

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



**Belfast
City Council**

15th December, 2022

MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the **Lavery Room and remotely via Microsoft Teams** on Friday, 16th December, 2022 at 9.30 a.m., for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest

2. Restricted Items

- (a) Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023/24 (Pages 1 - 16)
- (b) Update on Contracts (Pages 17 - 24)
- (c) Update on North Foreshore (Pages 25 - 58)
- (d) Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund (Pages 59 - 62)

3. Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

- (a) Response to SONI Consultation on Energising Belfast Project (Pages 63 - 66)
- (b) Complex Lives - Creation of Reserve (Pages 67 - 70)

4. Physical Programme and Asset Management

- (a) Asset Management (Pages 71 - 78)
- (b) Update on Area Working Groups (Pages 79 - 122)
- (c) Update on Physical Programme - Forth Meadow Community Greenway Public Art Sculpture Plaque (Pages 123 - 134)

5. Equality and Good Relations

- (a) Minutes of the Meeting of the Shared City Partnership (Pages 135 - 164)

6. Operational Issues

- (a) Minutes of the Meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum (Pages 165 - 168)
- (b) Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel (Pages 169 - 212)
- (c) Requests for Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality (Pages 213 - 218)
- (d) Minutes of the Meeting of the Disability Working Group (Pages 219 - 222)
- (e) Minutes of the Meeting of the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group (Pages 223 - 228)
- (f) Minutes of the Meeting of the Social Policy Working Group (Pages 229 - 234)
- (g) Minutes of the Meeting of the All-Party Working Group on the City Centre (Pages 235 - 238)
- (h) Recruitment of the post of Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services (Pages 239 - 242)
- (i) NILGA Local Government Conference (Pages 243 - 246)

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank



Belfast
City Council

Subject:	Response to SONI Consultation on Energising Belfast Project
Date:	16th December, 2022
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
Contact Officers:	Debbie Caldwell, Belfast Climate Commissioner

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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To update the Committee on SONI's consultation on Energising Belfast Project and present an officer submission for approval.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is requested to review the following officer submission to the SONI Energising Belfast Project, which has been forwarded to SONI on the understanding that Committee approval and Council ratification is required:
2.2	"Belfast City Council broadly welcomes the approach being taken by SONI within the Energising Belfast Project. The Council appreciates the efforts to minimise disruption to residents and businesses in Belfast.

2.3	In relation to the benefits of the project, as set out in SONI plans, these align with both the Council's and the city ambitions to enhance resilience, to become net zero, while supporting economic development, as set out in the Belfast Agenda, the Belfast Resilience Strategy, the Belfast Net Zero Carbon Roadmap, Belfast Region City Deal and the Draft Belfast Economic Strategy.
2.4	The Council will develop a Belfast Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) by the end of 2023. It would welcome SONI involvement in the LAEP process and alignment between SONI plans and those of the Council and city partners. The Council would welcome regular updates and meetings with SONI in relation to the Energising Belfast project so that officers and Elected Members can support local engagement and enhanced communication around this initiative and others."
3.0	Main Report
3.1	SONI is the electricity transmission system operator for Northern Ireland. SONI plans for the future of the electricity grid and operate it. This includes interconnecting to neighbouring grids and running the wholesale electricity market. The grid brings power from generators and sends it to NIE Networks. NIE then supplies electricity to every home, farm, community and business in Northern Ireland via its distribution network.
3.2	The Energising Belfast Project documentation describes the ambition to ensure that Belfast City Centre, its people and its businesses have the clean energy needed to grow. SONI states that 'a thriving City centre is vital to the prosperity of the entire city and region and this project will deliver a grid ready to power the clean energy transition. This scheme will support the aspirations of the Council's 'Belfast Agenda' to increase the employment and residential population in the city.'
3.3	The project aims to future proof the transmission system in Belfast to ensure businesses have capacity and the power they need to expand in the near-term and into the future, supporting the economic and societal vision of the Belfast Region City Deal and all partner councils in the Greater Belfast area. SONI is responsible for the design and securing planning consent and NIE Networks will lead on the construction phase of the project.
3.4	The project will deliver a new high-capacity underground cable in Belfast City Centre, as well as a new transformer at Castlereagh Main substation. SONI is also assessing the potential to build new substations at or next to existing sites in the city, or at new sites close by. This would mean that SONI can remove older overhead lines in the future and prepare the transmission system in the Greater Belfast area for future population and economic growth, as well as the electrification of heating and transport.

3.5	SONI has recently held consultation sessions in Belfast, more information on which can be found by clicking here . This included a meeting on 14th September with the Council's Party Group Leaders to update them on the project. Feedback from that session has informed the Council's response.
	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>
3.6	None
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Implications</u>
3.7	None
4.0	Documents Attached
	None

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Complex Lives – Creation of Reserve
Date:	16th December, 2022
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director City and Organisational Strategy David Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Kevin Heaney, Head of Poverty and Inclusive Growth Kelly Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services 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"/>
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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide an outline in relation to funding received in-year across partners to support the scaling up of the Complex Lives (CL) approach, highlight the limited timeframe in relation to being able to fully allocate/spend and, therefore, seek Committee approval to create a reserve to assist with the recruitment and retention of required posts and maximise spend in-year and on in 23/24 whilst partners are confirming budgets for next year.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the creation of a dedicated Complex Lives reserve, to be held and administered within City and Neighbourhood Services Department; and note that work is ongoing with statutory and community and voluntary partners via the relevant structures (i.e. Strategic Leadership Group – meets quarterly, and the CL

	Steering Group – meets monthly) to identify and agree in-year spend priorities, progress with recruitment in-year, and to seek budget allocation for 2023/24.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	The Committee will be aware that the Council is leading, alongside a range of partners, in developing the Complex Lives whole system approach to better support individuals impacted by chronic homelessness in the City. The design of the model has been informed by proven approaches developed in Doncaster and aims to help a core group of vulnerable people who are locked in a cycle of rough sleeping with repeated accommodation breakdowns, who have poor physical and mental health, drug misuse issues, offending behaviour, often impacted by past and ongoing trauma.
3.2	The Belfast Complex Lives model commenced its prototyping phase in October 2021, following a period of collective agreement and joint development work. The agreed timeline was for the prototyping to run for six months, to the end of March 2022, and then to roll out/mainstream the model from April 2022 onwards, making any necessary tweaks or adaptations based on learning from the trial and test period.
3.3	Whilst much has been achieved in relation to improved relationships and processes across partners and in relation to outcomes for individuals, the ability to scale up the model from early 2022 as planned has been impacted upon the ability of partners to leverage in additional funding.
3.4	Negotiations and follow up across partners took place between April and September 2022 to secure the £350k annual budget required to scale up the approach (this includes recruitment of up to 6 Intensive Support Workers, a Coordinator and a Project Support post alongside case management and outcomes monitoring systems and ongoing strategic advisory support via Marsh Public Service Solutions who were instrumental in developing the Doncaster model and who have been assisting throughout).
3.5	In-year funding was confirmed at the October 2022 meeting of the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG) with a total of £277k committed from a number of core/key partners including DfC PCSP, PBNI, PHA, PSNI, NIHE, PHA – as well as BCC.
3.6	The fact that funding awards were confirmed so late in the financial year presents challenges in being able to ensure full in-year allocation and spend – particularly given that a substantial amount of this funding was to recruit posts (as noted in 3.4). Therefore a key ask at the SLG

	<p>meeting was for partner organisations to be as flexible as possible in terms of taking forward in-year actions/priorities and to request if there would be any ability to carry over committed funding into next year as a specified reserve (with all necessary caveats built in) to enable the appointment of key support posts on a 1-year basis rather than on a 3-4 month basis, as the latter would obviously impact on the attractiveness and likelihood of filling these core posts.</p>
3.7	<p>Partners with a responsibility for commissioning, are now currently engaging internally to check whether their in-year funding allocations could be utilised in this manner, and in the interim, it was agreed that officers would seek permission to create a dedicated reserve to facilitate this – hence the report to SP&R. Delivery organisations are progressing with recruitment on a temporary basis with a possibility of extension – and commission organisations, including BCC, are also working through internal budgeting processes for 23/24 – it is therefore hoped that having a reserve will enable us to continue to fund posts and actions into early 23/24 ensuring continuity and that momentum is maintained. The SLG is due to meet again on the 17th January 2023 and will review the current and future financial position, and the Complex Lives Steering Group continues to meet monthly to progress and review actions.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.8	<p>All funding – BCC (58k) and Partners (218k) has been confirmed for 2022/23. Each organisation is progressing with recruitment and other related actions. Proposal is that any remaining funding, where partners attain necessary approvals, be held in a dedicated reserve for Complex Lives.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.9	<p>There is set criteria for being nominated for consideration for support via the Complex Lives model and agreed processes for case management and provision of wraparound support. Many of the individuals who benefit are from S75 groups, and as part of the process, are directly involved in making decisions about their care and support needs.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	None

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Asset Management: i) Kent Street Car Park – Renewal of Licence Agreement ii) Areema Play Park – Land swap and Wayleave with Apex Housing Association
Date:	16th December 2022
Reporting Officer:	Sinead Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes
Contact Officer:	Pamela Davison, Estates 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"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

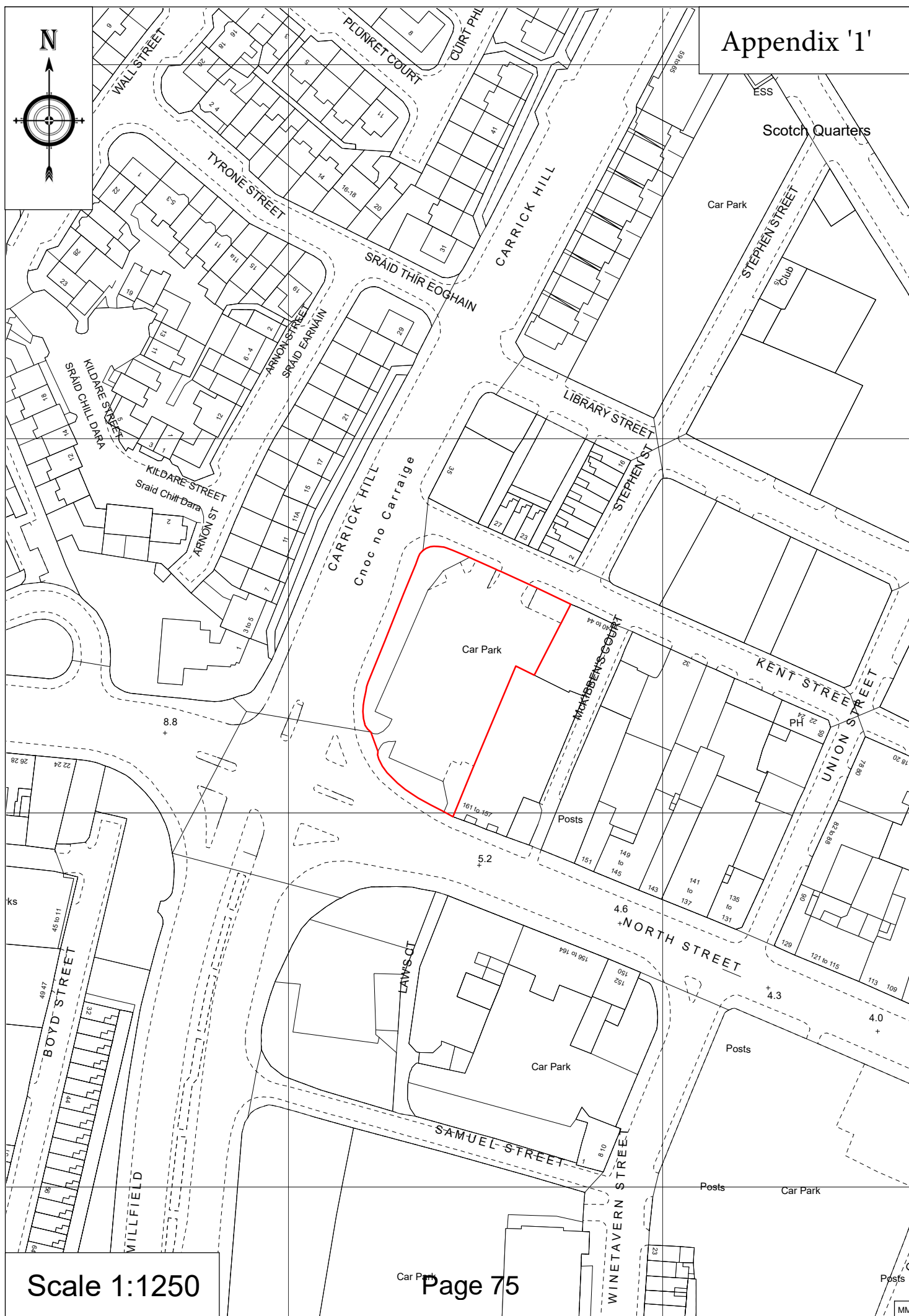
Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.0	The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Committee on asset related disposal, acquisition and estates matters.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to: i. Kent Street Car Park – Renewal of Licence Agreement

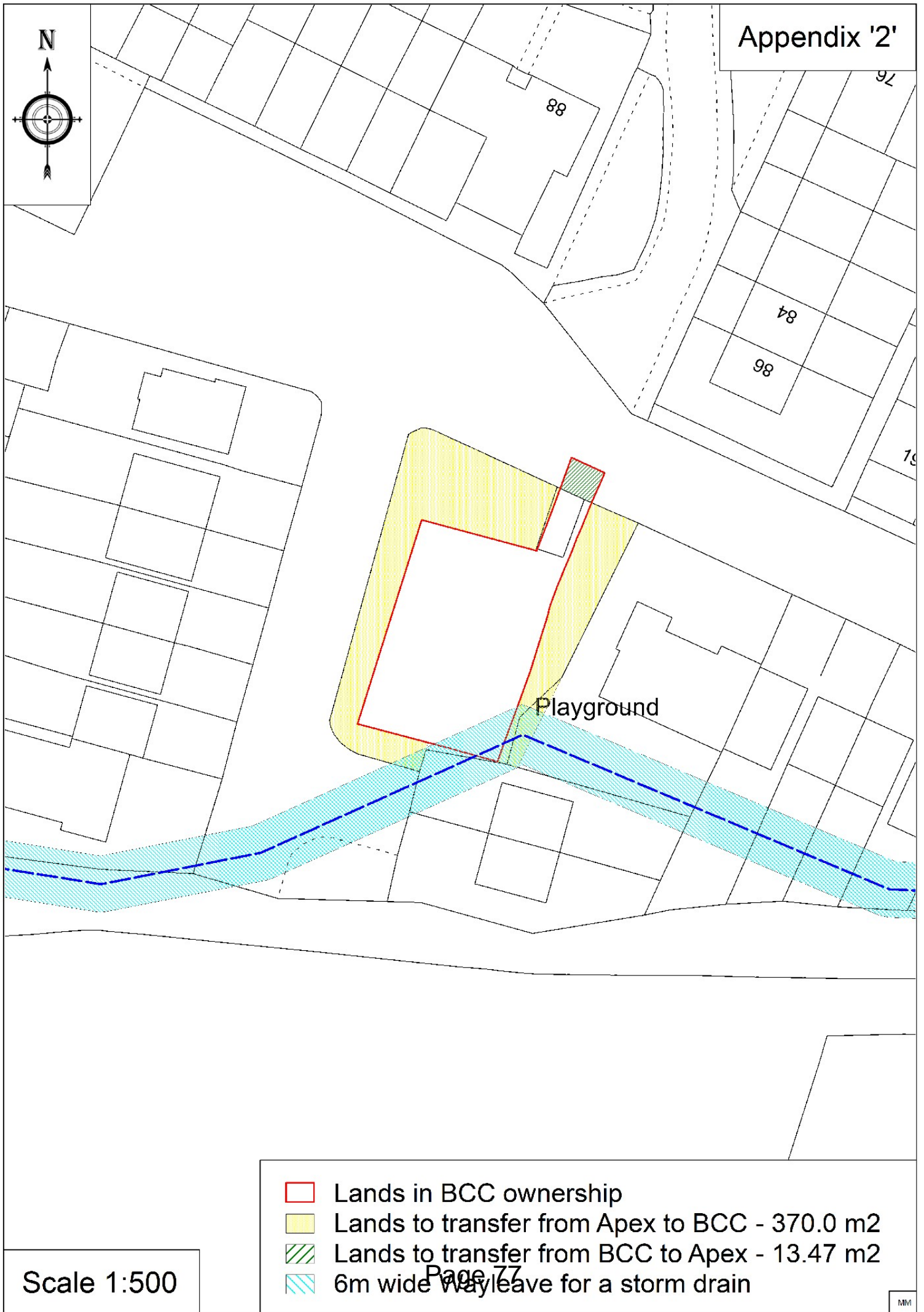
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approve the renewal of a Licence agreement from the Department for Communities (DfC) to Belfast City Council (BCC) in relation to the Council operated off-street car park at Kent Street. <p>ii. Areema Play Park – Land swap and Wayleave with Apex Housing Association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approve a land swap and wayleave with Apex Housing Association.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>i. <u>Kent Street car park – Licence renewal</u></p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>As part of the Transfer of Functions legislation for off-street car parking from DRD, the car park at Kent Street transferred to the Council on 1st April, 2015. This car park is owned by the Department for Communities (DfC) and has been held by Council under Licence since the transfer date (See Appendix 1). The current Licence from DfC was for a term of 3 years and expired on 30/06/2022. DfC has proposed renewing the Licence for a further term of 3 years to 30/06/2025. Land & Property Services (LPS) has provided a valuation for the Licence Fee of £23,474 for the initial year. The fee for the following two years will be agreed annually. Council will retain all revenue generated from its operation of the car park. Both DfC and Council will have a mutual break option given that development plans for the Inner North West (INW) Cluster include this site.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resources Implications</u></p> <p>The Licence shall be drafted by DSO acting on behalf of DfC. The Council's Legal Services shall act on the instructions of the Estate Management Unit to review the Licence. Council will be responsible for payment of an annual Licence fee to be assessed by LPS based on actual income and expenditure.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.2	<p>ii. <u>Areema Play Park – Land Swap and Wayleave with Apex Housing Association</u></p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>Areema Playground transferred from Lisburn Borough Council to Belfast City Council in April 2015, as part of Local Government Reform. It has been closed for several years and a new playground is now due to delivered as part of the Playground Improvement Programme.</p> <p>There is an opportunity for the Council to acquire additional lands adjoining Areema Playground which will enable a comprehensive refurbishment scheme. Apex Housing Association own the adjoining land on which they have built a new shared housing development named Areema Grove. Apex has left 370m2 of land undeveloped with the</p>

	<p>intention of transferring it to Council to extend the existing playground, which will serve their residents. Apex are unable to sell the land due to restrictions associated with Article 15 of the Housing Amendment Order, however propose to transfer the land to Council by way of a Long Lease subject to a peppercorn rent. The Council proposes to transfer 13.5m2 of land to Apex which will sit outside of the playground boundary and form part of the new public footpath and road network. This transaction will release Council from liabilities associated with owning this land. it is also necessary to retrospectively put a 6m wide Wayleave in place between Council and Apex to regularise a storm drain serving the new housing development which travels through a corner of Areema Playground as shown at Appendix 2.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>A budget of c. £145,000 has been allocated for Areema Playground refurbishment works, which is funded through the Capital Programme for financial year 2022-23. The value of the lands due to transfer from Apex to Council is c. £10,000. The total value of the small area of land to be disposed of by Council and the Wayleave area is c. £1,000. Subject to the relevant approvals, the parties have agreed to a land swap with no disposal costs payable by either party for the land transactions. Apex solicitor will draft the Lease and Wayleave. Councils Legal Services shall act on the instructions of the Estate Management Unit to review the documents.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Map showing Kent Street Car Park</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Map showing lands at Areema Play Park subject to a Land swap and Wayleave</p>

This page is intentionally left blank



This page is intentionally left blank



Scale 1:500

- Lands in BCC ownership
- Lands to transfer from Apex to BCC - 370.0 m²
- Lands to transfer from BCC to Apex - 13.47 m²
- 6m wide wayleave for a storm drain

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Update on Area Working Groups
Date:	16th December, 2022
Reporting Officer:	Sinead Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes
Contact Officer:	Shauna Murtagh, Programme 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"/>
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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To present for approval the minutes of the most recent round of Area Working Group meetings.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approve the most recent AWG minutes (<i>West – 24 November, South – 28 November and North – 29 November</i>), as attached; Belfast Bikes – approve the recommendations in respect of Belfast Bikes, as laid out in paragraph 3.2 below; and, Physical Programme – approve the recommendations in respect of LIF, BIF and SOF projects including reallocations as laid out in paragraph 3.3 below.

3.0	Main Report
	<u>KEY ISSUES</u>
3.1	<p>Area Working Group Minutes</p> <p>Members agreed in June 2016 that the Area Working Group minutes would be taken into the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval going forward, in line with the Council's commitment to openness and transparency and to ensure a consistent approach with other Member-led Working Groups.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to approve the most recent AWG minutes as attached.</p>
3.2	<p>Expansion of Belfast Bikes Scheme 2022/23</p> <p>West AWG</p> <p>The Working Group agreed to defer consideration of the final locations to the next West Area Working Group meeting to enable further consultation and consideration to be given to the proposed locations.</p> <p>South AWG</p> <p>The Working Group agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that Drumglass Park and the Elms Village be selected for the next phase of the Belfast Bikes Scheme in South Belfast.</p> <p>North AWG</p> <p>The Working Group agreed to note the status of the Belfast Bikes expansion scheme and agreed to the following docking station locations for the next phase of the expansion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grove Wellbeing Centre (North); and, - A Permanent station in close proximity to the new station entrance, to be initially located at the Council car park adjacent to Yorkgate Station, with the final location to be confirmed by Translink, following the refurbishment of the station.
3.3	Physical Programme Update
	<p>West Belfast AWG</p> <p>Belfast Investment Fund and Social Outcomes Fund – The Working Group recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Greater Shankill Community Council project is moved to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i>, and; – £507,000 of SOF funding is allocated to Greater Shankill Community Council and £80,000 is allocated to the Woodvale Park project.

	<p>South Belfast AWG</p> <p>Belfast Investment Fund – The Working Group recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that Coffee Culture (BIF46) and Arts and Digital Hub (BIF48) are moved to <i>Stage 2- Uncommitted</i>.</p> <p>North Belfast AWG</p> <p>Belfast Investment Fund – The Working recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that Midland Boxing Club project (BIF45) is moved to <i>Stage 3 - Committed</i>.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>All recommendations for BIF and SOF are based on reallocated funds under existing programmes.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	Minutes of the meetings of the West, South and North Area Working Groups

This page is intentionally left blank

West Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 24th November, 2022

HYBRID MEETING OF THE SPECIAL WEST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

Members present: Councillor McCann (Chairperson),
Alderman McCoubrey;
Councillors Corr, Canavan, Donnelly, Duffy,
Garrett, Hutchinson, McCabe,
McLaughlin, Thompson, Verner and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. M. Doherty, Project Manager;
Mr. F. Grant, Operations Development Manager;
Ms. A. McGlone, Neighbourhood Integration Manager; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported on behalf of Councillor Beattie.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the special meeting of 27th October were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Thompson declared an interest in relation to Item 2 – Update on Physical Programme is that she was a Director of the following three organisations who were referenced within the report:

- Glencairn Community Project;
- Greater Shankill Community Council; and
- Shankill Woman's Centre

The Member left the meeting whilst the agenda item was being discussed.

Issue Raised in Advance by a Member

Presentation from Shankill Juniors – Councillor Verner

Councillor Verner sought the permission of the Working Group to receive a presentation from the Shankill Juniors.

The Working Group agreed to receive the presentation and agreed to take it as the first item on the agenda.

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Mr. Craig Houston and Mr. Craig Fleck, representing the Shankill Juniors.

Mr. Fleck commenced by providing the Working Group with a background to Shankill Junior Football Club which was a community club established in 1987. He explained that the club was at the heart of the community and outlined the journey of a junior player from age 3-16, including detail regarding participation in the various leagues, including the National League and Irish League games. He also drew Members' attention to the club's core values which were to ensure that the players had fun, gave a commitment, and ultimately were young people who had integrity and strong moral principles.

He concluded by outlining the Club's Challenges as follows:

Facilities

- currently relies on 4 venues for training and highlighted that these were currently not enough due to the increase in numbers attending and overall demand; and
- extreme competition for training slots with clubs from all over Belfast and NI completing.

Costs

- training slots costing nearly £2000 per month (not sustainable); and
- noted that, if the club had home training grounds, the funds could be reinvested back into the club to provide the children with better opportunities.

Ability to Grow

- it was envisaged that the club would grow by at least 100 children in the next 3 years; and
- given the current demands, if it should grow at this anticipated level, there was concern as to where they would train.

Catchment Area

- the socio-economic area is one of the most deprived in Belfast and opportunities are limited for the children in the area;
- anti-social behaviour and crime figures in the area are high; and
- highlighted that the club aims to provide a 'safe space' for local children.

The Chairperson and several the Members thanked the representatives for their presentation and acknowledged the excellent work that the Shankill Juniors undertook with the local children in their community.

Councillor Verner thanked the Members for giving the representatives from the Shankill Juniors an opportunity to address the Working Group. She advised that she would be keen for the Council to consider the repurposing of the unused MUGA at Woodvale Park, this was currently a wasted space in the heart of the community which could potentially be repurposed as a training ground.

The Members discussed whether other funding avenues had been explored, for example, through the Department for Communities.

Several of the Members stated that they were keen not to build an unrealistic expectation that the project could be delivered.

Following discussion, it was agreed that a technical report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Working Group which would consider the costs in more detail and the logistics of delivering the proposal.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation, and they left the meeting.

Update on Physical Programme

The Members considered the undernoted report:

“1. Introduction

The Council’s Physical Programme covers projects under a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, the Local Investment Fund (LIF), the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Social Outcomes Fund (SOF) and the new Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF); in addition, the programme covers projects that the Council is delivering in behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- note the updates on the Physical Programme for West Belfast.**
- note the project movement for Greater Shankill Community Council project to *Stage 3 - Committed*.**
- recommend that £507,000 of SOF funding is allocated to Greater Shankill Community Council and £80,000 is allocated to the Woodvale Park project.**

3. Local Investment Fund

Members are reminded LIF is a £9m fixed programme of capital investment in non-council neighbourhood assets, over two tranches: LIF 1 (2012-2015) - £5m total funding pot, allocated across each AWG areas; and LIF 2 (2015 -2019) - £4m allocation. (LIF 1 – West - £1,127,500 + Shankill £490,000 and LIF 2 - £1,400,000).

Each LIF project proposal is taken through a Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. The table below outlines funding to date for each tranche, at key stages of the delivery

process: 50 projects have received In Principle support under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 49 have been completed and 1 project at delivery stage. In total, 98% of all LIF West projects have now been completed. Further details of these are outlined below.

LIF breakdown – West	LIF 1		LIF 2	
Stage/ Description	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)
Number of Projects Completed	25 (100%)	£1,617,500	24 (96%)	£1,341,788
Number of Projects On-going Delivery			1 (4%)	£58,212
Number of Projects in Pre-construction				
Number of Projects in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)				
Total Number of Approved Projects	25	£1,617,500	25	£1,400,000

The below table is a brief overview of the remaining live projects are shown below.

LIF Ref	Project	LIF Funding	Stage	Status	Action / Recommendation
WLIF2-04	St John Bosco Boxing Club	£40,000	Complete	Project recently completed. Snagging works ongoing.	Ongoing liaison with the group, Sport NI, DfC and DoF.
WLIF2-08	Berlin Swifts Football Club	LIF £65,085; SOF £113,000	On Ground	Modular changing building has been installed however utility connections remain outstanding. All utility connections applications now progressing well, with sufficient funding in place to complete project.	Continue engagement with utility companies and project partners.

4. Belfast Investment Fund

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration, partnership projects, with a minimum £250k investment. The West AWG had a total allocation of £9m comprising £5.5m from the original allocation, an additional £1.2m which was ring-fenced for projects in the Shankill area when this became part of the West AWG following the Council elections in

2015 and £2.5m which was ringfenced for projects in the Colin area following LGR.

6 projects have received an In-Principle funding commitment under BIF accounting for the full allocation. Each of the 'In Principle' projects are taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place. Table below provides a summary of BIF allocated projects.

Summary of BIF allocated projects

West	Stage 3—Davitts GAC—£1m; Raidió Fáilte—£950k; St Comgall's- £3.5m; Colin Glen Forest Park—£2.5m Stage 2—Glencairn Community Project— £700k; Greater Shankill Community Council- Royal British Legion- £300k, St Mary's CBS— no commitment Stage 1— An Sportslann; Suffolk Community Forum; Belfast Hills- Black Mountain Access—no commitment
------	---

BIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
BIF29	Greater Shankill Community Council - RBL	BIF- £300,000; SOF- tbc	Uncommitted; Design stage	Project cost estimate following tender exercise has led to a funding deficit due to rising construction costs. Additional funding under SOF in the amount of £507,000, subject to WAWG recommendation and Committee approval.	Move to Stage 3- Committed. Continue engagement with the group.
BIF09	Glencairn Community Project	£700,00	Uncommitted; Due Diligence stage	Project cost estimate following tender exercise indicates a deficit. Group are investigating other funding and mechanisms. Awaiting date for meeting with Education Authority to resolve land transfer. CNS officer to provide support at sub-group.	Continue engagement with the group and key stakeholders.

5. Social Outcomes Fund

SOF is £4m ringfenced capital investment programme with a focus on local community tourism projects. 5 projects in West Belfast received an In-Principle funding commitment. Similar to LIF and BIF, all projects are subject to Due Diligence process prior to any funding award.

SOF – West Belfast projects overview

West	<p>Stage 3— James Connolly Interpretative centre—£650,000; Rock Centre —£200,000; Belfast Orange Hall Museum- £80,000; Roddy McCorley Museum - £1,350,000</p> <p>Stage 1— Berlin Swifts Football Club - £113,000; Greater Shankill Community Council - £tbc; Shankill Road Environmental Improvement Project - £50,000; Woodvale Park - tbc</p>
-------------	---

An overview of the remaining SOF projects is outlined in the table below –

SOF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action / Recommendation
SOF05	Roddy McCorley Museum	£1,350,000	On Ground	Development of a modern interpretative museum and existing grounds. Project progressing well. Estimated completion December 2022.	Continue engagement with the group
SOF10	Shankill Road Environmental Improvement Project	£50,000	Initial stage	Small-scale environmental improvement project for the Shankill Road. Project is currently undergoing Due Diligence process.	Continue engagement with the group

Shankill SOF projects

Members will note that on 23 September 2022, the SP&R Committee agreed to allocate £750,000 SOF monies due to the withdrawal of the Shankill Mission project to Berlin Swifts FC (£113,000), Shankill Road Environmental Improvement project (£50,000), and to meet the funding deficit for Greater Shankill

Community Council (GSCC) project once the tender has been returned, and out of remaining allocation agreed in principle to support proposals for Woodvale Park. The GSCC tender exercise has now completed and the overall project costs is estimated at £807,000. It is noted that this is a significant rise which is due to the ongoing challenges in the construction sector. It is recommended that the funding shortfall of £507,000 is met via the reallocation of the monies from the Shankill Mission project. With the GSCC cost estimate confirmed, there is approximately £80,000 remaining monies for the Woodvale Park MUGA upgrade proposal. The Woodvale Park project is to be worked up with further detail to be brought back in due course. Members are asked to recommend that £507,000 of SOF funding is allocated to Greater Shankill Community Council and the residual amount is allocated to the Woodvale Park project.

6. Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund is a £10m capital fund to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long-term difference in their communities. On 7 November 2022, Members have considered the feedback on *Stage 1- Applications* in the West Belfast area and made recommendations to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on which applications they wish to move forward to *Stage 2 – Development Stage*. In line with the agreed process, the outcome of special AWGs have been taken through Strategic Policy & Resources Committee and are now subject to Council ratification on 1 December 2022.

7. Capital Programme

The Capital Programme is the rolling programme of enhancing existing Council assets or building / buying new ones. Members are reminded of the 3-stage approval process in place for every project on council's Capital Programme, as agreed by SP&R Committee. Table below provides an update on current live projects West Belfast area. Members are asked to note the updates on the Physical Programme.

West Belfast – Capital programme overview

Project	Status and update
City Cemetery – National Lottery Heritage Fund	Stage 3 – Committed. On ground. Contractor works are progressing well. The new service yard is completed. The restoration of the Mortuary Tower & exterior of Foxes Lodge is completed. Visitor centre is completed and work is ongoing in preparation for opening. In tandem with this the restoration works on several of the site's key assets such as the Centre Steps and Victorian Fountains is well underway. Design and procurement works are underway with regards to Dual Language signage throughout the site with some external signage due for installation before

	Christmas. This will enable the visitor Centre to be opened for public use. Further dual language work (site signage, app, videos etc) is underway and engagement with Irish language groups is ongoing and will remain so until all dual language works are completed.
Playground Programme - Areema and Sally Gardens	Stage 3 – Committed. Works programmed for completion within 2022/23 financial year.
Alleygating Phase 5	Stage 3 – Committed. Approved at SP&R Committee in September 2022 including the list of alleygates to be taken forward subject to costs.
Access to the Hills – connections from Cavehill to Divis Mountain and Black Mountain	Stage 2- Uncommitted. Business case procurement underway. Will also be considered within the wider study as below.
Black Mountain/Upper Whiterock Greenway	Stage 2- Uncommitted. Undergoing the business case review process. Will be assessed within the wider study.
Colin Greenway	Stage 2- Uncommitted. Draft Business case related to the development of the Colin Active Travel Routes prepared and under review.
Connectivity - Access to Hills Programme (city wide)	Stage 1- Emerging. Secured DAERA funding for the Access to the Belfast Hills Feasibility Study. Contractor has been appointed and study is underway.
Belfast Bikes Expansion	Further expansion – there is a separate report being presented to Members at this AWG on Belfast Bikes proposed locations.

8. Externally funded programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for several government department on key capital investment programmes, namely Social Investment Fund (SIF) and Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office as well as several schemes with DfC. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to West Belfast.

Urban Villages Initiative

The table below shows the status on UV projects in West Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined West Belfast geography (Colin area).

West Belfast – UV overview

Project	Status and update
Páirc Nua Chollann	Project completed and opened to the public on 20 October 2022. Animation activity is underway. A celebration event is taking place on 24 November 2022.
Colin Valley Football Club	Council is acting as Delivery Partner. On ground. The contractor on site and the project is progressing well with an anticipated completion of end January 2023.
Healthy Living Centre (Sport in the Community PCA)	Council is acting as Delivery Partner. On ground. Council agreed 25-year lease and 25-year Deed of Dedication has been confirmed. The contractor commenced on site in September 2022. Anticipated completion date is March 2023.

PEACEIV – Capital Projects

Members are asked to note updates on the capital projects that are related to the PEACEIV Programme.

West Belfast – Peace IV Capital Projects overview

Project	Status and update
Forth Meadow Community Greenway	<p>On ground.</p> <p><i>Section 1 – Glencairn</i> – Works complete and handed over to City and Neighbourhood Services. Signage package to be installed to include feature panels, narrative panels and beacon lights.</p> <p><i>Section 2 – Forth River/ Springfield Road</i> – Works commenced in October 2022 with the date for completion of June 2023.</p> <p><i>Section 3- Falls Park/Whiterock</i> – Works now complete however, there is a delay with hand-over to Council due to issues with NIE connections for lighting columns. This to be resolved by the end of November 2022.</p> <p><i>Section 4 – Bog Meadows</i> – Phase 1 complete, Phase 4 underway, anticipated completion late 2022.</p> <p><i>Section 5 – Westlink to City Centre</i> – currently at detailed design stage.</p> <p>Members will note that work on the flagship piece is progressing with installation and a public unveiling planned for January 2023.</p>
Black Mountain Shared Space Project	<p><i>Phase 1.</i> Tender returned. SP&R approval 21st October 2022 for award of contract. Will be liaising with funders regarding reducing the deficit. Works to commence on site by end of November 2022. Project completion within the PIV funding programme is still a major risk.</p> <p><i>Phase 2.</i> Design team appointed. Design agreed with end user. Planning submission in preparation stage.</p>

Shankill Shared Women's Centre	On ground. Hoarding artwork unveiling took place on August 2022. Update on SSWC provided in SP&R report of 21 st October 2022 with regards to securing additional funding. Project completion extended to 30 June 2023.
---------------------------------------	---

DfI funded projects

Below is the status update on projects funded by Department for Infrastructure in West Belfast.

DfI – West Belfast projects overview

Project	Status and update
Covered cycle stands Phase 1	<i>Via Revitalisation Programme (DfC, DfI)</i> Grosvenor Community Centre - Project completed – installed in September 2022
Covered cycle stands Phase 2	<i>Via DfI Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i> Páirc Nua Chollan, Andersonstown Leisure Centre – currently in production and due for installation by May 2023. Potential additional location: Brook Leisure Centre.
Belfast Bikes (New Station at Kennedy Centre)	<i>Via DfI Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i> Project completed – September 2022

DfC funded projects

Members are asked to note that the projects currently match funded by Department for Communities include: Páirc Nua Chollann (recently completed), Berlin Swifts Football Club, Forth Meadow Community Greenway and Black Mountain Shared Space Project.”

The Working Group recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee adopt the recommendations as outlined at 2.0 of the report.

Belfast Bikes Update and Location Agreement

The Operations Development Manager, Mr. F. Grant, took the Committee through a PowerPoint presentation which considered the Belfast Bikes Expansion scheme and the options and recommendations for each location for the next phase of the scheme, including pictures of the proposed locations.

The Members considered the suggested locations, as follows:

Options for St Mary's College

- St Dominic's Grammar School or Coláiste Feirste.

Options for Shankill Road

- Spectrum Centre or Woodvale Park.

A Member queried whether consultation had been undertaken with Coláiste Feirste to establish if it would be content with the proposed location, especially given that it would be erected in front of a statue.

The Members also considered the proposed Shankill locations and discussed the possibility of the final location being located nearer to Glencairn and requested that further consideration be given to this.

Following discussion, it was agreed to defer consideration of the final locations to the next West Area Working Group meeting to enable further consultation and consideration to be given to the proposed locations.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

North Belfast Area Working Group

Tuesday, 29th November, 2022

NORTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillors Bradley (Chairperson),
Councillors Cobain, Magee, Maskey,
McCullough, Murphy, Nelson, O'Hara, Pankhurst
and Whyte.

In attendance: Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Ms. S. Murtagh, Programme Manager;
Mr. F. Grant, Operations Development Manager; and
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 2nd November were approved by the Working Group.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Request to Present: Department for Infrastructure - York Street Interchange Review

The Working Group agreed to receive, at a future meeting, an update from the Department for Infrastructure on the York Street Interchange Review.

Expansion of Belfast Bike Scheme

The Working Group considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To update Members on the status of the Belfast Bikes expansion scheme, and to agree final locations for next phase of expansion.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to:

- note the current status of the Belfast Bikes expansion scheme;
- to agree final locations for the next phase of expansion.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

The Belfast Bikes scheme was launched in 2015 as part Belfast City Council's physical investment programme. The Department for Regional Development provided initial capital funding for the scheme as part of their Active Travel Demonstration Projects budget. The scheme launched with a network of 30 docking stations and 300 bikes. The scheme has been operated by NSL continually since inception using bikes and supporting infrastructure from 'Nextbike by TIER'. The scheme currently operates with 573 bikes (including those in reserve for new stands) and 50 docking stations.

3.2 Current expansion status

At CG&R on 12 May 2021 it was agreed that an additional four Belfast Bikes docking stations would be deployed using DFI Active Travel funding. Installation began in Q1 2022/23 and the current status is as follows:

- Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre was installed on 7 July 2022 and is operational;
- Olympia Leisure Centre was installed on 25 October 2022 and is operational;
- Kennedy Centre installation has been postponed due to delays by supplier; it is expected to be operational by late November;
- Waterworks installation has been postponed due to delays by the supplier; it is expected to be operational by late November;

An additional station at Titanic Quarter was completed in May 2022, funded by developer contribution.

3.3 Future expansion 2022/23

At CG&R on 9 June 2021 it was agreed to proceed with 15 docking stations outlined in the expansion proposal. An investment of approximately £525,000 is required, based on cost estimates from previous network expansions. At SP&R on 18 June 2021 members agreed for £500,000 to be invested in the expansion proposal.

3.4 Eight stations will be installed in the upcoming phase, which should be completed by 31 March 2023. Seven stations will follow in the next phase the following year (2023/24).

3.5 The following areas were agreed previously by SP&R Committee, with the final locations of each docking station to be agreed through Area Working Groups:

- North: Yorkgate and Shore Road
- West: St Mary's College and Shankill Road
- South: Lisburn Road and Malone Road
- East: Castlereagh Road, Upper Newtownards Road.

3.6 Options and recommendations for each location will be presented during the meeting, for discussion and agreement by Members.

3.7 The options for Shore Road area are:

- Grove Leisure Centre (South)
- Grove Leisure Centre (North)
- Grove Park / North Queen Street

3.8 The options for Yorkgate area are:

- Temporary station at Council car park near Yorkgate station.
- Permanent station to be confirmed by Translink, who are permitting the station to be placed on their land following Yorkgate station refurbishment. This will be placed in close vicinity to the new station entrance.

3.9 A site expansion matrix was previously agreed by SP&R for future expansion. Although it is not required for determining the final locations in this phase, it has been used to help demonstrate the application of this matrix.

3.10 Financial & Resource Implications

Finance

There are no specific financial or resource implications contained within this report.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications

None."

The Working Group agreed to note the status of the Belfast Bikes expansion scheme and agreed to the following docking station locations for the next phase of the expansion:

- Grove Wellbeing Centre (North); and
- A Permanent station in close proximity to the new station entrance, to be initially located at the Council car park adjacent to Yorkgate Station, with the final location to be confirmed by Translink, following the refurbishment of the station.

Update on Physical Programme

The Working Group considered the following report:

“1. Introduction

The Council's Physical Programme covers projects under a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, the Local Investment Fund (LIF), the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Social Outcomes Fund (SOF) and the new Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF); in addition, the programme covers projects that the Council is delivering in behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to

- note the physical programme update for North Belfast,
- note the project movement for Midland Boxing Club project to *BIF Stage 3- Committed*,
- note the projects highlighted under LIF and BIF where little or no progress has been made, and;
- recommend that the following Groups are issued with a letter seeking written confirmation on whether the group wish to either withdraw or engage in the process, by mid-January 2023, with update to be brought to next AWG: Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership, Mercy Primary School, Crumlin Road; Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church (Old Grove).

3. Local Investment Fund

LIF is a £9m fixed programme of capital investment in non-council neighbourhood assets, over two tranches: LIF 1 (2012-2015) - £5m total funding pot, allocated across each AWG areas; and LIF 2 (2015 -2019) - £4m allocation with the North being allocated £1.127m under LIF1 and £800,000 under LIF2.

Each LIF project proposal is taken through a Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. The table below outlines funding to date for each tranche, at key stages of the delivery process: 43 projects in total have received In Principle support under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 35 have been completed; 2 are at delivery stage; 1 are at pre- construction stage and 5 remain at due diligence / initial stages. In total, 80% of all LIF North projects have now been completed.

LIF Breakdown North	LIF 1		LIF 2	
Stage/Description	Projects	Amount/Value (£)	Projects	Amount/Value (£)

Number of Projects Completed	23 (92%)	£996,500	12 (67%)	£566,400
Number of Projects On-going Delivery			2 (11%)	£133,467
Number of Projects in Pre-construction			1 (6%)	£21,667
Number of Projects in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)	2 (8%)	£131,000	3 (17%)	£76,667
Total Number Of Approved Projects	25*	£1,127,500	18**	£798,201

***This includes additional funding for a LIF 2 project, Ballysillan Youth for Christ.**

**** This includes additional funding for two LIF 1 projects, Marrowbone Parochial Hall and Jennymount Church.**

The table below provide an overview of progress and actions around the remaining live projects. **Members are asked to note the status of the current LIF projects and the ongoing actions.**

LIF Ref	Project	LIF Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
NLIF2-14	Star Neighbourhood Centre	£58,467	On Ground	On Ground Electrical works complete. Art piece has been installed. Quotation from supplier for playground equipment received. Waiting for final certificate from other works before order can be made	Continued engagement with the group
NLIF2-22	Sailortown, St Joseph's Church Refurbishment	£75,000	On Ground	On Ground. Heaters procured and installed. Contractor on site. Works on Gallery paused pending HED consent. Architectural option drawings for HED	Continued engagement with group and HED
NLIF2-21	Somme Group – cross community memorial	£21,667	Tender Preparation	Ongoing work with Legal Services in order to get the funding agreement. The procurement exercise for works was initiated last	Continued engagement with group. Requirement for street works licence to be resolved, work in progress with DfI.

				month and is ongoing.	
NLIF014	Westland Community Centre - new building	£65,00	Due Diligence stage	Project originally agreed for LIF in January 2013. A revised community centre scheme has been agreed as an emerging UV capital project. A governance model is being explored and the Business Case is progressing	Continued engagement with group and the Executive Office.
NLIF057	Ardoyne Holy Cross Boxing Club (Link to UV project – ABC Trust H&L Hub)	£66,000	Due Diligence stage	This project is part of the UV development of St. Gemma's School-ABC Trust. Construction works on ABC Trust (Phase 1) ongoing Boxing Club LIF project will be part of Phase 2.	Continued agreement with Group and with UV
NLIF2-19	Women's Tec	£46,667	Due Diligence stage	Agreed February 2017. Lease renewal is signed by group for the former Skegoneill Primary School and awaiting Education Authority signature. The quotation for works exceeds the budget. The team are working with the group and EA to bring the project back within budget.	Continued engagement with Group
NLIF2-03	Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership	£15,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed in June 2018. Project remains at Due Diligence stage – lease issues to be resolved. Officer attempting to make contact with group to seek	Propose that a letter is sent seeking written confirmation on whether the group wish to either withdraw or engage in the process by mid-January 2023, with an update to be

				clarification whether the project is to proceed or not. No response as yet. Group contact not available and will return to work on 29 th Nov.	brought to next AWG.
NLIF2-05	Mercy Primary, Crumlin Road	£15,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed June 2016. Group governance documents being assembled. Attempting to make contact with group (Mercy Primary School Principal). No response as yet.	Proposed that a letter be sent seeking written confirmation on whether the group wish to either withdraw or engage in the process by mid-January 2023, with an update to be brought to next AWG.

4. Belfast Investment Fund

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration partnership projects, with a minimum

£250k investment from Council BIF – North Belfast was allocated £5.5m. In North Belfast, 7 projects have received an In-Principle funding commitment under BIF, thereby fully allocating its £5.5m: and 2 projects are on the longer BIF list. Each of the ‘In Principle’ projects are taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place.

Members are asked to note the status update of these projects provided below. The table provides a summary of BIF allocated projects i.e. project stage; project title; and funding allocated.

Summary of BIF allocated projects

North	Stage 3 - Cancer Lifeline—£575k; Grace Family Centre —£1.3m; Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church Ireland -£900k Stage 2- Malgrove- £950k, Marrowbone Park £750k; Cultural Community Hub - £350k, Midland Boxing Club £550k Stage 1 - Cliftonville Community Forum, Sunningdale Community Centre - no commitment
--------------	--

BIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
---------	---------	---------	-------	--------	------------------------

BIF41	Marrowbone Millennium Park (Link to UV Project)	£750,000	On Ground	Contractor appointed. Works progressing. Estimated completion date is Autumn 2023.	Continue engagement with the group and stakeholders.
BIF45	Midland Boxing Club	BIF £550,000; GWF £30,000	On Ground	Contractor appointed. Works progressing well. Due Diligence process is now complete.	Move to Stage 3- Committed. Continue engagement with the group.
BIF22/34	Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church (Old Grove)	BIF £900,000; DoE £500,000	Design stage	Information requested from Basement Youth Club to complete an updated Economic Appraisal (requested by the Department of Education) has not been received following a number of requests. A lease is required to allow the redevelopment of the Gainsborough Drive site. No update has been provided by Elim Church or the Department of Education in relation to the possibility of this lease being created between Elim and Basement YC.	Propose that a letter is sent seeking written confirmation on whether the group wish to either withdraw or engage in the process, by mid-January 2023, with an update to be brought to next AWG.

BIF15	Malgrove	£950,000	Design stage	Business case completed - preferred pavilion option (2017) is for a 4-team changing. Detailed design progressing. Aim to submit a planning application for the whole sporting complex within the next few months.	Continue engagement with the group and the team to agree the design and submit the planning application.
BIF43	Cultural Community Hub	£350,000	Uncommitted – Due Diligence stage	Proposed new cultural hub community facility. Project will comprise of a 130sqm permanent brick facility on derelict Orange Lodge owned site. DD information being assembled – this work is continuing since last update.	Continue engagement with the group and stakeholders.
BIF49	Cavehill Tennis Club	£71,413	Initial stage	Agreed at October Council. Officer is liaising with group to scope the project. Meeting organised with group in late November 2022.	Continue engagement with the group.

5. Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund is a £10m capital fund to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long-term difference in their communities. On 2 November 2022, Members have considered the feedback on Stage 1- Applications in the North Belfast area and made recommendations to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on which applications they wish to move forward to Stage 2 – Development Stage. In line with the agreed process, the outcome of special AWGs have been taken through Strategic Policy & Resources Committee and are now subject to Council ratification on 1 December 2022.

6. Capital Programme

The Capital Programme is the rolling programme of enhancing existing Council assets or building / buying new ones. Members are reminded of the 3-stage approval process in place for every project on council's Capital Programme, as agreed by SP&R Committee. Table below provides an update on current live projects North Belfast area. Members are asked to note the updates on the Physical Programme.

North Belfast – Capital programme overview

Project	Status and update
Belfast Zoo – Programme of Works (Works to the Large Cats Enclosure, Sea Lion, etc)	Stage 3 - Committed. On ground. Sea Lion works complete, H&S works complete. Picnic area has been constructed. Work on new lion enclosure has started and aim to complete by Easter 2023.
North Foreshore - Development Sites Infrastructure Works	Stage 3 – Committed. On ground. Storm Drainage Infrastructure Installation contractor appointed and due to start in January 2023. The Landfill Gas Ring Main tender being reviewed in light of material price increases.
Reservoir Safety Programme	Stage 3- Committed. Works to Alexandra Park, Waterworks Upper and Waterworks Lower. Consultants appointed and undertaking investigative work to assess the existing condition of the reservoirs and associated structures. Public consultation and planning application to be submitted in 2023. PAD meeting held. Additional survey and investigative works required.
Cathedral Gardens (including Belfast Blitz)	Stage 3 – Committed. Approved for movement to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> at SP&R Committee in October 2022. Design team is continuing to develop the project and are appointed up to Planning stage. Aim to submit planning application in Spring 2023.
Playground Improvement Programme - Westland	Stage 3 – Committed. Works programmed for completion within 2022/23 financial year.

Alleygating Phase 5	Stage 3 – Committed. Approved at SP&R Committee in September 2022 with the list of alleygates to be taken forward subject to costs.
LTP - Girdwood Indoor Sports Facility	<p>Stage 2 – Uncommitted. DfC partnership project. Continued development of OBC for new leisure facility. Continued liaison with key stakeholders around options for new facility and overall development of the Girdwood site.</p> <p>Public consultation open until late November 2022. Information sessions held at Girdwood and adjacent community centres.</p>
Relocation of Dunbar Link Cleansing Depot	Stage 2 – Uncommitted. OBC being worked up. Possible alternative sites being explored with C&NS in light of current operational requirements and potential route optimisation.
Glencairn Park/ Ligoniel Park Greenway	Stage 2- Uncommitted. Will be considered within the wider study as below.
Access to the Hills – connections from Cavehill to Divis Mountain and Black Mountain	Stage 2- Uncommitted. Business case procurement underway. Will also be considered within the wider study as below.
Connectivity - Access to Hills Programme (city wide)	Stage 1- Emerging. Secured DAERA funding for the Access to the Belfast Hills Feasibility Study. Contractor has been appointed and study is underway.
Belfast Bikes Expansion	Further expansion - there is a separate report being presented to Members at this AWG on Belfast Bikes preferred location.

7. Externally funded programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for several government department on key capital investment programmes, namely Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office, Peace IV as well as a number of schemes with DfC. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to North Belfast.

Urban Villages Initiative

The table below shows the status on UV projects in North Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined North Belfast geography (Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan).

Project	Status Update
Marrowbone Millennium Park <i>(links to BIF programme)</i>	On ground. As above BIF41. Contractor has been appointed and work progressing well and completion date is estimated as early 2024.
ABC Trust Health and Leisure Hub <i>(links to LIF programme)</i>	On ground. Partnership project with UV DfC, DfI and Flax Trust. Contractor has been appointed and works is progressing. Estimated completion of phase 1 is early 2024 with phase 2 to follow.
Ballysillan Playing Fields	Partnership project with UV, DfC and DfI Living with Water Programme. At design stage and the planning application is progressing. Land transfer issues are also progressing. It is anticipated that a contractor will be appointed and on-site in late 2023 pending planning approval.
Ardoyne Youth Enterprises (AYE) Social Enterprise Project	Council is acting as delivery agent. The Letter of Offer is expected early 2023. TEO has identified a funding gap in the sum of £500,000. TEO and the Project Promoter are exploring additional funding opportunities to support this project. Planning application approval pending. Design Team appointed. Contractor expected on site in December 2022.
Sunningdale Community Centre	Council is acting as delivery agent, proposed on Council land. The project is being fully funded by TEO UV Programme The Business Case has been approved and the Letter of Offer is awaited. . The group has been incorporated as a community interest company. Sustainability issues that had previously been highlighted have been explored and Council is satisfied these have been resolved. Land transfer arrangements are progressing. The Design Team has been appointed. Planning application to be submitted. Contractor expected to start on site by spring 2024.
Westland Community Centre <i>(links to LIF programme)</i>	Partnership project with UV. This is an emerging project. A governance model is being explored and the Business Case is expected to complete by March 2023 with the LoO being issued thereafter.

Peace IV

Members are asked to note the update on Peace IV - Forth Meadow Community Greenway project.

Project	Status and update
Forth Meadow Community Greenway project	<p>On ground.</p> <p><i>Section 1 – Glencairn</i> – Works complete and handed over to City and Neighbourhood Services. Signage package to be installed to include feature panels, narrative panels and beacon lights.</p> <p><i>Section 2 – Forth River/ Springfield Road</i> – Works commenced in October 2022 with the date for completion of June 2023.</p> <p><i>Section 3- Falls Park/Whiterock</i> – Works now complete however, there is a delay with hand-over to Council due to issues with NIE connections for lighting columns. This to be resolved by the end of November 2022.</p> <p><i>Section 4 – Bog Meadows</i> – Phase 1 complete, Phase 4 underway, anticipated completion late 2022.</p> <p><i>Section 5 – Westlink to City Centre</i> – currently at detailed design stage.</p> <p>Members will note that work on the flagship piece is progressing with installation and a public unveiling planned for January 2023.</p>

DfC funded projects

Members are asked to note the update on projects funded by Department for Communities.

Project	Status and update
Voice of Young people In Care (VOYPIC) and Include Youth	Project recently completed. Council is acting as delivery agent. Refurbishment of 100 Great Patrick St, Belfast to provide a modern, fit for purpose youth space.

At the request of a Member, the Programme Manager agreed that a detailed report would be presented to the next meeting of the Working Group on the Reservoir Safety Programme.

The Working Group agreed:

- To note the Physical Programme update for north Belfast;
- To note the project movement for Midland Boxing Club project to *BIF Stage 3 – Committed*;
- To note the projects highlighted under LIF and BIF where little or no progress had been made; and
- That letters are issued to the undernoted groups to request written confirmation of whether the groups wish to withdraw or engage in the process, with a response deadline of mid-January, with the letters to also state that the Area Working Group may consider options around these allocations of funding:

- Ardoyne Shankill Health Partnership;
- Mercy Primary School; and
- Crumlin Road Basement Youth Club/Elim Church (Old Grove).

Chairperson

South Belfast Area Working Group

Monday, 28th November, 2022

MEETING OF SOUTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Bunting (Chairperson); and
Councillors Gormley, Groogan, T. Kelly, Lyons,
McAteer, McDonough-Brown, McKeown, Murray
and Spratt.

In attendance: Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Mr. F. Grant, Assets Development Manager;
Mr. D. Logan, Project Manager, Physical Programmes;
and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 10th October and 7th November were approved by the Working Group.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Request to Present - Edenderry Village Energy Co-operative

The Working Group agreed to receive at a future meeting a presentation on the work of the Edenderry Village Energy Co-operative.

Expansion of Belfast Bikes Scheme 2022/23

The Director of Economic Development submitted for the Working Group's consideration the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To update the Working Group on the status of the Belfast Bikes expansion scheme and to agree final locations for next phase of expansion.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Working Group is requested to:

- note the current status of the Belfast Bikes expansion scheme; and
- agree final locations for the next phase of expansion.

3.0 Main Report

Background

- 3.1 The Belfast Bikes scheme was launched in 2015, as part of the Council's physical investment programme. The Department for Regional Development provided initial capital funding for the scheme as part of its Active Travel Demonstration Projects budget. The scheme launched with a network of 30 docking stations and 300 bikes. The scheme has been operated by NSL continually since inception, using bikes and supporting infrastructure from 'Nextbike' by TIER. The scheme currently operates with 573 bikes (including those in reserve for new stands) and 50 docking stations.**

Current Expansion Status

- 3.2 The City Growth and Regeneration Committee, on 12th May 2021, granted approval for an additional four Belfast Bikes docking stations to be deployed using DFI Active Travel funding. Installation began in Q1 2022/23 and the current status is as follows:**

- Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre was installed on 7th July 2022 and is operational;
- Olympia Leisure Centre was installed on 25th October 2022 and is operational;
- Kennedy Centre installation has been postponed due to delays by the supplier - it is expected to be operational by late November; and
- Waterworks installation has been postponed due to delays by the supplier - it is expected to be operational by late November;

An additional station at Titanic Quarter was completed in May 2022, funded by developer contribution.

Future Expansion 2022/23

- 3.3 The City Growth and Regeneration Committee, on 9th June 2021, agreed to proceed with 15 docking stations, details of**

which have been circulated. An investment of approximately £525,000 is required, based on cost estimates from previous network expansions. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, on 18th June 2021, agreed to invest £500,000 in the expansion proposal.

- 3.4 Eight stations will be installed in the upcoming phase, which should be completed by 31st March, 2023. Seven stations will follow in the next phase the following year (2023/24).
- 3.5 The following areas were agreed previously by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, with the final locations of each docking station to be agreed through the Area Working Groups:
- North: Yorkgate and Shore Road
 - West: St. Mary's College and Shankill Road
 - South: Lisburn Road and Malone Road
 - East: Castlereagh Road, Upper Newtownards Road.
- 3.6 Options and recommendations for each location will be presented during the meeting, for discussion and agreement by the Working Group.
- 3.7 The options for the Malone Road area are:
- Elms Village
 - Danesfort
- 3.8 The options for the Lisburn Road area are:
- Drumglass Park
 - Lisburn Road (opposite Tesco)
- 3.9 A site expansion matrix was previously agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for future expansion and has been circulated. Although it is not required for determining the final locations in this phase, it has been used to help demonstrate the application of this matrix.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.10 There are no specific financial or resource implications contained within this report.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

- 3.11 None.”

After discussion, the Working Group agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that Drumglass Park and the Elms Village be selected for the next phase of the Belfast Bikes Scheme in South Belfast.

Update on Physical Programme

The Working Group considered the following report:

“1. Introduction

The Council’s Physical Programme covers projects under a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, the Local Investment Fund (LIF), the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Social Outcomes Fund (SOF) and the new Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF); in addition, the programme covers projects that the Council is delivering in behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme.

2. Recommendations

The Working Group is asked to:

- i note the physical programme update for South Belfast, and;
- ii note the project movements for Coffee Culture (BIF46) and Arts and Digital Hub (BIF48) to BIF *Stage 2 - Uncommitted* and the respective funding allocations as part of the Sandy Row Area projects.

3. Local Investment Fund (LIF)

Members are reminded LIF is a £9m fixed programme of capital investment in non-council neighbourhood assets, over two tranches: LIF 1 (2012-2015) - £5m total funding pot, allocated across each AWG areas; and LIF 2 (2015 -2019) - £4m allocation. Each LIF project proposal is taken through a Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. The table below outlines funding spend to date for each tranche, at key stages of the delivery process: 24 projects received ‘In Principle’ letters under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 21 have been completed; 1 project at delivery stage, 1 at pre-construction stage and 1 project still at initial stage. Further details of these are outlined below.

LIF breakdown – South	LIF 1		LIF 2	
<i>Stage/ Description:</i>	<i>No. Projects</i>	<i>Amount (£)</i>	<i>No. Projects</i>	<i>Amount/ (£)</i>
Number of Projects Completed	12 (92%)	£1,053,600	9 (82%)	£676,000
Number of Projects in Delivery			1 (9%)	£80,000

Number of Projects in Pre-construction			1 (9%)	£40,000
Number of Project in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)	1 (8%)	£30,000		
Total Number of Approved Projects	13	£1,083,600	11	£796,000

The table below provides an overview of progress and actions around the remaining live projects – Holylands Area Improvement Initiative (£80,000), Finaghy Bridge (£30,000) and The Lock House (£40,000). Members are asked to note the status of the live LIF projects and the ongoing actions.

LIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
SLIF2-07	Holylands Area Improvement Initiative	£80,000	On ground	Contractor on site at present and will completion at the end of November 22. Pilot of 14 trees (Jerusalem Street, Palestine Street and Carmel Street)	Continue engagement with the contractor, group and partners
SLIF2-13	LORAG- The Lock House	£40,000	Design stage	Partnership project with UV. Letter of Offer received. At detailed design stage and planning application has been submitted. Contractor to start landscaping work in December 2022, with main contractor to start in Feb 2023.	Continued engagement with the group; engagement with UV regarding overall project and spending profile.
SLIF017	Finaghy Bridge	£30,000	Design stage	DfI Roads Highways Team are taking the lead on design and the Council will contribute the LIF funding to DfI.	Continue engagement with DfI Roads.

4. **Belfast Investment Fund (BIF)**

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration partnership projects, with a minimum £250k investment from Council BIF – South Belfast was allocated

£5.5m; with additional £500k ringfenced for new areas (outer South) that had joined the District area under Local Government Reform. In South Belfast, 6 projects received an in-principle funding commitment, thereby fully allocating its £5.5m, and £500k pot of funding. Each project is taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place.

Summary of BIF Allocated Projects

South	Stage 3—Lagan Gateway—£2.1m; Lanyon Tunnels—£1.3m; Bredagh GAC- £700k Stage 1— Coffee Culture, and Arts & Digital Hub (BSCR IT Exam Centre project) and Sandy Row Open Space project [Sandy Row area projects, formerly Gilpins]— £1.35m <i>Stage 1—Belfast Islamic Centre—no commitment</i>
Balmoral DEA	Stage 3 - Knockbreda Parish Church Hall—£250k Stage 2— Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC—£250k

Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/Recommendation
BIF04	Lagan Gateway	£2.1m	On ground	Phase 1 complete and bridge pier murals complete. Design of Phase 2 of the project underway and match funding application made to DfI for Phase 2. Consultation complete and planning in early 2023. Members are receiving a separate update on this project at the AWG.	Continue engagement with the group and key stakeholders.
BIF19	Bredagh GAC	£700,000	Tender stage	Tender process for refurbishment complete and awaiting Tender Award. Due Diligence process is almost complete with access to adjacent land for duration of contract confirmed. Contractor expected to be appointed following DD meeting in mid-December 2022.	Continue engagement with the group.

BIF07	Lanyon Tunnels	£1.3m	Stage 3-Committed	Urban Villages has been approached as potential funder in place of SIF. Ongoing discussions with group, DfC and TEO. Surveys and reports collated and sent to Planning. The business case is under consideration by DfC.	Officer engagement with Executive Office and DfC as key funders, and key stakeholders.
BIF33	Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC	£250,000	Stage 3-Committed	Update as previously reported: Proposal for Phase 1A of larger sports hub project –Belvoir FC's grass football pitch, road access works and resurfacing carpark. Planning consent for wider development in place. Wider masterplan requires funding hence project has stagnated. NIHE have agreed in principle the land disposal and have instructed their solicitor accordingly. The Boys Brigade and Project Promoter are working with officers to fulfil the Due Diligence requirements.	Continue to engage with all stakeholders regarding the wider masterplan. More focussed liaison with Belvoir FC. Project Officers to attend forthcoming steering group with BB/Linfield FC regarding moving Phase 1A forward.
BIF46	Coffee Culture	£286,519	Stage 1-Emerging <i>Part of Sandy Row Area projects</i>	Partnership project with UV. Letter of Offer approved. Funding package via UV, DfC, SOF and BIF. Due Diligence process is now complete for this stage.	Move to Stage 2-Uncommitted. Project progressing to detailed design.

BIF48	Sandy Row Arts and Digital Hub	£584,167	Stage 1- Emerging <i>Part of Sandy Row Area projects</i>	Partnership project with UV. Business Case progressing. In August 2022, SAWG agreed to increase the total funding allocation to £584,167 so that UV Letter of Offer can be released. Due Diligence process is now complete for this stage.	Move to Stage 2- Uncommitted. Project progressing to detailed design.
BIF47	Sandy Row Open Space project	£479,314*	Stage 1- Emerging <i>Part of Sandy Row Area projects</i>	Work is progressing, location being confirmed with an exploration of potential opportunities in terms of final project, urban farm to allotments or a mixed development based on community needs. <i>*The remaining balance of the ringfenced allocation for the Sandy Row Area projects</i>	Continue engagement with the group.

5. Social Outcomes Fund

SOF is £4m ringfenced capital investment programme with a focus on local community tourism projects. 3 projects in South Belfast received an in-principle funding commitment. Similar to LIF and BIF, all projects are subject to Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. Members are asked to note the progress update of each project in the table below.

SOF – South Belfast Projects Overview

Project	Award	Status and update	Action/ Recommendation
SOF04 Belfast South Community Resources (SRCF)	£80,000	On Ground. Development of a Tourism Trail to complement the Transport Hub. Council as acting as delivery agent for the project and will assist in the maintenance of signage as part of the council-wide upkeep of tourism signage.	Continue engagement with the group

		Project on site and should be completed by late November 2022.	
SOF02 Coffee Culture	£100,000	As above at BIF46. Partnership project with UV. Letter of Offer approved. Funding package via UV, DfC, SOF and BIF. Due Diligence process is now complete for this stage.	Continue engagement with the group and key stakeholders.

6. Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund is a £10m capital fund to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long-term difference in their communities. On 7th November 2022, the Working Group considered the feedback on *Stage 1- Applications* in the South Belfast area and made recommendations to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on which applications they wish to move forward to *Stage 2 – Development Stage*. In line with the agreed process, the outcome of special AWGs has been taken through the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and are now subject to Council ratification on 1st December.

7. Capital Programme

The Capital Programme is a rolling programme to either enhance existing Council assets or build / buy new assets or facilities. Table below provides an update on current live projects South Belfast area. Members are asked to note status and update.

South Belfast – Capital Programme Overview

Project	Status and Update
Alleygating Phase 5 – City wide	<i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> Approved at SP&R Committee on Sept 2022 with the list of alleygates to be taken forward.
Palm House, Botanic Gardens	<i>Stage 1 – Emerging.</i> Link to Tropical Ravine
Belfast Bikes Expansion	Further expansion – there is a separate report being presented to Members at this AWG on Belfast Bikes proposed locations.

8. Externally Funded Programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for several government department on key capital investment programmes, namely Social Investment Fund (SIF) and Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office as well as a number of schemes with DfC and

DfI. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to South Belfast.

Urban Villages Initiative

Table below is the status update on UV projects in South Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined South Belfast geography (Sandy Row; Donegall Pass and Markets).

UV – South Belfast Projects Overview

Project	Status and update
Coffee Culture <i>SOF and BIF</i>	As above at BIF46. Partnership project with UV. Letter of Offer approved. Funding package via UV, DfC, SOF and BIF. Due Diligence process is now complete for this stage.
The Lockhouse— Gateway to the River / Walkway	As above at SLIF2-13. Partnership project with UV. Letter of Offer approved. At design stage and planning application has been submitted. Contractor will start landscaping work in November 2022.
Sandy Row Arts and Digital Hub <i>BIF (formerly IT Exam Centre)</i>	Partnership project with UV. Business Case progressing. In August 2022, SAWG agreed to increase the total funding allocation to £584,167 so that UV Letter of Offer can be released. Due Diligence process is now complete for this stage.
Accidental Theatre (Shaftesbury Square)	Business Case at preliminary stage and progressing.

DfC Funded Projects

Below is the status update on project funded by Department for Communities in South Belfast.

DfC – South Belfast Projects Overview

Project	Status and update
Belfast Islamic Centre – Renovations of Aldersgate House, University Rd	The Council is the delivery agent for this project. Working in conjunction with BIC and DfC the project has commenced on site as of the 15 August 2022.
Holylands Alleygating and Cleansing Project	Project progressing. Link to the citywide Alleygating Phase 5 project.
Strangford Playing Fields	Feasibility study completed. Potential funding sources are being explored with discussions ongoing with DfC. Officers have submitted an application to DfC Access and Inclusion Fund.

DfI Funded Projects

Below is the status update on project funded by Department for Infrastructure in South Belfast.

DfI – South Belfast Projects Overview

Project	Status and update
Lagan Gateway	As above as BIF04. Underway.
Finaghy Bridge	As above at SLIF017. Design stage.
Covered cycle stands Phase 1	<i>Via Revitalisation Programme (DfC, DfI)</i> Belvoir Activity Centre and Mary Peters Track – installed. Project completed.
Covered cycle stands Phase 2	<i>Via DfI Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i> Botanic Gardens, Ormeau Park - Currently in production and due for installation by May 2023. Potential additional locations: Cherryvale Park, Shaftesbury Centre, Musgrave Park.
Expansion of Belfast Bikes Network	<i>Via Revitalisation Programme (DfC, DfI)</i> The new station at Olympia in South has been installed. Further stations are also under development via the Council funded scheme."

During discussion, the Chairperson drew the Working Group's attention to the Linfield FC/Boys' Brigade/Belvoir FC project (BIF33) referred to within the report and pointed out that the £250k of BIF funding had been allocated for the provision of a grass pitch for Belvoir Football Club, as part of a wider masterplan involving the three partner organisations.

She referred to the significant delay in commencing the wider project and confirmed that Belvoir Football Club had informed Linfield Football Club and the Boys' Brigade that it now wished to decouple the grass pitch project from the wider project and move forward with this separately and was requesting the Council to approve the proposal.

After discussion, the Working Group agreed that a report be presented to a special meeting in January addressing the request in greater detail.

Update on Lagan Gateway Scheme - Phase 2

The Project Manager provided the Working Group with an update on Phase 2 of the Lagan Gateway Scheme, which would create a shared walking/cycling greenway connection between Phase 1 and Belvoir Park Forest.

He provided a brief overview of the environmental improvement works which would be required and confirmed that a recent public consultation had provided an opportunity for comments to be made in advance of the submission of the planning application for Phase 2 of the project. The vast majority of respondents were in support

of a proposed greenway and the following potential amendments would be inputted into the final design, in response to concerns which had been raised by the public and other stakeholders:

- felled trees would be replaced, where appropriate, to ensure that the character of the site was retained;
- the final design would consider the arrangement of routes and widths, with all surface materials to be considered throughout the design process and natural materials being preferable to retain the natural character of the site;
- picnic and public spaces would be considered as part of the revised scheme;
- where appropriate, gates would be removed to improve access for all;
- additional bins would be located along the route;
- the need for interpretive panels would be considered in the development of a signage strategy, as part of the next stage of detailed design; and
- cycle stands would be considered at either end of the route but not along the route itself.

He added that, where comments had not led to changes in the proposed development, mitigation measures had, where required, been identified to reduce the potential impact of the proposed development.

In terms of next steps:

- the project board responsible for delivering the scheme would be updated on discussions arising at this meeting;
- the outcomes from the consultation would be published on the Council's 'You Said, We Did' consultation hub;
- a request would be presented to the Planning Service for a further Pre-Application Discussion, now that the consultation had taken place, in line with the Planners' suggestion;
- the Project Team would prepare for the Planning process; and
- Site Investigation work would be carried out in January/February 2023 to inform the design process.

Finally, the Project Manager pointed out that an application had been made to the DfI Green and Blue Infrastructure Fund for additional support for this project. This potential funding would be a key requirement for the design process and if, confirmed, would have a timeline for specific expenditure by the end of March, 2023.

In response to points which had been raised by Members around the need for sensory provision in picnic and play areas, for wheelchair and other accessibility, for effective communication/information and for facilities to be in keeping with their natural surroundings, he confirmed that those were being addressed within the design process. He also provided details of the forthcoming site investigation works and on the enhancement of some elements of Phase 1 of the project.

The Working Group noted the information which had been provided and agreed that the provision of a Belfast Bikes docking station be given priority within the overall Phase 2 project plan, subject to budget.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Update on Physical Programme - Forth Meadow Community Greenway Public Art Sculpture Plaque
Date:	16th December, 2022
Reporting Officer:	Sinead Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes
Contact Officer:	Shauna Murtagh, Programme 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"/>
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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The Council's Physical Programme currently includes 170 capital projects with investment of £150m+ via a range of internal and external funding streams, together with projects which the Council delivers on behalf of external agencies. The Council's Capital Programme forms part of the Physical Programme and is a rolling programme of investment which either improves existing Council facilities or provides new facilities. One of the projects currently underway is Forth Meadow Community Greenway, a Peace IV funded project. In addition to the 12km of greenway, there are a number of pieces of public art, one main art piece and five smaller floor art pieces. The Committee is asked to give consideration to the installation of a plaque to accompany the main art piece 'Carry Each Other' which will be located at the roundabout at the entrance to the Innovation Factory.

2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Installation of Plaque ‘Carry Each Other’ Sculpture – note the update on the wording for the plaque to accompany the ‘Carry Each Other’ sculpture, as part of the Forth Meadow Community Greenway and note that the proposal is for the wording on the plaque to be in both English and Irish.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>The Committee will be aware that Forth Meadow Community Greenway is an ambitious and transformational Peace IV funded scheme. It will see the development of a new 12km urban greenway in West Belfast with work underway.</p> <p>Section 1 – Glencairn, works complete with the exception of the signage package</p> <p>Section 2 – Springvale Park works underway due for completion May 2023</p> <p>Section 3 – Falls Parks, works complete with the exception of the signage package</p> <p>Section 4 – Bog Meadows, works complete with the exception of the signage package</p> <p>Section 5 – Westlink to Transport Hub, planning application submitted for the erection of signage and directional markers along the route.</p>
3.2	<p>In addition to the greenway, the scheme also includes a number of pieces of public art. These include five pieces of floor art, located in each section of the greenway. The Chair of the Shared City Partnership and some local school children recently unveiled the floor art piece in Glencairn Park (see Appendix 1). The main art piece entitled ‘Carry Each Other’ will be located to the left of the roundabout at the entrance to the Innovation Factory (see Appendix 2). The artist Sara Cunningham-Bell’s piece is a 7-metre-high figure carrying a child (see Appendix 3). As part of the commission, there were numerous public engagement events which included draw, walk, share sessions with local Councillors, the volunteer walking and cycling groups involved in the greenway and many local schools. The drawings prepared by these groups have been incorporated into the floor art pieces and to the child’s jacket. The main sculpture will be installed early 2023 therefore the plaque must be designed, ordered, manufactured and installed to accompany the piece and give some context to the piece.</p>
3.3	<p>The Committee is asked to note that a request has been received from Conradh na Gaelige for full provision of bilingual signage, including direction signage, health and safety signage, panels and information boards, and all other markers, signs along the route of the greenway. Officers are currently reviewing this request in line with conditions contained within the Letter of Offer and the brand identity guidelines – Forth Meadow Community Greenway – on common ground.</p>

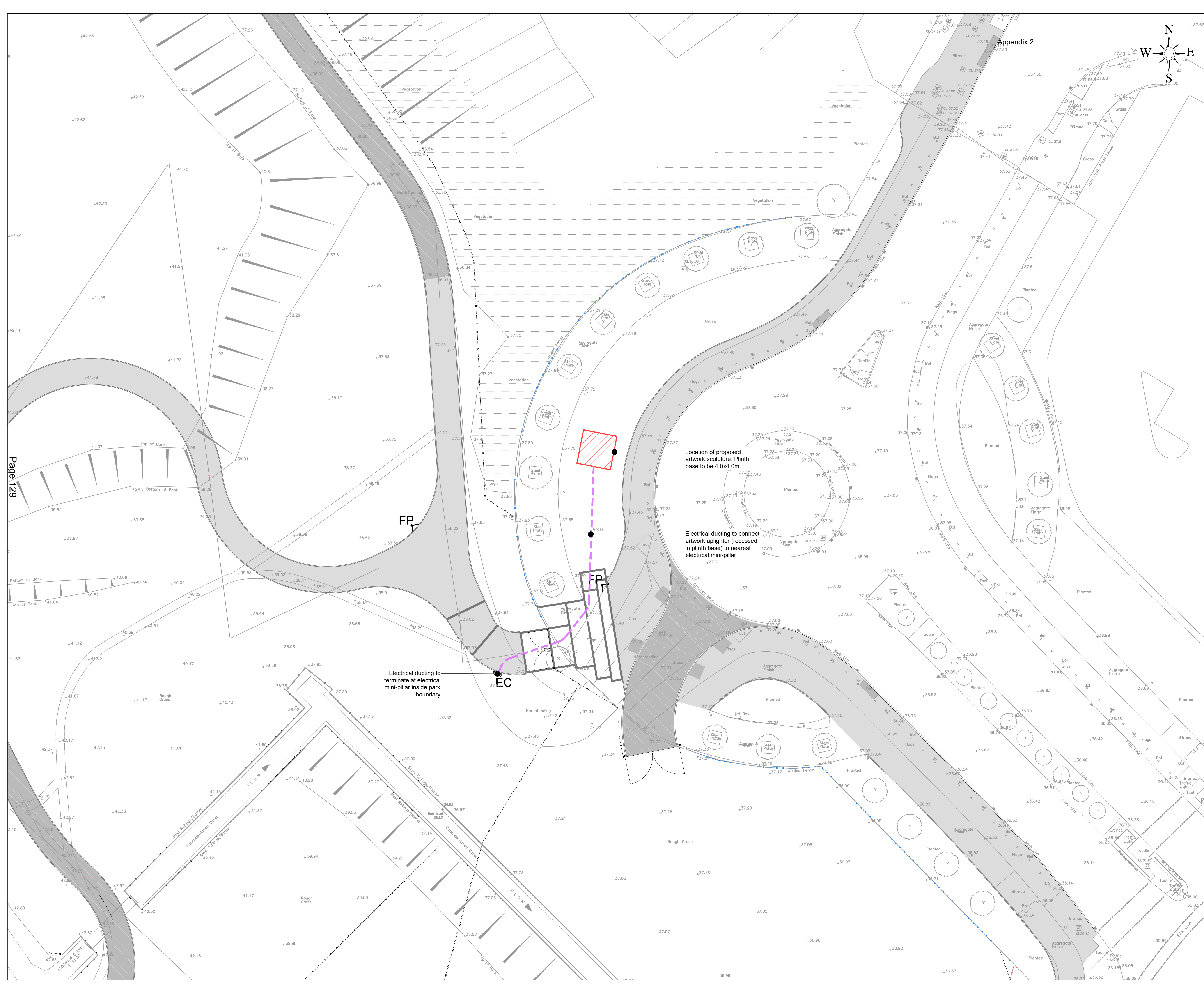
	An update on this will be brought to a future meeting of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. In the interim and to ensure that the sculpture can be installed early in 2023. The Committee is asked to note that the wording on the plaque to accompany the sculpture is proposed to be in English and Irish.
	<u>Financial and Resources Implications</u>
3.4	<p><i>Financial</i> – Funding has been received from SEUPB Peace IV Programme for construction of Forth Meadow Community Greenway and the associated art pieces.</p> <p><i>Resources</i> – Officer time to deliver as required</p>
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u>
3.5	All capital projects are screened as part of the stage approval process.
4.0	<u>Documents Attached</u>
	<p>Appendix 1 – Floor art piece in Glencairn Park</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Location of ‘Carry Each Other’ Sculpture</p> <p>Appendix 3 – ‘Carry Each Other’ Sculpture</p> <p>Appendix 4 – Plaque to accompany sculpture</p>

This page is intentionally left blank

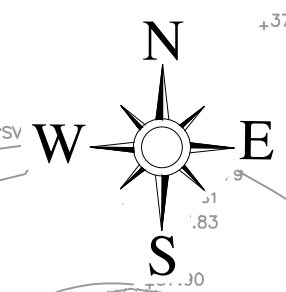
Glencairn Park Floor Art





This page is intentionally left blank



Appendix 2



- LEGEND**
-  Plan location of proposed artwork sculpture
 -  Proposed electrical ducting to supply recessed uplighter in artwork plinth

Rev	Date	Description	Dm	Ckd	App
Funder					
<div><div>Peace</div><div>Northern Ireland - Ireland</div><div>European Regional Development Fund</div><div>The Shared Spaces Reconnecting Open Spaces project has been supported by the European Union's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)</div></div>					
<div><div></div><div>Shared Spaces & Services</div></div>					
Project Manager/ Civil Engineers			McAdam Design Ltd 1c Montgomery House 478 Castlereagh Road Belfast, BT15 6BQ T 028 9040 2000 F 028 9079 4144 admin@mcadamdesign.co.uk www.mcadamdesign.co.uk		
<div><div>McADAM</div><div>DESIGN</div></div>			<div>Electrical Engineer</div> <div><div>BELGRAVIA</div><div>Engineering Consultancy Ltd.</div></div>		
Landscape Architect					
<div><div>G&M</div><div>DESIGN</div><div>ASSOCIATES</div></div>					
Drawn	DSA	Checked	KOS	Approved	NK
Date	28.11.22	Date	28.11.22	Date	28.11.22
Client					
BELFAST CITY COUNCIL					
Project					
SHARED SPACES RECONNECTING OPEN SPACES PROJECT					
Drawing					
WP2 - ARTWORK SCULPTURE AT INVEST NI LOCATION PLAN					
Scale					
1:200 @ A1					
Project No		Drawing No		Revision	
E2103		02-143		-	
All dimensions are in millimetres. Figured dimensions to be taken in preference to scaled dimensions. Dimensions to be checked on site. © 2018 McAdam Design Ltd					
CONSTRUCTION					

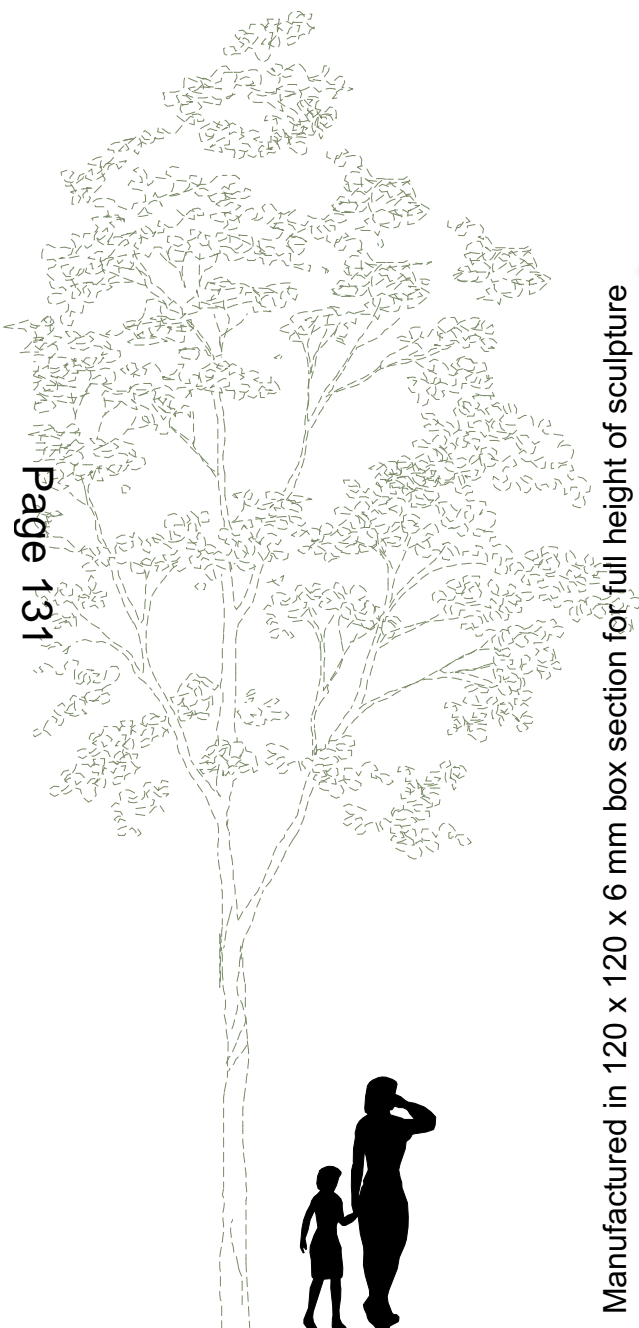
This page is intentionally left blank

Scale of Proposal - Context

Appendix 3



bellarchitects
CREATIVE DESIGN : SUSTAINABLE APPROACH



Page 131

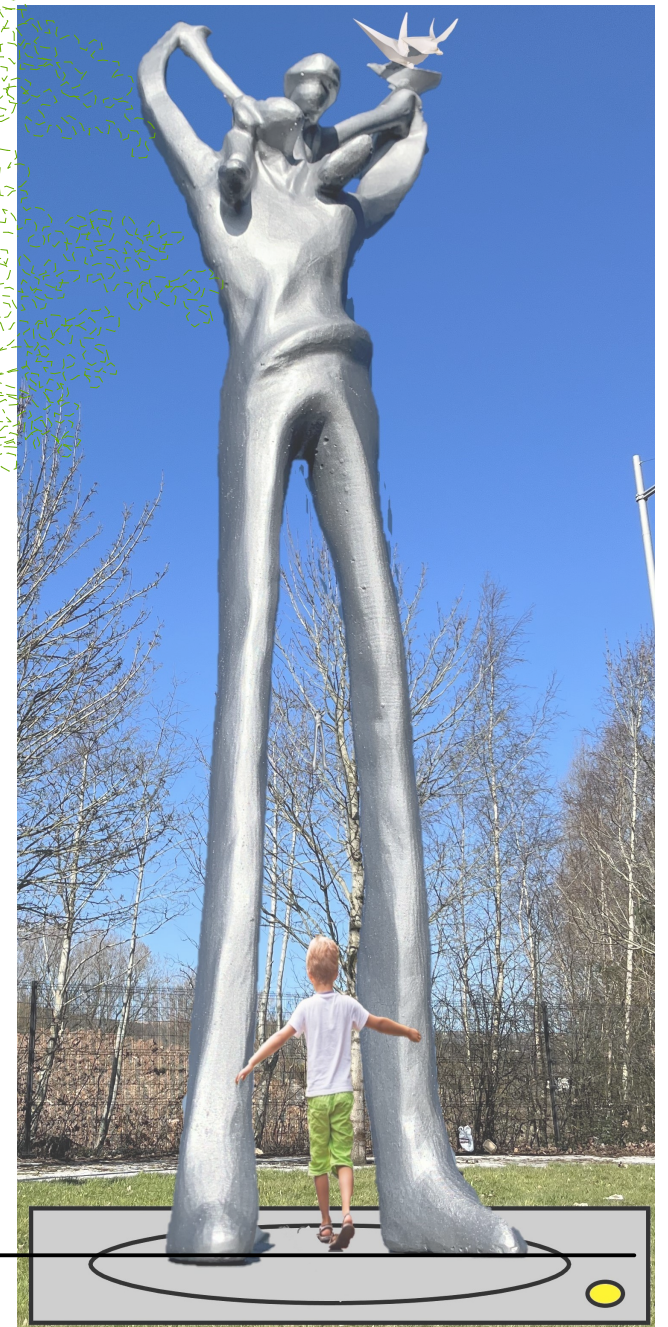
Manufactured in 120 x 120 x 6 mm box section for full height of sculpture



7000



Walk under - like a bridge



Proposed Sculpture
Approx. Scale 1:50

LANDMARK
SCULPTURE
09

M22 SCB Belfast

© COPYRIGHT Bell Architects Ltd 2022 www.bell-architects.com

for Belfast City Council.
at Peace IV, Forth Meadow
Community Greenway, Belfast.

T 028 2766 6406

E office@bell-architects.com

bell
architects
65-67 Main Street
Ballymoney
BT53 6AN

This page is intentionally left blank

Include FMCG logo

Carry Each Other *in Dialogue*

Sculptor: Sara Cunningham-Bell

This sculpture was created as part of the EU-funded Forth Meadow Community Greenway project.

belfastcity.gov.uk/forthmeadow Add QR code

Include all logos below plus the EU funding statement:



Belfast
City Council



Riailas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Department for
Communities
An Roinn
Pobal
Department for
Communities
www.communities.gov.uk



Department for
Infrastructure
An Roinn
Bonneagair
www.infrastructure.gov.uk

This project is supported by the European Union's PEACE IV Programme, managed by the Special EU Programmes Body.

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Minutes of the Meeting of the Shared City Partnership
Date:	16th December, 2022
Reporting Officer:	David Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	David Robinson, Leish Dolan; Good Relations Unit and Debbie McKinney, PEACE IV

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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To update the Committee on the key issues discussed at the Shared City Partnership meeting held on 5th December and seek approval of the minutes.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is requested to note the contents of this report and approve the minutes of the meeting of 5th December, including the following recommendations:
	<u>PEACE IV</u>
2.2	Secretariat The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report.

2.3	<p>CYP3: On the Right Track (OTRT)</p> <p>The Partnership noted the contents of the report and related appendices and recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the position of this contract remained at risk and all measures were being pursued to address the under delivery and current status of project; <p>CYP 5 NIHE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Note the revised budgets indicating delivery to February 2023 and as noted to extend the Finance Officer and Programme Manager roles and the salary increase to March 2023.
2.4	<p>BPR Theme</p> <p>The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report and related appendices and agree in principle:</p> <p>BPR 1 – NIHE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The request for Finance Officer and Programme Manager roles to be extended to early March 2023 to ensure all documentation could be submitted and verified to allow achievement of a successful closure process within the timeframe of the Council’s Letter of Offer; - To note the decision from the delivery partner not to continue with the East Belfast Network for the reasons outlined in the report; <p>BPR 3 - Local Action Plan Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To note that all projects were completed in November; - To note the two remaining study visits that sit with Council to deliver would not be achieved; <p>BPR 5 - LINCS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To note that the project would complete at the end of November with a small, localised event planned to capture completion of the leadership programme and overall completion of the project;

2.5	<p>BPR 5 - Traveller</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To note that the final event was cancelled due to low commitment to attend. The proposed approach would be to showcase the collective exhibition artworks in the new year at a central location; <p>BPR6 St. Comgall's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To agree that the extension agreed in November by the Members to 31st January 2023 to allow for changes to materials to be implemented, to be instead processed through to 28th February 2023 for prudence, this was within the original contract terms (a contract renewal); <p>BPR Cinematography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To agree an extension to 28th February for Cinematography. This was to allow all filming to be captured for projects that had been extended (SSS, NIHE projects). <p>It was also agreed the Peace IV Programme Officer would liaise with NIHE in respect of a specific BPR programme date.</p> <p>SSS Theme</p> <p>The Partnership noted the contents of the report and related appendices and recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narratives/Interpretative Panel – Mediation NI - Note that the contact hours achievement level was to be discussed and agreed with SEUPB; • Youth Civic Education – Youth Link NI - Note an extension of the Youth Civic Education project to 28 February 2023; - Note the additional / alternative activity for schools (Crumlin Rd Gaol) and day trips - Agree a possible contract uplift of no more than 10% (£16,000) subject to the submission of a budget breakdown and availability of support within the SSS programme budget; - Note that delegated authority had been given to the CYP Chair and BPR Chair to agree the finalised contract uplift, subject to the above confirmation.
-----	--

2.6	<p><u>GOOD RELATIONS</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good Relations Audit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed to feed back any comments on the draft Audit to Peter Osborne by 14th December 2022; • Agreed that a finalised Audit and draft 2023/24 Good Relations Action Plan be submitted to Members at its January meeting, prior to submission to The Executive Office. 2. Recommended that funding be awarded under the BCC7 Interfaces Programme within the Council's Good Relations Action Plan as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower Oldpark Community Association; £4,927 towards their NOW (Neighbours Over the Wall) programme; • Limestone United Football Club: £1,000 towards a youth engagement programme
2.7	<p><u>PEACEPLUS</u></p> <p>That Members of the Partnership noted the contents of the report, provided feedback and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreed that Stage 1 facilitated engagement process closed as outlined in the report; - Provided feedback on the process for finalising the Stage 1 report; - Agreed to the general process for commencing Stage 2 for developing the local action plan.
3.0	<p>Main Report</p>
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Shared City Partnership is a Working Group of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee which consists of Elected members and representatives from various sectors across the city. The minutes from the Partnership are brought before the Committee for approval on a monthly basis.</p>
3.2	<p>The key issues on the agenda at the November meeting were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Good Relations Audit • PEACE IV -Update on Secretariat • PEACEV IV - Update on CYP Theme • PEACE IV Update on BPR Theme

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PEACE IV - Update on SSS Theme • Good Relations Action Plan Funding allocations for Interfaces Programme (BCC7) • Update on PEACE PLUS – Local Community Peace Action Plan <p>More details regarding the above issues and recommendations are included in the attached minutes of the meeting.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>All financial implications are covered through existing budgets</p>
3.4	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The recommendations of the Partnership promote the work of the Council in promoting good relations and will enhance equality and good relations impacts.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	Minutes of the meeting of 5 th December

This page is intentionally left blank

SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

Monday 5th December, 2022

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Kyle (Chairperson);
Councillors Hutchinson, Lyons, McCullough and O'Hara.

External Members: Mr. J. Donnelly, Community and Voluntary Sector,
Ms. A. Roberts, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Mr. I. McLaughlin, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Ms. B. Arthurs, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Mr. W. Naeem, Faith Sector;
Mr. A. Irvine, Faith Sector;
Mr. M. McBride, Education Authority;
Mr. S. Hamilton, Belfast Chamber of Commerce;
Ms. A. M. White, British Red Cross; and
Mr. A. Hannaway, NIHE.

In attendance: Ms. D. McKinney, PEACE IV Programme Manager;
Mr. D. Robinson, Good Relations Officer;
Ms. N. Lane, Neighbourhood Services Manager;
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer;

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf Councillor Carson, Ms. A. Tohill, Superintendent Ford and Mr. P. Anderson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 7th November, 2022 were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

Mr. J. Donnelly declared an interest in 2b Children and Young People Update. He also advised that his daughter had been co-opted as an Elected Member of Belfast City Council on 1st December 2022.

Ms. B. Arthurs declared an interest in item 3(a) Good Relations Updates – Funding Requests Update Paper at 3.3 and 3.7.

Presentation on Update on Good Relations Audit

The Chairperson advised that, due to a bereavement, Mr P. Osborne of Rubicon Consulting was unable to attend the meeting. In his absence, the Good Relations Officer provided the Shared City Partnership with an update on the work being undertaken on the Good Relations Audit.

The Members were reminded that every three years, as part of its Letter of Offer from the Executive Office for its Good Relations Programme, the Council must undertake an independent audit of the Good Relations issues and needs within the City. Provision for the audit was included in the 2022/23 Good Relations Action Plan, as agreed by the Members in February this year. Following a procurement process, Mr. P. Osborne of Rubicon Consulting was awarded the contract to develop the Audit and associated Good Relations Action Plans.

The Good Relations Officer presented the key activities which had been undertaken to date as outlined in the draft audit report for the Partnership's consideration:

- Carried out a community survey with c.75 responses to date;
- Carried out a survey of all staff at Belfast City Council with c.85 responses to date;
- Facilitated an Elected Member survey with 13 replies to date;
- Conducted approximately ten interviews;
- Facilitated focus groups with over 40 participants;
- Engaged directly with elected representatives from three political parties to date;
- Engaged with senior managers from the Council's City and Neighbourhood Services Department as well as all Council senior directors.

The Good Relations Officer further presented the key issues identified to date both internally within the Council and externally within the City. He brought the Members' attention to other insights contained within the report which the research had uncovered, that is, sectarianism and racism were still a significant issue. Discussion ensued around these issues as well as homophobic attacks, and matters relating to environmental and community engagement. A Member asked what needed to be done to deal with sectarianism, what wasn't being done and stated that systemic change was also needed at agency and Government level. A Member added that the Good Relations focus should be interconnected, for example, sectarianism and racism should not be seen as separate issues. Another Member posed the question, could change be achieved at a community level given the 'them and us' political situation. The matter of the sustainability of communities was discussed and how this could be linked to mainstream funding. A Member provided his frontline experience of how young people in disadvantaged areas were particularly affected by the matters discussed and added that sectarianism was a system of inequality and disadvantage.

The Good Relations Officer asked the Members to consider the contents of the Audit and feed back any comments to both himself and Mr. P. Osborne by 14th December, for inclusion in a final report to be submitted to the January meeting of the Partnership. The Chairperson encouraged the Members to feed back due to the importance of the piece of work.

The Members noted the contents of this report and:

1. Agreed to feed back any comments on the draft Audit to Peter Osborne by 14th December 2022;
2. Agreed that a finalised Audit and draft 2023/24 Good Relations Action Plan be submitted to Members at its January meeting, prior to submission to The Executive Office.

Peace IV Updates

Peace IV - Update on Secretariat

The Peace IV Programme Manager provided the Members with an update in respect of the Secretariat activity associated with the implementation of the Peace IV Local Action Plan.

The Peace IV Programme Manager advised that project activity was progressing as outlined in the thematic reports, and mitigations and project extensions continued to be progressed as required to enable implementation of the programme.

She advised the Members that final clarifications were being sought which would enable CYP2 and BPR4 project closures to be completed. On the spot verifications for CYP3 and CYP4 had been arranged for December. Giga's final report for CYP1 had also been submitted by the delivery partner and was currently being reviewed. Issues relating to the CYP3 OTRT Sports project continued to be addressed by the Programme Manager and Leisure Manager.

The Members were requested to note that the NIHE revised budgets, discussed in November's meeting, had been submitted by SEUPB to their Steering Group for consideration. This would allow SEUPB to enable changes on the eMS system for the issue of revised Letters of Offer. The Members also noted that further mitigations for the Traveller, Roma and SSS Narratives project had been considered by the Programme Board and modifications would be progressed formally with SEUPB.

The Programme Manager reported that a review of workplan deliverables was progressing to identify gaps and future activity would be coordinated by the PEACE IV team.

An event was being held on 7th December at Girdwood Community Hub, with researcher Paul Nolan, to discuss his recent work with NISRA on the 2021 Census findings. It would provide an opportunity for those who are involved in peace work to look at the findings in more detail and discuss their implications.

The Members heard how resource pressures across the PEACE IV team continued. The Council was now providing additional support on claim submissions. The Members noted that the risks associated with resource pressures had been noted on the PEACE IV risk register and had been escalated to senior management. Options to address the staffing issues were currently being explored.

As previously reported, following written confirmation of the extended delivery timeframe, staff contracts had now been extended to March or June 2023 in line with delivery timeframes. The PEACE IV team was progressing key priorities, including project modifications, project closures, updating of monitoring and evaluation.

The Programme Manager reported that expenditure across the programme totalled £7.87m, with a reimbursement of £6.2m to date. Preparation of the Period 32 claim was currently progressing, the value of which was estimated at £855k. The Council's resource pressures were causing some delay in responding to SEUPB requests to progress claims reimbursement. The Members noted that discussions had taken place with SEUPB on prioritising the reimbursement of outstanding NIHE claims given the delivery partner's backlog of claims.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report.

Peace IV - Update on CYP Theme

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

To provide the Shared City Partnership (SCP) with a progress report in respect of the Children and Young People’s (CYP) theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.

2.0 Recommendations

The Partnership is requested to note the contents of the report and related appendices and recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to

CYP 3 On the Right Track (OTRT)

- Note the position of this contract remains at risk and all measures are being pursued to address the under delivery and current status of project.

CYP 5 NIHE

- Note the revised budgets indicating delivery to February 2023 and as noted to extend the finance officer and programme manager roles and the salary increase to March 2023.

3.0 Main report

Project Updates

3.1 CYP 1-TECH CONNECTS, GIGA Training (Afterschool’s and Digital Arts Academies’ Camps)

(6-11, 12-16 yr. olds)

Members are advised this project is moving to completion. The delivery agent has submitted the final report, which is currently being reviewed. The M&E evidence shows the figures having completed as below. An onsite visit is to be scheduled to verify retention of records etc and close the contract with final payment.

Delivery Agent	Sessions	Target	Completed	Variance
GIGA Training	6-11-Year-Olds	494	484	-10
GIGA Training	12-16-Year-Olds	365	360	- 5
Previous Delivery agent	Tech Connects 2018/2019	133	133	0
	Total	992	977	-15

98.5% complete against target.

3.2 CYP 1 – TECH CONNECTS, Belfast Metropolitan College (Digital Insights Programme)

(17-24 yr. olds)

In line with the approval to extend to 31 January 2023, a contract addendum has been prepared and forwarded for signing to Belfast Metropolitan College.

As outlined in previous highlight reports, the scheduled intakes were impacted by last minute cancellations, participants no longer being available, and by staff absences due to illness. However, delivery is ongoing for November/ December with new cohorts and efforts continuing around recruitment.

The November Programme Board, noted the anticipated completion level of 104 participants, 6 less than the previously approved and amended target of 110. Discussions are to be progressed with SEUPB, on the acceptance of this level of achievement given the approved reduction as presented in the Business case was from 160 to 110.

Total	104 from a target of 160	56 remaining against original target of 160
	104 from a target of 110	6 remaining against target of 110

3.3 CYP 2 – Playing our Part in the City

An On-the-Spot Verification/Site Visit took place during October and a report issued to the project for further clarification. On receipt of the final clarification, the final payment will be released.

Total	610 young people from a target of 640	Progressing to Closure
	123 Parents from a target of 100	

3.4 CYP3 – On the Right Track – Sports and Personal Change elements

There is currently no live programming for OTRT. The last partnership completed delivery on the 11th November with 42 participants completing the 26 required hours. Recruitment of further clubs / participants is temporarily on hold as there is no Project Officer in post.

Officers have met with the delivery partner to discuss the current position and ascertain next steps. A full review of monitoring data and report on status has been provided for review. The report highlights the position as presented in this table. It is anticipated

that an update will be presented to Members at the December meeting.

There are currently 811 registered participants with 547 completing the required 26hours.

Hours Status	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total Participants
Completed OCN & Hours	210	51	40	136	437
Incomplete OCN	111	77	25	51	264
VRQ & Sports Leaders COMPLETED	29	57	24		110
	<u>350</u>	<u>185</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>1787</u>	<u>811</u>

Total	547 completed from a target of 1260	713 remaining to achieve target figure of 1260 264 registered but have not achieved hrs of engagement
-------	-------------------------------------	--

Personal Change – Delivered by Extern

As previously reported, the final report and additional supporting information and evidence has been submitted. An On-the-Spot Verification Site Visit is being progressed.

Total	42 from a target of 42	0 remaining – Progressing to Closure
-------	------------------------	--------------------------------------

3.5 CYP 4 – Cooperation Ireland (Young Advocates)

As previously reported, a final signed closure report together with supporting evidence has now been submitted. Officers are reviewing all information and an On-the-Spot Verification Site Visit is to be arranged.

Total	87 from a target of 80	+ 7 achieved – Progressing to closure
-------	------------------------	---------------------------------------

3.6 CYP 5 – NIHE Local Area Network Partner Delivery

NIHE's request for extension has been approved in principle which will allow delivery to February 2023. A revised implementation plan has been requested.

The revised budget has been submitted with some minor queries raised and NIHE are progressing returns.

The additional request for retention of finance officer and programme manager to March 2023 has been requested. However, this may have implications on the current Peace IV Letter of offers

which also complete in March 2023. NIHE have been advised of this position with the potential to complete early March.

Consideration must be given to the potential of delayed paperwork and time allotted for the Peace IV team to collate and submit paperwork for this and other project closures.

Total	352 from a target of 304 120 Core Participants 232 Peer Participants	+ 48 over target
--------------	---	-------------------------

3.7 Financial and Resource Implications

The financial position is as previously reported, with claims up to Period 31, valued at £1.92m submitted to SEUPB for reimbursement and expected claim for Period 32 at £83k for BCC, £17k for NIHE and total £100k. To date £1.665m has been reimbursed.

3.8 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

The draft plan has been equality screened and discussed at the Equality Consultative Forum on 13 May 2015. The Equality Consultative Forum was further consulted on 18 November 2020”.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and related appendices and recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to:

CYP 3 On the Right Track (OTRT)

- Note the position of this contract remained at risk and all measures were being pursued to address the under delivery and current status of project;

CYP 5 NIHE

- Note the revised budgets indicating delivery to February 2023 and as noted to extend the Finance Officer and Programme Manager roles and the salary increase to March 2023.

Update on BPR Theme

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

To provide the Shared City Partnership (SCP) with a progress report in respect of the Building Positive Relations (BPR) theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1

The Partnership is requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that they note the

contents of the report and related appendices and agree in principle:

BPR 1 - NIHE

- The request for finance officer and programme manager roles to be extended to early March 2023 to ensure all documentation can be submitted and verified to allow achievement of a successful closure process within the timeframe of the Council's Letter of Offer.
- To note the decision from the delivery partner not to continue with the East Belfast Network for the reasons outlined in the report.

BPR 3 - Local Action Plan Projects

- To note that all projects were completed in November
- To note the two remaining study visits that sit with council to deliver will not be achieved.

BPR 5 - LINC'S

- To note that the project will complete at the end of November with a small, localised event planned to capture completion of the leadership programme and overall completion of the project.

BPR 5 - Traveller

- To note that the final event was cancelled due to low commitment to attend. The proposed approach will be to showcase the collective exhibition artworks in the new year at a central location.

BPR6 - St Comgall's

- To agree that the extension agreed in November by members to 31 January 2023 to allow for changes to materials to be implemented, to be instead processed through to 28 February 2023 for prudence, this is within the original contract terms (a contract renewal)

BPR Cinematography

- To agree an extension to 28 February for Cinematography. This is to allow all filming to be captured for projects that have been extended (SSS, NIHE projects).

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

The status and progress with projects are outlined in Appendix I BPR-RAG report.

Projects are at various stages of delivery; some projects are completing, whilst activity is continuing with other projects.

3.1 BPR1 – Cross Community Area Networks (CCAN)

Participation levels remain consistent with 129/144 core participants and over 400/485 peer participants all pending verification.

Members are asked to refer to recommendations and agree the additional request to extend the finance officer and programme manager roles to March 2023. Budgets have been submitted to reflect this request. There is a likelihood of crossover with the Peace IV Programme Letters of Offer and therefore, delivery to the end of March 2023 will impact the time allotted to NIHE. Council's current Letter of Offer with SEUPB is only extended until 31 March 2023. Therefore, Members are asked to agree an early March completion date to be agreed with the Programme Manager and Neighbourhood Services Manager. This will ensure all documentation can be submitted and verified to allow achievement of a successful closure process.

Members will be aware of the request to progress with Quantity surveyors for the place shaping concepts. NIHE have advised they are speaking with Carlin, the agreed consultants on how engagement with the local communities to date has been achieved and recorded.

Members will be aware of the recent challenges with the East Belfast Network. NIHE were asked to consider the rationale to support the approach and continuation of the single identity group. The delivery partner has advised that this group is no longer viable as it cannot achieve the objectives of the cross-community project.

3.2 BPR2 – Creative Communities Project

The current projected position indicates 110 participants should complete by December 2022 from a reduced target figure of 144.

The review of all data, monitoring and registrations indicates current participant numbers as 156 registered. However, to date only 73 have completed 42 hours engagement.

Members to note the Culture Unit has agreed to continue the PSO post to March 2023. Therefore, delivery could continue to February 2023 dependent on agreements from existing artists and interest to continue engagement is gained from participants.

Current indications are that both the Ardoyne Woodvale and Divis Lower Shankill groups wish to complete by December 2022, with only a small number anticipated to complete the required 42hrs.

Options to address this shortfall are to explore an additional cohort which could see the final 144 target achieved. The project support officer is progressing options for a new cohort pursuing options with Shankill Women's Centre, Short Strand Community Centre and TWN- Training for Women Network.

McCadden has produced initial draft for the East cohort booklet, the publication is in a vibrant and appealing format, showcasing the sessions and works completed by this cohort. Once finalised an example will be included in papers for information. McCadden continue to work with steering group leads and artists to progress the other booklets.

3.3 BPR3 – Transform for Change Project

Transformative Leadership Programme

The local projects developed through the Action Plans completed throughout November with one final piece due to complete early December. In total, in excess of 1380 people attended or participated in these local projects.

The Black gates project will complete in December, the community event and a subsequent workshop session have helped to shape the final proposed art. All parties in Suffolk community centre, Stewartstown Road Regeneration project and Kidstogether have reviewed and agreed the final works.

A further consultation was carried out by the community engagement officer appointed to Suffolk community centre with the feedback submitted as positive.

The artist is finalising the actual works on the gates and an unveiling event is scheduled for early December. (Appendix 2, Black gates images.)

The West Garden of Reflection and the Ulster University Gaming app are the two projects that availed of additional funds to launch their projects to the communities. Each project received up to a maximum of £1500 each to utilise for unveiling their completed works to the communities. It is

anticipated up to 100 people will attend across both projects.

Processing of payments and procurement related to the local action plan projects remains an extensive piece of work and is envisaged to continue into the new year. The Thematic Project Manager continues to progress these areas to ensure final closure of all council related elements of the local action plan projects.

The two remaining study visits assigned to council for delivery will not be achieved. This is in part due to resource pressures and in large a lack of participant's interest. Scoping indicated less than 10 people were available for these events. The target is 20 participants per visit therefore it is not considered financially viable to progress.

The thematic manager is finalising all elements of closure and an on-the-spot visit is scheduled early December with the delivery partner. The Project Manager is finalising the review of documentation for closure of the Transform for Change project.

S3 solutions (Transform for Change evaluators) have met with the Thematic Manager, completed a summary, and clarified the final position of all objectives both for partner delivery and internal delivery. The Thematic Manager collated significant information and data to support S3 to complete their final evaluation report of the Transform for Change project. S3 have submitted their quarterly report and have agreed the final evaluation report will be progressed before year end.

Target	Status
45 cluster reports	48 submitted
15 case studies	13 submitted
45 TLP courses	42 achieved
934 participants	592 completed

3.4 BPR4 – BATW-Facilitation

The Belfast and the World project is complete all verification of documentation and the on-the-spot visit have been completed. The final payment has been processed.

The facilitation of the BCC element of study visits and residentials is also complete with the final study visit not realised as previously reported. Payment has been progressed and reflects the element not achieved.

3.5 BPR5 – Supporting Connected Communities - LINCS Project

The LINCS project completed at the end of November. The end report has been issued a band after review of all data submitted and verification of monitoring a date for the on-the-spot visit will be issued.

LINCS are considering the closure event. They have noted there is limited interest from participants after a long programme and a smaller low-key event has been suggested with planning under way.

The Leadership Programme has completed, and targets achieved, pending verification.

Target	Status
96 participants – to engage in 68 hrs of engagement	96 participants completed 68 hrs and over
1 Shared learning event per annum 2 Intercultural events per annum	3 achieved 14 achieved

All attendance trackers for all elements along with minutes and details of Inclusion forums have been submitted for final review.

3.6 BPR5 – Traveller Project - Supporting Connected Communities

All workshops and exhibitions have been completed and delivery of the traveller project workshops and exhibitions is now at an end. Verification of the Empowering Young Women's project documentation remains outstanding and is with the delivery agent to progress.

The Heart Project's Health and Wellbeing Exhibition took place in October had over 30 people in attendance. The women all baked breads, hosted an exhibition and spoke to their experiences. It was very well received by all present and the final work will form part of a larger event in the new year. The Heart Project has submitted all documentation and final payment has been progressed.

The project end report has been progressed by the Thematic Manager along with the submission of the quarterly report. Final verification of all monitoring documentation will form part of the end process and closure.

Target	Status
40 participants – Traveller and Settled Communities	32 completed 26 hrs or more 3 completed between 23-25hrs
200 attendees at community events	135 people attended 3 community events and 1 festival.

As previously noted, SEUPB were to consider the reduced final figures and to note have accepted the reduction in targets achieved. Engagement and collaboration across this project have encountered challenges, as previously reported which have delayed or hindered areas to be fully realised.

3.7 BPR5 – Roma Project - Supporting Connected Communities

The Roma project has submitted a delivery schedule for the remaining training elements completing on the 12th December 2022. The end event, a celebration of the Roma project is in planning and has been provisionally scheduled for 19th December at 11am. Invites will be extended nearer the time once the venue and itinerary have been confirmed.

The final position for Forward South is positive with some minor adjustments and mitigations of deliverables. An on-the-spot verification visit is to be scheduled and the end report submitted.

SEUPB met with the PEACE IV Secretariat to review mitigations for remaining elements. The delivery partner remains positive that they can complete both the Advice training and the conversational English classes within the remaining period.

3.8 BPR6 – St. Comgall's

Project activity is nearing an end with one rescheduled seminar and the final celebration event to be held. The project has advised the final celebration event will meet the outcome of a seminar and provide additional contact hours.

The equality screening for the exhibition and educational resources is ongoing. Further supporting information on the development process and demonstration of meeting Peace objectives has been received from the delivery partner and is under review. The process will continue until the required S75 obligations have been met.

Target	Status
20 core young people participants	27 completed target of 33 hrs
20 core adult participants	14 completed reduced target of 32 hrs

Cinematography Project

Filming of suitable opportunities to capture the Belfast Peace Journey is continuing. Members are asked to approve an extension to February 2023 to allow all deliverables to be met, namely for better coverage of the extended projects – SSS capital and NIHE projects.

End of project clips produced in the last month have been for Roma and Traveller projects. A BPR1 social clip was filmed and produced. Upcoming filming is scheduled for SSS Youth Civic Engagement, CYP5 projects, and the Forth Meadow public artwork. End of project clips for NIHE, SSS and BPR6 will follow in the new year.

3.9 Financial and Resource Implications

BPR expenditure and claims within this period are estimated to total £578,289.81, with BCC BPR claims for period 32 valued at £147k and BPR NIHE valued at £431,495.58

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

The draft plan has been equality screened and discussed at the Equality Consultative Forum on 13 May 2015. The Equality Consultative Forum was further consulted on 18 November 2020”.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report and related appendices and agree in principle:

BPR 1 – NIHE

- The request for Finance Officer and Programme Manager roles to be extended to early March 2023 to ensure all documentation could be submitted and verified to allow achievement of a successful closure process within the timeframe of the Council's Letter of Offer;
- To note the decision from the delivery partner not to continue with the East Belfast Network for the reasons outlined in the report;

BPR 3 - Local Action Plan Projects

- To note that all projects were completed in November;

- To note the two remaining study visits that sit with Council to deliver would not be achieved;

BPR 5 - LINC'S

- To note that the project would complete at the end of November with a small, localised event planned to capture completion of the leadership programme and overall completion of the project;

BPR 5 - Traveller

- To note that the final event was cancelled due to low commitment to attend. The proposed approach would be to showcase the collective exhibition artworks in the new year at a central location;

BPR6 St Comgall's

- To agree that the extension agreed in November by the Members to 31st January 2023 to allow for changes to materials to be implemented, to be instead processed through to 28th February 2023 for prudence, this was within the original contract terms (a contract renewal);

BPR Cinematography

- To agree an extension to 28th February for Cinematography. This was to allow all filming to be captured for projects that had been extended (SSS, NIHE projects).

It was agreed the Peace IV Programme Officer would liaise with NIHE in respect of a specific BPR programme date.

Peace IV - Update on SSS Theme

The Peace IV Programme Manager provided an update on the progress report in respect of the Shared Spaces and Services (SSS) theme of the Peace IV Local Action Plan.

• **Springfield Dam**

The naming process closed on 21st November 2022 with 40+ names submitted by local people. A short-listing meeting, to agree the final three/four options to go out for public vote, had been scheduled for Thursday 1st December 2022. A "yourspace" page was also being drafted and would be opened for the public voting process before Christmas, closing in January 2023.

PEACE IV Network Scheme - Capital Works - Work was continuing in Section 2, following commencement in October, with completion still scheduled for June 2023. There remains a delay with hand-over to the Council, for Sections 3 and 4, due to issues with NIE connections for lighting columns.

• **Social Values Clause**

The Members noted the update below relating to the social values clause:

Apprentices / Placements: A Civil Engineering placement student from Queen's University was employed from July 2021 to August 2022, replaced with another in May 2022, who would be involved in the project to completion.

An apprentice Civil Engineer joined the project in January 2022 for a period of 130 weeks, with a second joining in October 2022. Both have been involved with surveying / setting out duties.

Long Term Unemployed: The ground works contractor, Demesne Contracts, employed a general operative, who had previously been unemployed and who had been in employment on the project since March 2022.

Trainees: The Contractor, John McQuillan contracts (JMQ) had been having difficulty sourcing candidates interested in obtaining unpaid training and were looking at linking with the Council's Employability and Skills Team for a list of potential candidates through their contacts.

Community Engagement: To date, JMQ had engaged with all sections of the community before commencing each work phase and had included:

- Prestart letter drops providing detail of the scheme and contact information.
- Calls in person to local schools, sports clubs and community hubs providing detail on the project and contact details for site team.

They had also attended a number of community meetings and had supported a number of local projects across the Greenway. There were also plans to donate Christmas hampers in December, but the method of distribution was to be agreed and they would be liaising with the project team and community stakeholders regarding this.

Fundraising/Local Charities: JMQ had been collecting tinned / bagged goods to donate to food charities in early 2023, with a drop in box located in their canteens. They would be liaising with the project team as to the most appropriate organisations to receive the donations.

Information Days: Due to the works phased being spread across a large geographical area, JMQ had not organised any specific information days. If there were suggestions of what might be suitable for Section 2, they were keen to fulfill this requirement.

Social Media: Regular updates were on JMQ's LinkedIn page, and they were currently drafting an update for posting this month.

Supplier Opportunities: Due to the nature of the works and the small number of materials involved, this requirement had been hard to fulfill. JMQ's 'in house' companies supply all the necessary materials.

Considerate Contractors Scheme: JMQ had had two visits from the CCS inspector in March and August 2022, scoring 36/45 in March and 38/45 in August.

- **Signage**

As reported in November, in line with ongoing discussion around the Council's language policy, senior management were advised on the PEACE IV Rules and Regulations around language. The Members would be updated on any progress or outcomes.

- **Public Art Pieces**

Work on the flagship piece was progressing with installation planned for Monday 16th January 2023 and a public unveiling on Thursday 19th January 2023.

Two floor art pieces were currently being installed in Glencairn Park (Section 1) and Springfield Park (Section 3).

- **Programming**

Implementation of the programming aspects were progressing.

- **Shared History, Heritage and Identity Content / Narratives for Shared Space**

Deliverable targets	Targets achieved
300 individuals	257 recruited
51 narratives (3 narratives x 17 panels)	52 draft narratives
12 contact hours per participant	152 participants (68%) achieved over 10 hours 200 participants (89%) achieved 6 hours or more.
Compilation document of all stories	In progress

Draft narratives, for panels planned for Section 4, were circulated to the sub-group for review and the narratives for inclusion on the planned panels had been agreed (referred to in Appendix II). The project was finalising the publication for all the narratives gathered and with a foreword from the SCP Chairperson, forwarding a draft for review and proofing in line with Council's Plain English policy.

The Members noted that the Programme Board had been requested to agree the level of achievement in relation to participants' contact hours, ahead of discussion with SEUPB and acceptance of the level of achievement.

- **Shared Space Volunteer Training**

Deliverable targets	Targets achieved
Sustrans	
30 volunteers (15 Walk & 15 Cycle Leads)	27 recruited across 3 groups
Volunteer Now Enterprise	
15 volunteers (Local Ambassadors)	13 recruited
The Conservation Volunteers	
15 volunteers (Nature Guides)	12 recruited

An options document, around the interim coordination of volunteering, was approved by the Programme Board and had been forwarded to the SEUPB for review and requesting approval.

Volunteers from the four projects, participated in a visit to Oxford Island on 17th November, visiting The Lough Neagh Discovery Centre and Bushcraft Centre. The volunteers were able to see other shared projects, talk about their own activities and get some ideas. A second visit was being planned for early 2023, this time to Cloughmills.

- **Governance / Management Model**

A contract was being prepared, and the contractors (MDL and Viatac Limited) had begun work on the project, submitting a Project Framework / Engagement Plan (Appendix III).

Discussions had been scheduled with Council officers and senior managers on 1 and 6 December respectively. The contractors would be in Belfast, week commencing 5th December, and would be facilitating discussions / workshops on 6th December (youth providers), 7th December (community stakeholders) and 8th December (volunteers).

- **Youth Engagement & Civic Education**

Deliverable targets	Targets achieved
400 young people	80 young people registered from Nubia, Blackmountain, Glencairn and Forthspring.
60 contact hours per participants	54 young participants have achieved 60+ contact hours.

On submission of the requested implementation plan (Appendix IV), the Programme Board were being asked to approve an extension of the project to 28 February 2023. The plan forecasted completion by 387 young people (97% of delivery target). The Members noted that there was additional activity included in the implementation plan:

- A celebration lunch and tour of Crumlin Road Gaol, for all the schools involved; and
- Replacing residential activity with day trips, where appropriate, and requested by participant groups.

This was a variation from the original tender submission and the approved project plan. The Partnership noted, as such, the Programme Board were being requested to approve this additional activity and change to project delivery.

The Partnership further noted that, given the extended period, Youth Link NI had highlighted additional costs would be incurred. They had estimated an additional £15K-£20K would be needed to conclude the project. The Programme Board was requested to approve, in principle, a contract uplift of no more than 10% (£16,000), subject to the submission of a requested budget breakdown and the availability of support within the SSS programme budget. Delegated authority had been given to the CYP and BPR Chairperson to agree the finalised contract up-lift.

- **SSS Activities and Animation Programme**

Deliverable targets	Targets achieved
20 cross community activities/events, (to an audience of a minimum of 1200 attendees)	11 cross community activities / events to an audience of approximately 1000+ people
- 4 Public spectacle events (150 people at each) – 2 in Springfield Park	- “Luminate” event in Springfield Park – approx. 1500 people - “Swamp Festival” in Bog Meadows – approx. 1700 people - “Colour Festival” in Woodvale Park – approx. 1,000+ people

	- "Day of the Dead" in Springfield Park – approx. 2,000+ people
- 6 Medium sized creative animation activities / events (50-100 people at each).	- "River Clean event" – approx. 100 people - Colour Run events in Falls and Glencairn Park – approx. 500 people - "Movies in the Dam" – approx. 700 people
- 10 small community focused activities / events (30 to 50 people at each)	- "Sunflower Festival" – approx. 50 people - Foraging Walk and Big Potato Harvest in Bog Meadows – approx. 100 people - Dunville Heritage Tour and Whiskey Tasting – approx. 20 people - "Street Art Jam in Partnership with Seedhead Arts at Glencairn Park – attracted approx. 10 people - "Spooks on Spokes" – approx. 20+ people

ArtsEkta had now completed its contract, co-ordinating a programme of over 20 small, medium and large community events / activities. PEACE IV was now reviewing its Period 32 Quarterly Report and Final Project report.

- **Resource Allocation**

Options in relation to how to use the support from the Resource Allocation was approved by Programme Board in November and forwarded to SEUPB for review, receiving approval by email on 22 November 2022.

As previously reported, total expenditure to date for the SSS totaled £2.7m, with £1.82m reimbursed by SEUPB. Claims for Periods 28-31 valued at £908K remained outstanding. A Period 32 claim for £177k was to be submitted.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and related appendices and recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to:

- Narratives/Interpretative Panel – Mediation NI
 - Note that the contact hours achievement level was to be discussed and agreed with SEUPB;
- Youth Civic Education – Youth Link NI
 - Note an extension of the Youth Civic Education project to 28 February 2023;
 - Note the additional / alternative activity for schools (Crumlin Rd Gaol) and day trips
 - Agree a possible contract uplift of no more than 10% (£16,000), subject to the submission of a budget breakdown and availability of support within the SSS programme budget;
 - Note that delegated authority had been given to the CYP Chairperson and BPR Chairperson to agree the finalised contract uplift, subject to the above confirmation.

A Member recognised the work that had been undertaken by Mr. D. McGann, Peace IV Project Manager, in relation to the Springfield Dam bridge naming process which he stated

was helped by the officer's diligence and patience when dealing with such a broad and diverse group to agree the final four names for public consultation.

Update on Interfaces Programme

The Good Relations Officer updated the Members in relation to further project proposals that had been developed as part of the Good Relations Action Plan within the BCC7 Interfaces Programme.

The Members recalled the Interfaces Programme (BCC7) within the Good Relations Action Plan. Thus far, the Members had allocated £64,235 of the total fund of £70,000. Projects across the City had been funded under this programme.

The Good Relations Officer advised that officers had continued to engage with groups on project development and received project proposals as follows:

1. Lower Oldpark Community Association for support towards their NOW Project (Neighbours over the Wall). This project was a cross community Women's project consisting of a partnership between the Lower Oldpark Community Association and Thorndale Duncairn and Kinnaird Community Group. The funding of £4,927 would go towards a series of workshops and a study visit to Derry/Londonderry to meet with groups working on interface issues there;
2. Limestone United Football Club for support towards a youth engagement programme to engage with young people directly involved in negative activity through "interface conversations and engagements". The funding of £1,000 would help break the cycle of this negative behaviour, such as sectarian abuse, anti-social behaviour and possession of offensive weapons.

The Partnership noted that applications for Council small grants, including Good Relations small grants, were currently open. The closing date for receipt of applications was Friday 13th January 2023 at 12:00 noon and all information was available at: <https://www.belfastcity-grants.com/>

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommended that funding be awarded under the BCC7 Interfaces Programme within the Council's Good Relations Action Plan as follows:

- Lower Oldpark Community Association; £4,927 towards their NOW (Neighbours Over the Wall) programme;
- Limestone United Football Club: £1,000 towards a youth engagement programme.

Update on PEACE PLUS Local Community Action Plan

The Neighbourhood Services Manager provided the Members with an update on recent activity with regards to the development of the PEACE PLUS 1.1. Co-designed Local Community Peace Action Plan for Belfast and explained that the areas for discussion at the meeting would include:

- An overview of Stakeholder Engagement for Stage 1 and any outstanding planned engagement;

- Public survey that has been issued which would form part of Stage 1;
- Co-design Stage 1 final report process;
- Co-design Stage 2 overview of process;
- SEUPB update.

- **Stage 1 - Stakeholder Engagement Sessions Completion**

Following on from an update at the previous Partnership meeting, further engagement had taken place as part of Co-Design Stage 1 development of the local plan. The reason for additional engagement sessions was to address gaps from the initial engagement sessions that had taken place in October.

The purpose of these engagement workshops was to receive input from stakeholders on how the local Peace Action Plans should be developed and how they should be involved in Co-Designing the plan. The Members received a breakdown of attendance at a range of engagement sessions that had taken place to date via Public Information sessions and online.

As part of Stage 1 engagement, as agreed by the Partnership, a public survey was issued that that asked similar questions to those that were asked at the facilitated sessions. The Members had been involved in designing this survey. The survey opened on Wednesday 30th November and would be advertised and issued through the following channels:

- PEACEPLUS 1.1 Mailing list – a total of 405 individuals / organisations who had signed up to be involved in the development of the local action plan;
- Council's Your Say Belfast Engagement Platform – a total of 1400 individuals had signed up to receiving Council related information via this platform;
- Council website and social media platforms;
- Council community contacts;
- Elected Members and key partnerships.

The closing date for the survey was 15th December 2022.

There were potential further engagement sessions that might take place as part of Stage 1, to finalise the Stage 1 report which would need to take place by Monday 12th December. The Neighbourhood Services Manager explained that the project was now at a stage where, due to the urgency of producing a Stage 1 report and commencing Stage 2, it was proposed that once any outstanding engagement had taken place, Stage 1 Engagement be completed. She informed the Members that once all the information from Stage 1 had been collated and summarised, a report would be produced that would be discussed at a future SCP meeting.

The content of the report would include the following:

1. Introduction to PEACEPLUS 1.1 and Stage 1 process;
2. Profile of the city including strategic context and research;
3. Emerging needs from Stage 1 engagement;
4. Emerging PEACEPLUS opportunities (thematic focus);
5. Next Steps.

Approval Timelines

To ensure that SCP members had input into the final report, Council approval was received with regards to its content and proposed next steps, it was proposed that the following be undertaken:

- **Stage 1 Report Approval Process**

Action	Date (2023)
SCP consider initial Stage 1 draft report	9th January
SCP workshop to provide detailed feedback	By 27th January
SCP Recommend Final report	6th February
SPR Sign off	17th – 24th February
Full Council Approval	1st March

The Members noted that, due to the forthcoming Local Government Elections, it was important that the Stage 1 report was signed off by the March Council meeting as there would be no further Council committee meetings taking place from April until June 2023.

- **Stage 2**

For Stage 2 Co-Design development of the plan, information collated in Stage 1 would be used and included in the final report to develop more detailed project concept ideas that could be included as part of the action plan submission to SEUPB. This would result in having a long list of project ideas. Due to the tight timeframes in relation to the submission of the local action plan, the Programme Officer explained that the Stage 2 planning process would be carried out in parallel with the end of the Stage 1 report going through the Council's governance procedures as outlined above.

The Neighbourhood Services Manager advised that further detail on Stage 2 would be brought back to a future SCP meeting, however, authority was being sought to start to plan and organise Stage 2 in January. Some of the key actions that would need to take this forward in Stage 2 would include:

Action	Indicative Dates (2023)
Agree Stage 2 methodology	By 27th January
Agree parameters for assessment on each theme based on SEUPB guidance and those identified by the SCP	By 27th January
Collective Round Table Workshop to present stage 1 Report to Stakeholders	February
Thematic deep dive workshops (to further develop potential ideas) 1. Local Community Regeneration and Transformation 2. Thriving and Peaceful Communities 3. Celebrating Cultural and Diversity	March

Final Stage 2 report with long list of project concepts and approval to proceed to Stage 3	April
Agree Stage 3 methodology	May

The Neighbourhood Services Manager advised that officers recently met with SEUPB to provide an overview of the current status with regards to progress on developing the local action plan for Belfast. SEUPB advised that they it was content with the progress with Stage 1 Engagement process. SEUPB officers also updated officers that it was unlikely that the call document for 1.1 would be open by the end of 2022.

Officers were commencing the process to progress recruitment of a PEACE Programme Manager in accordance with Council procedures.

The Members noted the contents of the report, provided feedback and:

- Agreed that Stage 1 facilitated engagement process closed as outlined in the report;
- Provided feedback on the process for finalising the Stage 1 report;
- Agreed to the general process for commencing Stage 2 for developing the local action plan.

The Chairperson referred to the launch of the 'Inequalities experienced by Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Traveller people residing in Belfast' research report which had been launched at the City Hall the previous week and acknowledged the work that had gone into the report and how valuable the research and recommendations would be going forward.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

Minutes of Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum Thursday 8th December 2022

Attendance

Members:

Councillor Matt Garrett (*for Councillor Ciaran Beattie*)
Councillor Christine Bower (*for Councillor Michael Long*)
Councillor Billy Hutchinson
Alderman George Dorrian
Councillor Mal O'Hara
Councillor Carl Whyte (*for Councillor Donal Lyons*)
Alderman Sonia Copeland

Apologies: Councillor Fiona Ferguson, Councillor Emmet McDonough-Brown, Councillor Ciaran Beattie, Councillor Michael Long, Councillor Donal Lyons

Officers:

John Walsh, Chief Executive
Trevor Wallace, Director of Finance (for Item 1)
John Tully Director of City and Organisational Strategy (for Item 2)
Christine Sheridan, Director of Human Resources (for Item 2)
Sinead Grimes Director of Physical Programmes (for Item 3)
Cathy Reynolds Director City Regeneration & Development (for Item 4)
Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services (for Item 5)

1. Finance Update

The Director of Finance presented a summary of the current position for the 2023/24 revenue estimates, he outlined the uncontrollable costs and highlighted an increase in the projections for utility costs since the last update to Members. The Director outlined the subsequent impact on the District Rate and the specified reserves both for 2023/24 and future years for some of the options being considered. He advised that it was imperative that Members agree a Baseline Rate at the December SP and R Committee in order that work can progress to be able to set the District Rate by the legally required deadline of 15th February 2023. Members noted the significant challenges involved in setting the 2023/24 budget in these unprecedented times. Officers are continuing to challenge budget submissions and identify funding sources for the uncontrollable costs.

A query was raised by a Member in relation to recent legislation in the model for the setting of the District Rate and some Members stressed that this is considered going forward. It was also agreed that the Director follow up with the Department for Communities on current rate exemption policies and provide an update for Members at a future meeting.

The Director outlined the current proposals being considered in the other 10 Councils and a query was raised by a Member in relation to the status of rate support for some of the other Councils and what level this may be for 2023/24. The Director provided clarity as far as he could on this and it was agreed the Director of Finance will follow up and try to ascertain if there is any further update available.

The Director advised a detailed report on the current position and the proposals outlined would be presented to December's SP and R Committee.

2. Pay and Grading Review

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy updated the Forum on the progress being made on the Pay and Grading review proposals. He outlined for Members the detail of the proposals put forward including current position and advised that engagement with the Trade Union Group is ongoing. The projected costs and the subsequent impact on the district rate is still to be identified and an update on this will be included in the Revenue Estimates and District Rate report to December's SP and R Committee. A query was raised by a Member in relation to the current NJC framework for Local Government Services which the Director of Human Resources provided clarity on.

3. North Foreshore Update

The Director of City Regeneration and Development provided an update on the North Foreshore site and outlined the background to the Expression of Interest for Giant's Park for the commercial, leisure development brief. She provided an overview of the development brief process, the outcome of the process and the final approval made by SP&R Committee. The Director of Physical Programmes advised that given the unforeseen circumstances in the market since the original approval was granted the developer had since submitted revised proposals for the site. She advised that these revised proposals had recently been considered by the Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore Steering Group. Detailed discussion followed and a number of queries were raised by Members in relation to accessibility to the site, sustainable transport and local community engagement which were

all noted by the Director of Physical Programmes to consider in the next stages. As recommended by the Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore Steering Group a report on the next steps in order to progress the stie options agreement will be brought to December's SP and R Committee for consideration.

The Director of Physical Programmes advised that a request had been made for a meanwhile use on part of the North Foreshore site, initially on a short term lease basis. It was agreed, in principle, that discussions on this meanwhile use could proceed with an update to be brought back to Members in due course.

4. Cathedral Quarter

The Director City of Regeneration and Development provided an update for Members on the Cathedral Buildings fire response which occurred on the 3rd October, causing the immediate displacement of 14 business and cultural organisations. The Director outlined the immediate response that took place managed by the Council, emergency responders, and statutory partners. Members also noted the subsequent support and advice that has been provided since and it was agreed a detailed briefing outlining the support and advice provided to date would be circulated to Party Group Leaders following the meeting.

5. Planning Update

The City Solicitor updated the Forum on the live planning applications and informed the Forum of applications that were being presented to the Planning Committee in the coming months.

Members also noted that the Replacement Planning Portal (new Planning IT system) had gone live as planned on 5th December and as previously advised was experiencing some initial issues. Officers continue to put in place internal contingences in order to mitigate any risks where possible.

6. AOB

Dates of Meeting 2023

Members noted the scheduled dates of the Forum meetings for 2023. The Chief Executive advised that, as previously agreed by Party Group Leaders, meetings will be held in person

commencing in January, 2023. A remote option will still be offered to those unable to attend in person, if required.



Subject:	Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel
Date:	16th December, 2022
Reporting Officer:	Claire O'Prey, Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS)
Contact Officer:	Claire O'Prey, Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS)

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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a summary of the key issues which were considered by the Audit and Risk Panel on 6th December and present the minutes of that meeting for approval, including the updated Raising Concerns Policy,
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the key issues arising at the meeting on 6th December and approve the minutes at Appendix 1 , including the updated Raising Concerns policy at Appendix 2 .
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Key Issues
	<u>Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO)</u>
3.1.1	The NIAO Director presented the Panel with the Annual Audit Letter and Report to those Charged with Governance, explaining that the audit of the 2021/22 financial statements is

	<p>complete and that the Local Government Auditor (LGA) is providing an unqualified audit opinion. These accounts are a fundamental part of the Councils overall corporate governance framework and provides assurance to Members and ratepayers on the stewardship of the Council's finances and its financial position.</p>
3.1.2	<p>Regarding the Councils compliance with the performance improvement duty, the LGA has certified the performance arrangements with an unqualified audit opinion and believes that the council has discharged its performance improvement and reporting duties.</p> <p><u>Key Reports</u></p>
3.1.3	<p>The Panel noted the progress being made against the annual internal audit plan and that six audits were finalised in the period, with two audits on Absence Management and Information Governance receiving an assurance opinion of major improvement required. The Panel underlined the importance of management implementing the agreed action plans for these areas. Regarding a recent internal audit of Police and Community Safety Partnerships, the Panel received an update from management on the progress being made to implement the recommendations arising.</p>
3.1.4	<p>The Panel also received an update on the progress being made by management to implement agreed actions from previous internal audits. The Panel noted that management had implemented 25% of open actions in the period. Almost a third of the actions that remain open are classed as high priority and the Panel highlighted the importance of management agreeing realistic dates for implementation and ensuring that these dates are adhered to.</p>
3.1.5	<p>The Panel considered the corporate risk dashboard which provided an analysis and update on the progress being made to manage the 23 risks that are considered to present the greatest threat to the delivery corporate priorities and / or compliance with key statutory requirements. The Panel was updated on how the ownership of risks had been reallocated following changes at Chief Officer level and on the themes emerging from the horizon scanning exercise. The Panel noted the quarterly assurances provided by senior management regarding compliance with risk management and internal control processes. The Panel was also provided with an update on the review of the business continuity plans for a cyber-attack scenario for the critical services.</p>
3.1.6	<p>The Panel also considered the report on the recent external review of the Councils risk management arrangements, which concludes that the arrangements are well developed and</p>

	made seven recommendations for improvement. This provides Members with valuable independent assurance on the Council's risk management arrangements.
3.1.7	The Panel agreed the updated Raising Concerns policy , which had been updated in line with the NIAO Good Practice Guide and is designed to encourage people who have serious concerns in the public interest to come forward. The draft policy was agreed by the Council's Joint Negotiating and Consultative Committee in October 2022.
3.1.8	The Panel also agreed the initial self-assessment of compliance with the updated CIPFA publication "Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police" (October 2022) and agreed for this to be considered in more depth at their next training session.
3.1.9	The Panel was also provided with a progress update on the agreed actions to be taken in relation to the recommendations contained within the report from Peter Coll QC of his independent investigation relating to events at Roselawn Cemetery on 30th June 2020, noting that the remaining actions are due to be completed by March 2023.
3.1.10	The Panel also received Quarter 2 reports on corporate health and safety, absence management and performance improvement.
3.2	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>
3.3	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None known at this time.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 - Minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel of 6th December</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Raising Concerns Policy</p>

This page is intentionally left blank

Audit and Risk Panel

Tuesday, 6th December, 2022

MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK PANEL

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Alderman Rodgers (Chairperson);
Councillors Carson, Matt Collins and Hutchinson; and
Ms. G. Fahy (Independent Non-Executive Member).

In attendance: Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal
and Civic Services;
Ms. C. O'Prey, Head of Audit, Governance and Risk
Services;
Mr. L. Mulholland, Audit, Governance and Risk
Services Manager;
Mr. M. Whitmore, Audit, Governance and Risk
Services Manager;
Ms. H. Lyons, Corporate Finance Manager;
Ms. S. Williams, Governance and Compliance
Manager; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Also attended: Ms. C. Kane, Director, Northern Ireland Audit Office.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported on behalf of the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly).

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 21st September were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Schedule of Meetings 2023

The Panel approved the following schedule of meetings for 2023, with a commencement time of 12.30 p.m.:

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2022**

- Tuesday, 7th March
- Tuesday, 6th June
- Tuesday, 12th September and
- Tuesday, 5th December.

Absence Rates - Quarter 2 2022/23

(Ms. C. Sheridan, Director of Human Resources, attended in connection with this item.)

The Panel considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Audit and Risk Panel of the Council’s performance in managing absence in quarter 2 - April to September 2022.**

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Audit Panel is asked to note the contents of this report.**

3.0 Main Report

Key Corporate Indicators:

At the end of quarter 2:

- **The Council’s average sickness absence rate stands at 8.21 days per FTE, an increase of 1.03 days compared to absence for the same period last year (7.18).**
- **A total of 16551.84 working days was lost due to sickness absence. This accounted for 7.3% of the total working days available.**
- **The table below provides a summary of how departments are performing against the target. As indicated below, 4 Departments did not meet the Corporate target for quarter 2 (6.5 days).**

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2022**

End of year target	12.99					
End of Q2 target	6.5					
Department	Number of Staff (FTE)	Total lost days (FTE)	Actual Absence per FTE	Variance	% of workforce	% of absence
City and Neighbourhood Services	1126.92	9849.73	8.74	2.24	55.92%	59.51%
City and Organisational Strategy	118.25	630.85	5.33	-1.17	5.87%	3.81%
Finance and Resources	189.08	813.75	4.30	-2.20	9.38%	4.92%
Legal and Civic Services	149.53	1611.78	10.78	4.28	7.42%	9.74%
Place and Economy	308.94	2356.33	7.63	1.13	15.33%	14.24%
Physical Programmes	122.67	1289.4	10.51	4.01	6.09%	7.79%
Total	2015.39	16551.84	8.21	1.71		

Additional Absence information:

- There has been a decrease in the number of staff with no recorded absence in this period (56.63%) compared to the same time last year (66.86%). The decrease can be mainly attributed to an increase in short-term absence (1-5 days) and medium-term absence (6 – 19 days) in 22/23 when compared to 21/22.
- There has been an increase in absence classified as long term (20+ days) this year (11136.85 days) compared to the same time last year (10773.00 days).
- Council's average sickness absence rate further reduces to 6.98 days per FTE when COVID-19 related absences are deducted.
- The number of days lost per full time equivalent increased in quarter two (4.26 days) when compared to quarter one (3.96 days). This increase is illustrated in figure 1.
- Depression/anxiety/stress (36% of total days lost) and musculo-skeletal (23% of total days lost) continue to be the top two reasons for absence - Refer to figure 2 for further information).
- 652 employees were off between July and September 2022. Discretion was applied to 122 of these employees (18.7%) and their absence accounted for 3313.64 days (approximately 39% of the total absence for quarter two –

July to September) - Refer to figure 3 for further information.

- **A total of 117 cases were identified as having compliance related issues (80 in CNS) - Refer to figure 4 for further information.**
- **Approximately 34% of absence (5642.42 days) is recorded as disability related, of which, 58% of was managed as long term. Depression and Anxiety related absence accounted for over a third (38.47%) of disability related absence - Refer to figure 5 for further information.**
- **A total of 388 employees were recorded as absent due to COVID19 and this accounted for a total of 2491.54 days / 15.05% of the total absence in quarter 2.**
- **20 employees met the trigger for a Stage 4 / FAH in quarter 2.**
 - **One employee availed of a career break before Stage4/FAH being scheduled.**
 - **Discretion not to proceed to a stage 4 / FAH was applied to 9 of these cases The reasons for discretion include, 4 employees returned to work between month 6 and 7, two employees were medically redeployed, 2 cases did not proceed due to disability related absence and one case is awaiting a recruitment exercise to facilitate a flexible retirement request.**
 - **6 employees were ill health retired prior to Stage4/FAH being scheduled.**
 - **1 employee was dismissed at Stage 4 / FAH.**
 - **1 employee attended a Stage 4 / FAH however, the outcome is not yet known as additional information was requested of management.**
 - **2 cases did not proceed to Stage 4 / FAH due to non-compliance reasons (delay organising case review and delay organising Stage 4 hearing).**
- **Corporate HR has developed guidance documentation and templates to assist departments with development of Attendance Improvement Plans and DMT reporting.**

- **Departments are currently reviewing the guidance documentation and templates. The documentation and templates have been designed to ensure that departments are addressing potential risks that may have an impact on how absence is monitored, managed and reported.**
- **It is envisaged the guidance documents will be agreed and implemented by January 2023 (Quarter 4).**

4.0 Resource Implications

4.1 Directors are asked to ensure that:

- **attendance management continues to be a priority item on DMT agendas and related matters discussed and appropriate actions taken forward and**
- **resources are in place to ensure that adequate monitoring and review is in place at department level.**

5.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

5.1 Approximately 34.09% of absence (5642.42 days) is recorded as disability related.

The use of discretion and reasonable adjustments is considered in such cases.”

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

Update on Corporate Health and Safety Performance

(Ms. E. Eaton, Corporate Health and Safety Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager reminded the Panel that it was responsible for overseeing the Council's risk, control and governance arrangements for health and safety. In undertaking this function, the Panel provided independent scrutiny of the Council's health and safety performance, with reports being presented to it on a quarterly basis.

Accordingly, she submitted for the Panel's consideration a report on corporate health and safety performance and activities for the quarter ending on 30th September, 2022.

She provided, on a Departmental basis, information on the implementation of actions associated with the key performance indicators of health and safety and fire safety

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2022**

and pointed out that, at a corporate level, compliance rates had been 48% and 73% respectively.

In terms of accident/incident reporting, there had, in quarter two, been 12 employee accidents, 9 non-employee accidents, 8 RIDDOR accidents and 15 incidents of work-related violence.

She concluded by providing details of the information which had, during quarter two, been forwarded to the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland in response to enquiries/correspondence.

The Panel noted the corporate health and safety performance and activities for the quarter ending on 30th September, 2022.

Report to those charged with Governance 2021/22

The Panel considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The Local Government Auditor has issued her Report to those charged with Governance for 2021/22. This summarises the system/control issues arising during the Northern Ireland Audit Office’s (NIAO) 2021/22 audit and includes recommendations for management action. The purpose of this report is to appraise the Audit and Risk Panel of the issues raised in the Local Government Auditor’s Report for 2021/22 in relation to the Accounts of Belfast City Council.**

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Audit Panel is requested to note the Report to those charged with Governance Audit results for 2021/22 and agree the management responses.**

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

- 3.1 The Local Government Auditor has certified the 2021-22 statements for Belfast City Council with an unqualified opinion.**
- 3.2 The Local Government Auditor had identified in the Audit Strategy for 2021-22, the risk of fraud in revenue recognition and management override of controls as having an impact on the audit approach.**

During audit fieldwork, no significant issues were identified in these areas.

3.3 The Local Government Auditor has identified 3 areas where she has made prioritised recommendations. The NIAO definition of the priority levels are:

- 1) significant issues for the attention of senior management which may have the potential to result in material weaknesses in internal control;**
- 2) important issues to be addressed by management in their areas of responsibility, and**
- 3) issues of a more minor nature which represents best practice.**

3.4 In summarising the letter there are:

- 0 priority 1 area,**
- 0 priority 2 area, and**
- 3 priority 3 areas**

3.5 The 3 priority 3 areas are:

- Special Responsibility Allowance- recommendation that the Special Responsibility Allowance report published on the Council's website be revised to include the Councillor that has been omitted, so that this report agrees to the figure included in the statement of accounts.**
- Income cut off issue – recommendation that management should review all income invoices at year end to ensure they are correctly captured in the statement of accounts.**
- Timeliness of assurance from component auditor - recommendation that management liaise with the Directors and Auditors of BWUH Ltd and Beltel LLP to ensure group audit assurances to NIAO are provided on a timely basis.**

3.6 A detailed response to the management letter has been circulated, identifying timescales.

In accordance with the process adopted in previous years, management will monitor the progress made in implementing recommendations and will report back to the Audit Assurance Board and Audit and Risk Panel on the progress.

Financial and Resource Implications

3.7 None

**Equality or Good relations/Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment**

3.8 None.”

After discussion, the Panel noted the contents of the Report to those Charged with Governance for 2021/22 and approved the management responses.

Annual Audit Letter 2021/22

The Panel considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 As an independent auditor of the Council, the Local Government Auditor seeks to examine that the Council has managed its affairs having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness and that public money is properly spent or in the case of income properly accounted for. The Annual Audit Letter is issued under Regulation 17 of the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015. The Regulations require the Council to publish this Annual Audit Letter as soon as reasonably possible.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Audit and Risk Panel is asked to note the comments and review the Annual Audit Letter.

3.0 Main Report

1. Financial Statements

The Local Government Auditor has noted no financial adjustment to the draft accounts as a result of her audit work. The accounts for the 2021/22 year were given an unqualified opinion.

2. Proper Arrangements

The Local Government Auditor is required to satisfy herself that proper arrangements have been made for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.

The Local Government Auditor has confirmed that she is satisfied that the council has proper arrangements in place.

3. Annual Governance Statement

The Local Government Auditor has indicated that the Annual Governance Statement reflects compliance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021-22, it also complies with proper practices as specified by the Department for Communities, and it is not misleading or inconsistent with other information from the audit.

4. Absenteeism

The annual rate of absenteeism has shown an increase of 5.47 days from 2020/21. Covid related absences had a significant impact in 2021/22. If Covid related absences were excluded, the year end figure of 16.33 days for 2021/22, would reduce to 12.99 days. The main causes of long-term absence are due to stress/depression/anxiety and musculo-skeletal related conditions.

Average number of days sickness absence per full time employee						
2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
10.3	12.44	13.72	13.71	13.58	10.86	16.33

The robust, fair and consistent management of attendance continues to be a key priority for Belfast City Council.

5. Performance Improvement

Due to the pandemic, the requirement to publish an improvement plan for 2020-21 was set aside. As a result, the audit of the 2020-21 self-assessment report did not include a review of performance of improvement objectives for that year. The Local Government Auditor's Annual Improvement Report for 2021-22 was published on 31 March 2022 and concludes that the Council met its statutory duties in relation to publication of the 2020-21 self-assessment report and 2021-22 Annual Improvement Plan. Given the impact of the pandemic on council services, however, the Local Government Auditor was unable to conclude on an assessment of whether the council was likely to meet their performance improvement responsibilities under legislation for the 2021-22 year.

6. Outlook

The Local Government Auditor has highlighted the ongoing impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Financial and Resource Implications

None

**Equality or Good relations/Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment**

None.”

The Panel noted the contents of the Annual Audit Letter for the Council for 2021/22.

**Audit, Governance and Risk Services
Progress Report – September to December, 2022**

The Panel considered a report providing an update on the work which had been completed by Audit, Governance and Risk Services from September to December, 2022.

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager reported that six assurance audits/reviews had been completed during that period and drew the Panel's attention to two in particular, namely, Absence Management and Information Governance, which had received an audit opinion of 'Major Improvement Needed'.

In terms of Absence Management, significant issues had been identified in relation to the management of the Employee Counselling and Occupational Health contracts, ongoing non-compliance with the Attendance Policy and a lack of an up-to-date Health and Wellbeing Strategy and related action plan. Three high priority and three medium priority actions had been agreed in order to address these issues.

In relation to Information Governance, management had explained that a lack of staff resources had been the main cause of delays in the implementation of actions to manage this risk. The Unit had been required to concentrate on reactive work, such as supporting management in responding to requests for information under the Freedom of Information, Data Protection, and Environmental Information Regulations, as well as providing ad hoc advice, rather than taking forward proactive policy development and communications, oversight, compliance audits and training which would be required to reduce the level of risk. It was pointed out that a member of staff had since agreed to return to the Unit on a temporary basis.

Ms. Fahy stressed the importance of ensuring that the audit recommendations relating to Information Governance were implemented as soon as possible.

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager then updated the Panel on three areas which had received an audit opinion of 'Some Improvement Needed', namely Fuel, Waste Management (Operations) and Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall and pointed

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2022**

out that, in terms of progress against the 2022/23 Internal Audit Plan, 68% of assignments had been completed or were in progress.

He went on to inform the Panel that management in the City and Neighbourhood Services Department had, during the course of the quarterly meeting with Audit, Governance and Risk Services, highlighted delays to the development of a Waste Management Strategy by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and its impact upon the review and update of the Councils Strategy. Consequently, in order to derive value from the internal audit process, management had requested that the planned audit of the Waste Management Strategy, which had been included in the 2022/23 internal audit plan, be deferred until a future year.

The Panel was then provided with an update on the assurance and advisory work which Audit, Governance and Risk Services had undertaken around the new Advanced Accounting System, the Planning Portal and HR Payroll System. Information was provided also on audits which were currently in progress, investigations/fraud risk awareness and on the National Fraud Initiative.

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager then provided details of the advisory and other work which had been undertaken in support of management and confirmed that reports on an updated Raising Concerns (formerly Whistleblowing) Policy and on the outcome of the bi-annual recommendations monitoring exercise, which had been undertaken in October/November, would be presented to the Panel later in the meeting.

Finally, he drew the Panel's attention to the action plan which had been formulated to address the recommendations made by On Board Training and Consultancy Limited following its External Quality Assessment of the Service, in line with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, and review of Risk Management in the Council. It was the intention that the recommendations would be implemented by June, 2023.

After discussion, the Panel:

- i. noted the contents of the report;
- ii. approved the proposal to postpone the internal audit of Strategic Waste Management to a future audit plan; and
- iii. approved the action plan to address the recommendations made by On Board Training and Consultancy Limited in response to its review of compliance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

Update on Recommendations Monitor

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager reminded the Panel that it required assurance on a regular basis that agreed audit recommendations were being implemented.

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2022**

Accordingly, he submitted for its consideration a report providing an update on the implementation of agreed audit actions, following the most recent recommendations monitoring exercise, which had included a review of all audit recommendations open as at the end of September.

He explained that previous recommendations monitor exercises had tended to focus only on those actions which had passed their original implementation date. In the most recent exercise, Audit Governance and Risk Services had examined all actions, regardless of priority or due status, in order to provide management and Members with a more holistic representation of all open audit actions across the Council. It also enabled the Service to present a more complete analysis of actions which had been implemented, as well as those which remained outstanding at the completion of this exercise.

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager informed the Panel that 89 agreed actions could now be closed, representing an implementation rate of 25%. Whilst there had been a slight decrease on the previous period, this was broadly in line with the average implementation rates witnessed over a period of time.

He went on to point out that Audit, Governance and Risk Services had seen evidence of strong implementation of open actions in a number of areas across the Council, but in particular:

- SAP Replacement Project – 9 implemented actions
- HR Payroll Project – 10 implemented actions
- Income / Accounts Receivable – 5 implemented actions
- Gifts, Hospitality and Conflicts of Interest – 16 implemented actions
- Estates Management – 4 implemented actions.

In terms of the implementation of audit actions Council-wide:

- four Departments, namely, City and Organisational Strategy, Finance, Legal and Civic Services and Place and Economy had achieved implementation rates above the Council average;
- the majority of implemented actions (76%) related to actions which had been finalised in the last three years (2020-2022);
- of the actions which remained open, 29% were high priority. Most of the high priority actions which remained open (55%) had been agreed in audit reports which were more than three years old; and
- 83% of actions which remained open were overdue for implementation.

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager confirmed that the implementation of audit recommendations continued to be impacted by wider events within the Council, with the implementation of major IT projects, some of which were experiencing delays, ongoing Service and Departmental reviews, resourcing issues and competing priorities being frequently cited as issues causing delays to implementation.

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2022**

Despite this, management continued to express its commitment to implementing outstanding audit actions and had provided revised implementation dates for their implementation. Following briefings with Departmental Management Teams across the Council over the summer period, management had asked to be provided with more frequent information on the current position of open audit actions within their Department.

In terms of the timing of the next Recommendations Monitor, many of the outstanding audit actions were due to be fully implemented during 2023 and Audit, Governance and Risk Services would put in place a new process to provide each Department with quarterly information on open actions. In order to allow this process to fully embed and to ensure that management was given sufficient time to demonstrate improvement in implementation rates as a result, it was proposed that the next full validation exercise be undertaken in summer 2023, with the outcome being reported to the Panel in September, 2023.

Ms. Fahy highlighted the importance of management agreeing realistic dates for the implementation of audit recommendations and ensuring that those dates were adhered to.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided and requested that Audit, Governance and Risk Services continue to emphasise the importance of the timely implementation of agreed audit actions.

**Update on Corporate Risk
Management – Quarter 2 2022/23**

The Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services submitted for the Panel's consideration a report on the Corporate Risk Dashboard, which summarised the key updates from the risk review for the quarter ending 30th September, 2022. The report provided also an update on compliance with the Risk Strategy, based on assurance statements completed by senior management for the quarter and on business continuity management arrangements.

The Panel:

- i. noted the corporate risk management dashboard and update for the quarter ending on 30th September and approved the proposal to close the corporate risk on Organisational and Operational Recovery, given the current operational status of the Council;
- ii. noted the assurances from senior management regarding compliance with the Risk Strategy, based on the assurance statements for quarter-end September 2022;
- iii. adopted the proposal that the Directors of Finance, Human Resources and Marketing and Corporate Communications complete assurance statements in future;

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2022**

- iv. agreed that the Head of Digital Services and the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services also complete assurance statements from the quarter ending 31st December 2022, pending the recruitment of a Director of Corporate Services; and
- v. noted the current position regarding the review and update on business continuity plans for the critical services.

External Review of Risk Management Arrangements

The Panel was reminded that On Board Training and Consultancy Limited had, following a quotation exercise in March, been appointed to undertake an assessment of the extent to which Audit, Governance and Risk Services complied with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

The Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services explained that the company had, as part of this assessment, undertaken a high-level review of the Council's risk management arrangements, which had found that the arrangements for the management of risks were well developed, noting that:

- the form and content of the Risk Management Strategy was excellent;
- gap analysis and the report to the Audit and Risk Panel provided good evidence of the level of the Council's compliance with the requirements of the revised Orange Book and commitment to adopting best practice;
- the Corporate Risk Dashboard was an excellent development; and
- Corporate Risk Reviews undertaken by Audit, Governance and Risk Services were of a very high standard and provided the Council with good quality assurance on the management of corporate risks.

Seven recommendations for improvement had been made, which centred around:

- developing clearer guidance on the risk management process;
- implementing the areas for improvement identified in the gap analysis, along with three other areas, namely, undertaking a formal review of risk culture, formally incorporating horizon scanning into the risks identification and review process and undertaking an annual review of the risk management framework;
- developing of the risk appetite statement further; and

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2022**

- determining the most appropriate way to widen out assurance on the Councils risk management framework from solely corporate risks to also include risks facing Departments and Services.

The Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services confirmed that Audit, Governance and Risk Services would consider each of these recommendations and submit a worked-up action plan to the meeting of the Audit Assurance Board and the Audit and Risk Panel in March, 2023.

Given the time which it would take to determine the best approach to implementing these areas for improvement, Audit, Governance and Risk Services would defer the annual review and update of the Risk Management Strategy and the Business Continuity Management Strategy until after the action plan to implement the areas for improvement had been agreed in March.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided.

**Policing and Community Safety Partnerships
Assurance Review – August 2022**

(Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services and Mr. J. Girvan, Lead Officer – Community Provision: Community Safety, attended in connection with this item.)

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reminded the Panel that Audit, Governance and Risk Services had, in August, 2022, completed an internal audit of the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships. The audit had provided an opinion of 'Major Improvement Needed' and had made five recommendations, of which two were high priority and three medium priority.

He explained that the issues which had been identified in year 2021/22 had been due to significant resourcing difficulties in the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships Team, with approximately 60% of the Unit's staffing complement having been vacant throughout parts of the financial year, due to either long-term absence or vacant posts.

The Lead Officer – Community Provision: Community Safety confirmed that all agreed audit actions had now been fully implemented and provided a high-level update of the work which had been completed. He advised the Panel that documentation on completed projects would not be added to the 2021/2022 Project files, as this would entail a disproportionate level of resources. That decision had been approved by the Joint Committee.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided.

Raising Concerns Policy

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager reminded the Panel that Raising a Concern occurred when an individual disclosed information about suspected danger, wrongdoing or illegality which was in the public interest. The individual raising the concern was usually not personally affected by the danger, wrongdoing or illegality.

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2022**

He explained that the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services was responsible for the Council's Raising Concerns Policy, previously known as Whistleblowing, until such time as a Director of Corporate Services had been recruited. Audit, Governance and Risk Services was responsible for the maintenance of the Policy and its associated arrangements and reviewed it annually to ensure that it reflected current legislation and best practice.

During 2021/22, the Service had undertaken a comprehensive review of the Council's whistleblowing arrangements, following a self-assessment exercise against the Northern Ireland Audit Office's Raising Concerns Good Practice Guide. Whilst the existing arrangements had been found to be generally in line with that Guide, several areas in the Policy needed to be reviewed and updated. A number of changes had been made, including:

- amending the terminology from whistleblowing to raising concerns;
- ensuring that the new policy considered other policies, such as Safeguarding and Modern Slavery;
- highlighting how raising concerns was of benefit to the Council;
- setting out how data would be managed, in line with the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations;
- introducing a timeframe of seven days for formally responding to concerns raised;
- providing guidance for members of the public on raising concerns;
- providing a dedicated raising concerns e-mail address and contact details for two Raising Concerns Champions within Audit, Governance and Risk Services; and
- improvements in the way in which Audit, Governance and Risk Services oversaw how concerns are handled and addressed.

He drew the Panel's attention to the revised policy and confirmed that it had been approved by both the full Joint Negotiating and Consultative Committee and the Corporate Management Team. Officers from Audit, Governance and Risk Services had, over the summer months, attended various Departmental Management Team meetings to raise awareness of the Policy and had highlighted key changes and roles and responsibilities for Departments. The Service had since drafted an implementation plan to ensure that the revised policy was communicated to all relevant stakeholders, which included:

- updating current process documents for logging, tracking, monitoring and reporting on cases;

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2022**

- developing of a new case register;
- agreement on key messages to be communicated to all internal stakeholders including:
 - clarification of the nature of the issues that should be raised under the policy;
 - roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders; and
 - the introduction of the new templates to better streamline the process;
- agreement, in consultation with the Marketing and Corporate Communications Unit, on the approach to external communications and how / where best to deliver the message;
- the creation of a new generic email address to where concerns can be directed; and
- the identification of any training or support requirements.

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager concluded by pointing out that the Service was working currently with the Marketing and Corporate Communications Unit to develop the appropriate internal and external communications to support the roll out of the Policy. Once the policy had been communicated internally, the focus would turn to communicating it externally, via the council's website.

In response to suggestions made by Ms. Fahy, he confirmed that consideration would be given to ensuring that the communications and implementation plan would take account of the phrase "good faith reporting" and how the Council would take reasonable steps rather than "fulfil its responsibility" to ensure that staff were not harassed, victimised or otherwise disadvantaged when raising a concern.

The Panel approved the revised Raising Concerns Policy and the arrangements for implementing and communicating the Policy across the Council.

**Audit and Risk Panel Self-Assessment against
Good Practice and Effectiveness**

The Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services informed the Panel that an updated version of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's 2018 publication on "Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police" had been issued in October.

The publication set out guidance on the function and operation of audit committees and represented best practice. The guidance had been updated to reflect recent legislative changes in Wales and new expectations in England, following the Redmond Review of the effectiveness of external audit and transparency of financial reporting in

**Audit and Risk Panel,
Tuesday, 6th December, 2022**

local authorities, as well as professional developments. It included also additional guidance and resources to support audit committee members, emphasised the importance of audit committees and recognised that they were a key component of governance.

She explained that Audit, Governance and Risk Services had completed an initial assessment of:

- the Audit and Risk Panel's effectiveness against the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's best practice; and
- the impact and effectiveness of the Audit and Risk Panel.

In line with previous years, this initial assessment had found the Panel to be broadly in compliance with best practice. Audit, Governance and Risk Services would, she confirmed, ensure that the next training session for the Audit and Risk Panel would promote consideration and discussion on the effectiveness of the Panel against the good practice questions contained within the updated Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Guidance.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided.

**Peter Coll KC Report – Update on
Progress of Action Plan**

The Panel noted the contents of a report providing a quarterly update on the progress of the agreed actions arising from the recommendations contained within Section 6 of Mr. Peter Coll KC's independent investigation into events at Roselawn Cemetery on 30th June, 2020, of which six had yet to be completed.

(Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy, attended in connection with the following two items.)

Performance Assessment Quarter 2 2022/23

The Panel considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This purpose of this report is to present the Quarter 2 status update on progress made against activities contributing to the Improvement Objectives contained within the 2022-23 Improvement Plan.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Panel is asked to note the Q2 status update on the 2022-23 Improvement objectives.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Background

Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act requires councils to agree improvement objectives on an annual basis and publish these in the form of an Improvement Plan. BCC's Improvement Plan 2022-23 was agreed by the Council in June 2022 and contained the Council's commitment to securing continuous improvement as well as delivery of 5 Improvement Objectives.

- 3.2 The Act also requires that progress be monitored and reported in an annual assessment of performance. For this, we produced a 2021-22 year-end performance assessment report which was submitted to the September meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel. This assessment was later published [online](#) ahead of the September 30th, as required by legislation.

BCC Improvement Plan 2022 / 23

- 3.3 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed in June to approve the Improvement Plan for 2022/23. The Improvement plan does not include everything that council plans to do that year, but instead focuses on a smaller set of key improvement priorities, as informed by resident priorities and evidenced by need. The Plan for 2022/23 includes five improvement objectives as set out below;

3.4

3.5	Our services
	We will continue to adapt and improve our services
	Our communities
	We will work to support our communities, helping them to become stronger, healthier and more resilient
	Our economy
	We will work collaboratively to support businesses, jobs and inclusive growth
	Our environment
	We will champion climate action; protect the environment and improve the sustainability of Belfast
	Our city
	We will continue to support our city to recover and innovate in a safe, inclusive and sustainable way

The 2022/23 Improvement Plan was subsequently published on the Council website by 30th June in order to meet the statutory deadline.

- 3.6 The mid-year report on progress made against activities contributing to the Improvement Objectives contained within our 2022-23 Improvement Plan has been circulated. It sets out the key milestones and provides a summary of activity under each objective. The report also includes the most up to date position in relation to the performance indicators included within the plan.
- 3.7 Progress against all the objectives is in the most part on target with only a few milestones that have been slightly delayed, ragged amber or red, with the explanations for the delays contained within the report. A further report on progress will be presented to the panel at the end of quarter 3.
- 3.8 The Panel should note that the Guidance accompanying the legislation advises that what we learn about our performance in these reports should be used to:
- Help inform the content of our next Corporate Improvement Plan (due 30th June 2023) in terms both of ongoing activity and other actions that may address any shortfalls in the current Plan and;
 - Form the basis of our next *Year-End Performance Assessment Report* which must be made available to the Local Government Auditor by 30th September 2023.

Arrangements for Performance Improvement 2022-23

- 3.9 As the Panel is aware the 2022-23 NIAO audit and assessment of the Council's improvement activity is due to be completed by November 2022 and NIAO has advised that final reports would be received by November 2022. This will be presented to the Panel in the next report.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.10 Audit fees will be calculated on the basis of the time spent by the NIAO on Belfast's audit, the Panel will be updated once information has been received on this.

Equality and Good Relations/ Rural Need Implications

- 3.11 None associated with this report."

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

Performance Improvement – Northern Ireland Audit Office
Performance Audit and Assessment Report 2022/23

The Panel considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on progress to comply with the performance improvement duty, as laid out in Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act 2014 in relation to the 2022-23 Audit.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to approve the Belfast City Council Audit and Assessment report 2022-23

NIAO Audit and Assessment 2021 - 22

- 3.1 The Panel should note that the timeline for the Auditors fieldwork for 2022-23 has returned to the normal schedule since Covid and the NIAO audit and fieldwork has taken place from August to October 2022. The Performance Unit completed the Audit Self -Assessment report in September and have been working to supply the relevant information to the NIAO during September and October.

Audit Opinion

- 3.2 The Local Government Auditor (LGA) has certified the performance arrangements with an unqualified audit opinion, without modification and certifies an improvement audit and improvement assessment has been conducted. The LGA also states that, as a result, she believes that the Belfast City Council (the Council) has discharged its performance improvement and reporting duties, including its assessment of performance for 2021-22 and its 2022-23 improvement plan, and has acted in accordance with the Guidance.

Proposal for Improvement

- 3.3 The LGA has made no formal recommendations and just one proposal for improvement (detailed in the attached appendix) which the Council will work towards addressing and the Panel will be updated at the next meeting. Proposals for improvement are matters that may assist the Council in meeting its performance improvement responsibilities.
- 3.4 The proposal for improvement recommended for BCC states that the ‘Council should ensure that the Self-Assessment

report includes sufficient detail to provide the reader with a full understanding of Council's performance'. Further details are included along with the detailed observations within Annex B of the Appendix which had been circulated. The Council will work to respond accordingly to this proposal in its 2022-23 Performance Assessment.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.5** Audit fees will be calculated on the basis of the time spent by the NIAO on Belfast's audit, For the Council, it is estimated that this will cost £25,000 this year. As far as possible we will prepare all materials in advance to keep costs as low as possible.

Equality and Good Relations Implications

- 3.6** None associated with this report."

23. The Panel approved the Belfast City Council Audit and Assessment report 2022-

Date of Next Meeting

The Panel noted that its next meeting would take place at 12.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 7th March.

Chairperson



RAISING CONCERNS POLICY¹

1. Contents

This policy document includes the following sections:

- [Introduction \(section 2\)](#)
- [Aims of this policy \(section 3\)](#)
- [Types of concerns covered by this Policy \(section 4\)](#)
- [Raising Concerns: General \(section 5\)](#)
- [Raising Concerns: Our Workers \(section 6\)](#)
- [Raising Concerns: Others \(section 7\)](#)
- [Handling Concerns Raised \(section 8\)](#)
- [If you are the Subject of a Concern Raised \(section 9\)](#)
- [How to Contact Us \(section 10\)](#)
- [Outcomes \(section 11\)](#)
- [Summary of Roles and Responsibilities \(section 12\)](#)
- [Policy Control \(section 13\)](#)
- [Appendix 1: Raising Concerns Notification](#)
- [Appendix 2: Case Closure Summary](#)
- [Appendix 3: Routemap](#)

2. Introduction

Raising a concern in the public interest is the action of telling someone in authority, either internally and/or externally, for example regulators, about wrongdoing, risk or malpractice.²

As regards terminology used ‘whistleblowing’, ‘raising a concern’ or ‘speaking up’ generally refer to the same thing. In line with NI Audit Office guidance, this policy refers to raising concerns.

Why is a policy for Raising Concerns needed? All organisations face the risk of things going wrong from time to time, or of unknowingly harbouring illegal or unethical conduct. A culture of openness and accountability is essential in order to prevent such situations occurring and to address them when they do occur.

The Northern Ireland Audit Office’s (NIAO) ‘Raising Concerns: A Good Practice Guide’ sets out the benefits to an organisation of encouraging the raising of concerns, including:

¹ This policy does not form part of any contract of employment and BCC may amend it at any time.

² Raising Concerns: A good practice guide for the Northern Ireland public sector, NIAO June 2020

- Identifying wrongdoing as early as possible,
- Exposing weak or flawed processes and procedures which make the organisation vulnerable to loss, criticism or legal action,
- Ensuring critical information gets to the right people who can deal with the concerns,
- Avoiding financial loss and inefficiency,
- Maintaining a positive corporate reputation,
- Reducing risks to the environment or the health or safety of workers or the wider community,
- Improving accountability, and
- Deterring workers from engaging in improper conduct.

Who can raise a concern?

A concern may be raised by someone internal to the council, such as a worker³ or by someone external, such as a member of the public. In developing this policy, the council recognises the need for an open and honest culture where our workers and others have clear information on how to raise concerns that are in the wider public interest and are encouraged to do so in the knowledge that they will be listened to and treated with respect.

If an Elected Member has concerns regarding wrongdoing, risk or malpractice, they are advised to refer to the Northern Ireland Code of Conduct for Councillors, or to seek the advice of the council's Legal Services section.

3. Aims of this Policy

Belfast City Council is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with this commitment, we want our workers and others that we deal with who have serious concerns about any aspect of the council's work to come forward and voice those concerns. This policy aims to:

- Make you feel confident to raise concerns within the council, as soon as possible, rather than overlooking a problem or raising the concern externally,
- Give you avenues to raise concerns and receive feedback,
- Inform you how to take the matter further if you are dissatisfied with our response, and
- Reassure our workers that, in line with [legislation](#), you will be protected from reprisals or victimisation for raising concerns that you reasonably believe to be true and in the public interest.

4. Types of Concerns Covered by this Policy

The **nature of the issue being raised** will determine whether it is a concern, a grievance or a complaint, and subsequently the appropriate policy under which it should be addressed.

Raising a concern is where an individual discloses information about suspected danger, wrongdoing or illegality that is in the **public interest** (i.e. that affects others). The individual raising the concern is usually not personally affected by the danger, wrongdoing or illegality.

³ Worker, as defined in legislation, includes staff and may also include agency assignees, volunteers, consultants, those on secondment and contractors.

Consequently, they rarely have a personal interest in the outcome of the enquiries or investigation into their concern – they are simply trying to alert others.

The types of concerns covered by this policy include those matters that we, as a council, are the ‘prescribed’⁴ person for. Prescribed persons are responsible for the investigation of concerns that fall under their jurisdiction and protecting those raising concerns and their interests. For the council, these are:

- Matters which may affect the health or safety of any individual at work,
- Matters which may affect the health or safety of any member of the public, arising out of or in connection with the activities of persons at work,
- Compliance with the requirements of consumer protection legislation, and
- Compliance with the requirements of food safety legislation.

In addition, other types of concerns covered by this policy include, but are not restricted to:

- Risk to children and / or vulnerable adults,
- Conduct which is a criminal offence,
- Abuse of public funds,
- Potential fraud (see also the council’s fraud and bribery policy statement for more details),
- A breach of the employee **Code of Conduct**, and
- Conduct likely to damage the council’s reputation.

Personal grievances or dissatisfaction in respect of employment issues are not considered to be within the scope of this policy unless a particular case is in the public interest. These types of issues should be raised in line with our **Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure**. Examples of misconduct issues are set out under Appendix 2 of the procedure.

Complaints are not within the scope of this policy. Raising a concern is very different to making a complaint. Complaints should be made in line with our **Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy** which defines a complaint as ‘any oral or written expression of dissatisfaction by any person, however made, about the service, actions or inactions of the council or its officers which requires a response.’ It further sets out that, ‘A complaint is different from a whistleblowing concern, where an individual raises information as a witness about danger, wrongdoing or illegality that affects others.’

The routemap at [Appendix 3](#) shows the relationship between these policies. In addition, any concerns raised in relation to **safeguarding** or **modern slavery**, will be handled in line with the related council policy.

False Allegations

Although you are not expected to prove the truth of a disclosure, you will need to demonstrate that you have a reasonable belief that the concern is made in the public interest and that there is evidence of some malpractice.

If you raise a concern that you reasonably believe to be true which is subsequently not confirmed by initial enquiries or investigation, no action will be taken against you.

⁴ As set out in the Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order (Northern Ireland) 1999

However, to ensure the protection of all of our workers, those workers who raise a concern frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain and / or make an allegation that they do not reasonably believe to be true and not made in the public interest may be subject to disciplinary action.

5. Raising Concerns: General

Concerns can be raised in a number of ways, including in person or in writing, providing as much detail as possible. The background and history of the concern, giving names, dates and places where possible should be set out and the reason why you are particularly concerned about the situation. You should highlight if you wish to raise the matter under the council's Raising Concerns policy.

All concerns raised, regardless of their origin, will be subject to the same process as set out in [Section 8: Handling Concerns Raised](#).

[Raising Concerns Champion](#)

The council's Raising Concerns Champion is available for advice and guidance, either prior to formally raising a concern or at any stage during the process. The Raising Concerns Champion has a detailed knowledge of raising concerns and can provide advice to management, our workers, or any individual external to the council. Contact details can be found [here](#).

Openness, confidentiality and anonymity

In most cases the best way to raise a concern is to do so openly. By making their identity known, those raising concerns are more likely to secure a positive outcome. Openness makes it easier for us to address the issue, work out how to investigate the matter, understand the reasons for concern, get more information and report back on the outcome of preliminary enquiries / any investigation undertaken. This policy encourages you to put your name to your concern.

We recognise that there may be circumstances when you would prefer to speak to someone in confidence first. If this is the case, please state this at the outset. Confidentiality will only be breached if required by law and, where possible, we will gain your consent prior to undertaking any action that could identify you.

Concerns expressed anonymously are much less powerful as proper investigation may be impeded. Whilst we will accept anonymous concerns and commit to giving them due consideration, we would ask anyone thinking of making a disclosure to consider the following points:

- Detailed investigations may be more difficult, or even impossible, to progress if you choose to remain anonymous and cannot be contacted for further information,
- The information and documentation you provide may not be easily understood and may need clarification or further explanation,
- There is a chance the documents provided may reveal your identity,
- It may not be possible to remain anonymous throughout an in-depth investigation,

- It will not be possible to provide details of the outcome of any investigation to you if your disclosure is anonymous, and
- Statutory protection for a council worker is easier to obtain if a concern is raised openly. If a concern is raised anonymously it may not be possible to afford protection. Furthermore, it may be difficult to demonstrate to a tribunal that any detriment you have suffered is as a result of raising a concern.

We will make every effort to preserve your anonymity if you so wish. Please be aware that the investigation process may inadvertently reveal the source of the information and a statement from you may be required as part of the evidence.

Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations

Concerns raised will be treated in the strictest confidence and all personal data held securely in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Information obtained during initial enquiries or subsequent investigation will be maintained securely and confidentially so as not to prejudice future investigations.

6. Raising Concerns: Our Workers

The importance of the Raising Concerns policy is explicitly covered in our ***Code of Conduct for Belfast City Council Employees***. Our workers are often best placed to identify deficiencies and problems before any damage is done, so the importance of their role as the ‘eyes and ears’ of organisations cannot be overstated. Our Raising Concerns policy provides our workers with an opportunity to raise serious, **genuine** concerns rather than overlooking the problem or raising the concern externally.

Safeguards

The Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998 (amended in October 2017) defines an individual raising a concern as a “worker”, that is, someone inside the organisation. This policy therefore applies to Belfast City Council staff and may also include agency assignees, volunteers, consultants, those on secondment and contractors while they are engaged in carrying out duties for the Council.

The Order offers protection to ‘workers’ who disclose serious concerns made in the public interest. In accordance with this legislation workers **must not** suffer any detrimental treatment as a result of raising a concern. Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats, withholding a pay rise, objecting to a promotion, not giving training or any other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern.

The council will fulfil its responsibility to ensure that you are NOT harassed, victimised or otherwise disadvantaged when you raise a concern. We will take appropriate action including the application of the disciplinary and grievance procedure to protect a worker who raises a concern that they reasonably believe to be true and in the public interest. If you believe you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform one of the named officers in [Section 10: How to Contact Us](#) immediately. If it is not remedied, you should raise it formally using our ***Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure***.

If a worker is already the subject of disciplinary or redundancy procedures, these HR procedures will not be halted as a result of their raising a concern.

We trust that our workers will feel able to raise their concerns openly under this policy, however we recognise that some may want to raise their concerns confidentially (and anonymously). This policy document makes it clear that you can raise any concerns you have without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage.

How to raise a concern

If you have a concern about a risk, malpractice or wrongdoing at work, we hope that you will feel able to raise the matter first with your immediate line manager, Director or Business Support Manager. [Section 10: How to Contact Us](#) sets out a number of alternative options to raise your concerns. Alternatively, you can raise concerns through your trade union.

We recognise that the decision to raise a concern can be a difficult one to make but in uncovering malpractice you will be doing a service to the council, our ratepayers and members of the public. The earlier you express the concern the easier it will be to take action.

Contractors

As a first step, if you are a contractor, you should normally raise concerns with your manager, who should inform the most senior council officer who is dealing with the particular contract. If you do not have a manager, you should raise your concerns directly with the most senior council officer who is dealing with the contract. If you believe that your manager or the most senior council officer who is dealing with the contract is involved, you should approach one of the named officers set out in [Section 10: How to Contact Us](#).

All concerns are handled in the same way as set out in [Section 8: Handling Concerns Raised](#). If the concern relates to fraud, bribery or financial impropriety it will be referred to the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services.

7. Raising Concerns: Others

Anyone external to the council can raise the same types of concerns as a worker. As highlighted in the NIAO's good practice guide, **it is the issue being raised that is important, not the person raising it**. While the Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998 does **not** extend protection to members of the public who raise concerns, the council will endeavour, as far as possible, to apply the same principles to these concerns.

Information on how to raise a concern, whether that be in writing, verbally or in person, is available on our website. These options are also set out in this policy at [Section 10: How to Contact Us](#).

8. Handling Concerns Raised

What should I expect from the Council when I raise a concern?

If you raise a concern the council will (so long as you have not submitted your concern anonymously):

- Formally respond to your concern within seven days of receipt. You will receive a written response acknowledging that the concern has been received and indicating how we propose to deal with the matter,
- Offer you the opportunity to meet to discuss the issue,
- Take steps to ensure that you have appropriate support and advice,
- Agree a timetable for feedback. If this cannot be adhered to, we will let you know,
- Provide you with feedback to demonstrate that the concern has been appropriately considered and addressed, and
- In the case of our workers, take appropriate and timely action against anyone who victimises you.

The council has arrangements in place around how concerns should be handled. This includes guidance and procedures for helping to preserve confidentiality and the integrity of evidence as well as undertaking preliminary enquiries, conducting investigations and reporting on the outcome of these investigations. We will respect your confidentiality where this has been requested. Confidentiality will not be breached unless required by law and we will consult with you prior to any action that could identify you.

Receipt of concerns raised

It is essential that anyone who raises a concern is supported and, as such, **managers who receive disclosures** should:

- Have a positive and supportive attitude towards the individual raising a concern,
- Record as much detail as possible about the concern being raised and agree this record with the individual,
- Be aware of the process following the raising of the concern and explain this to the individual,
- Make sure the person raising the concern knows what to expect, for example feedback in relation to their concern,
- Assure the individual their confidentiality will be protected as far as possible,
- Make no promises and manage the expectations of the individual,
- In the case of one of our workers raising a concern, make clear that the organisation will not tolerate harassment of anyone raising a genuine concern and ask the individual to let you know if this happens,
- Refer the individual to available sources of support and advice, for example to Protect, a trade union or a professional association,
- Pass the information as quickly as possible to the council's Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS) or the Raising Concerns Champion who will log the case and consider the best way in which to respond (see below). The individual who has received the disclosure should do this by completing the **Raising Concerns Notification** template attached at [Appendix 1](#).

Cases will be carefully logged by the Raising Concern Champion in Audit, Governance and Risk Services to enable the investigation's progress to be monitored in a way that, where requested, safeguards the identity of the individual raising the concern. The Raising Concerns champion will refer the concern to the appropriate person for initial enquiries.

Initial Enquiries

In order to protect individuals and the council, initial enquiries will be made by the appropriate person(s) to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take. Concerns or allegations which fall within the scope of other existing procedures will normally be referred for consideration under these procedures. It may not be necessary to carry out a formal investigation in every case. The action taken by the council will depend on the nature of the concern. There may be a range of possibilities, depending on the nature of each case, for example:

- Explaining the context of an issue to the person raising the concern may be enough to alleviate their concerns,
- Minor concerns may be dealt with straight away by line management,
- A review by Audit, Governance and Risk Services as part of planned audit work might be sufficient to address the issue, for example, through a change to the control environment,
- There may be a role for the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) in addressing the concerns raised and either providing assurance or recommending changes to working practices,
- The matters raised may require a detailed internal investigation, or
- In some instances, concerns raised will be referred directly to the police or other statutory agencies.

The course of action will normally be agreed by Audit, Governance and Risk Services, Corporate Human Resources and Legal Services in consultation with senior departmental management, as appropriate. Audit, Governance and Risk Services will, in consultation, with these services, agree the approach to be taken and the appointment of officers to undertake a detailed investigation where this is required.

Detailed investigation

During any investigation, the amount of contact between you and the investigating officer considering the issues will depend on the nature of the matters raised, the potential difficulties involved and the clarity of the information provided. If necessary, the investigating officer will seek further information from you. Where any meeting is arranged, this can be off-site if you so wish and you can be accompanied by a trade union representative, a colleague or friend. We will take down a written summary of your concern and provide you with a copy after the meeting. We will also aim to give you an indication of how we propose to deal with the matter.

After the Investigation

The council accepts that you may wish to be assured that the concern you have raised has been properly considered and appropriately addressed. Feedback will be as set out in [Section 11: Outcomes](#).

As soon as possible following the completion of enquiries / investigation into any allegation made under this policy, the investigating officer should complete a **Case Closure Summary** template (attached at [Appendix 2](#)). This should be forwarded to the Raising Concerns Champion in AGRS to update the case log and, where applicable, ensure a response is issued to the individual who raised the concern.

9. If you are the Subject of a Concern Raised

If you are the subject of a concern raised, we will endeavour to inform you as soon as is practically possible. There are occasions when it may be necessary for initial enquiries to be undertaken first. In addition, where the concern raised is potentially serious in nature, the council may initially seek to validate the concern raised through observation, enquiry and / or liaison with the Police. Following these initial enquiries, you will then be informed of the allegations made and you will be given an opportunity to provide an explanation. We will apply the same considerations of confidentiality to the worker at the centre of the concern raised, as far as appropriate.

If following explanation and, if necessary, further investigation, there is no evidence to suggest misconduct, the matter will not be referred for disciplinary action. However, if there is evidence of potential misconduct there is a possibility that the council's Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure may be invoked to further investigate the matter.

10. How to contact us

There are several ways concerns can be communicated to the council. The options are set out below.

Option 1 – Raise your concern with management

We hope that our workers will feel able to raise the matter first with their immediate line manager, Director or Business Support Manager. Concerns can be raised verbally or in writing.

Option 2- Raise your concern by email

Concerns can be raised using the council's dedicated Raising Concerns mailbox, managed confidentially by the council's Audit, Governance & Risk Services.

Email: raisingconcerns@belfastcity.gov.uk

Option 3 – Raise your concern in writing or by telephone

Concerns can be raised in writing, by telephone or in person with the following officers:

- Raising Concerns Champion - Liam Mulholland, AGRS Manager and Cathy Haughey, Principal Auditor

These officers can be contacted at:

*Finance & Resources
9-21 Adelaide Street
Belfast BT2 8DJ*

Tel. council switchboard on **028 90320202**.

Option 4 - Raise your concern with senior, designated officers

If you feel unable to raise the matter with management or the Raising Concerns Champions, you should raise it with one of the following people:

- Chief Executive
- Director of Corporate Services (to be recruited)
- Director of Human Resources
- City Solicitor - Director of Legal and Civic Services
- Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services

These senior, designated officers can be contacted via the council switchboard on **028 90320202**.

Option 5 - Raise your concern with a regulator

We hope that this policy gives you the reassurance to raise a concern internally. However, it is also recognised that there may be circumstances where you may wish to report a concern to an outside body, such as a regulator. You can seek independent advice from an experienced organisation before doing this. **Protect** is an independent, charitable organisation that runs a free, confidential whistleblowing advice line. The number is 020 3117 2520 or you can contact them online via their website www.protect-advice.org.uk

In addition you may wish to report the concern to the Local Government Auditor (including the NIAO), who has been prescribed as a person to whom protected disclosures can be made under the Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998 in relation to the proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in relation to the provision of centrally funded public services and health service bodies. More information can be obtained from the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) on **028 9025 1062 or 028 90251000 or email raisingconcerns@niauditoffice.gov.uk**

11. Outcomes

The council accepts that you may wish to be assured that the concern you have raised has been properly considered and appropriately addressed. Subject to legal constraints, we will inform you of the outcome of any enquiries / investigation undertaken.

The response will be issued by AGRS, who will consult with the investigating officer(s), relevant Departmental Business Manager, Departmental Human Resources, Corporate Human Resources and Legal Services, where appropriate.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you can write to the Chief Executive and ask for the investigation and outcome to be reviewed. If you remain dissatisfied and you feel it is right to take the matter outside this process, the following are possible contact points:

- NI Commissioner for Complaints,
- Northern Ireland Audit Office (the Local Government Auditor),
- Relevant professional bodies or regulatory organisations,
- Your solicitor or
- The police.

Workers can rely on their rights under the Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998 (amended in October 2017). The Order gives you protection from victimisation if you make certain disclosures of information in the public interest. The provisions are quite complex and include a list of prescribed people outside of the council who can be contacted in certain circumstances. You should seek advice from your solicitor, your local Citizens Advice Bureau, the Ombudsman or Protect on the effect of the Order.

If you take the matter outside the council, you should make sure that you do not disclose confidential information. In order to make sure that you do not make any such disclosures you may want to check the position with the council's Legal Services section.

12. Summary of Roles and Responsibilities	
Members	Leadership, approve policy, receive and consider high level progress updates at the Audit & Risk Panel on concerns raised (as appropriate).
Chief Executive, City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services, Director of Human Resources, Head of AGRS	Potential contact points for those individuals raising concerns
Head of AGRS	<p>Allocated ownership of the following corporate policies on an interim basis pending the recruitment of the Director of Corporate Services.</p> <p>Potential contact point for those individuals raising concerns.</p>
Departmental management	<p>Management should ensure that their workers are aware of relevant council policies and procedures and ensure they are complied with.</p> <p>Management should be aware of what to do if someone raises a concern with them. (Refer to Section 8: Handling Concerns Raised) This includes notifying AGRS / Raising Concern Champion as soon as a concern has been raised, <u>prior to</u> any initial enquiries being undertaken, via the Raising Concerns Notification form.</p> <p>Managers may be asked, where appropriate, to undertake enquiries / investigations including liaising with the individual raising the concern, where possible.</p> <p>Business Support Managers will, where appropriate, be consulted on the investigation of concerns raised and will, where appropriate, keep senior departmental management and AGRS informed of the progress of investigations.</p>
Our Workers	<p>Worker, as defined in legislation, includes staff and may also include agency assignees, volunteers, consultants, those on secondment and contractors.</p> <p>Our workers should ensure they comply with relevant council policies and procedures.</p> <p>Our workers should be aware of what to do if someone raises a concern with them. (Refer to Section 8: Handling Concerns Raised)</p>
Audit, Governance and Risk Services	<p>Nominated officers in AGRS will undertake the role of the Raising Concern Champion.</p> <p>AGRS will undertake or provide advice and assistance to management in undertaking investigations.</p>

	<p>Provide the framework for the management of all concerns raised and the related investigations.</p> <p>Policy maintenance and communication. Ensuring staff awareness and training on the Raising Concerns policy is adequate for their specific needs, that is, workers, line managers, senior managers and Members.</p>
Raising Concerns Champion	<p>Potential contact point for those individuals raising concerns and available for advice and guidance, either prior to formally raising a concern or at any stage during the process.</p> <p>Will understand the types of public interest concerns the council can consider and redirect concerns where necessary to the appropriate body.</p> <p>Log concerns and ensure they are directed within the council to the most appropriate person for proper consideration and appropriate action, in liaison with Corporate Human Resources, Legal Services and senior departmental management, as appropriate.</p> <p>Liaise on an ongoing basis with those in the organisation handling concerns, to ensure progress is made and that appropriate feedback is provided to those raising the concerns.</p> <p>Where necessary, escalate concerns higher up the organisation.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the policy and the related roles and responsibilities across the organisation.</p>
External Audit – NI Audit Office	<p>Local government auditors have been prescribed as persons to whom protected disclosures can be made under the Public Interest Disclosure (NI) Order 1998 in relation to the proper conduct of public business, value for money, fraud and corruption in relation to the provision of centrally funded public services and health service bodies. More information can be obtained from the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) on 028 9025 1062 or 02890 251000 or email raisingconcerns@niauditoffice.gov.uk</p>
Departmental HR, Corporate HR and Legal Services	<p>Provision of specialist advice on investigations as well as potential disciplinary and or criminal matters.</p>

13. Policy Control

Policy or template title	Raising Concerns Policy (formerly Whistleblowing)
Document version	Updated November 2022
Departmental ownership	Corporate Services
Document owner	Claire O'Prey, Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS) (interim)
Officer responsible or document authority	Claire O'Prey, Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS)
Date of approval –	(Audit & Risk Panel) TBC
Date of last review	May 2019
Date of last update	March 2019
Updated by	Liam Mulholland, AGRS Manager
Date of next review	Annual review – December 2023
Approval details	Audit Assurance Board / Audit & Risk Panel
Locations of where document is held and referenced	AGRS / Interlink / external webpage
Intended audience	Communication process
Workers	Intercom, Interlink, and departmental briefings.
Elected members	Audit & Risk Panel training and reports, Member briefings
Contractors	BCC website, contract documents
Members of the public	BCC website

Appendix 1 Raising Concerns Notification

Raising Concerns Notification

NB: This form is to be completed, by the person receiving the concern, as soon as possible after the receipt of the concern. Please provide as much information as possible and e-mail the completed form to raisingconcerns@belfastcity.gov.uk and cc the Head of AGRS.

Private and Confidential		
	Case reference number (assigned by AGRS):	
1	Date concern received in the department:	
	How the concern was received e.g. telephone call / email / letter:	
2	Details of the concern: (Providing as much detail as possible for example; dates, times, names, places etc.)	
3	Name & contact details of person raising the concern (if known):	
4	Name & contact details of officer to whom concern was notified:	
5	Department / Service / to which concern relates:	
6	Details of the location at which the incident occurred:	
7	Details of any documents (electronic or hard copy) received with disclosure: NB Please forward all documentation with this notification, including any written record of a telephone call.	
8	Was confidentiality requested by the person raising the concern?	
9	Name & contact details of the manager of the relevant business area (contact point for ongoing correspondence / progress updates):	
10	Have you informed the individual that the concern would be passed to AGRS / Raising Concern Champion and that they would be in contact?	

Case Closure Summary - Post Investigation Outcome & Action

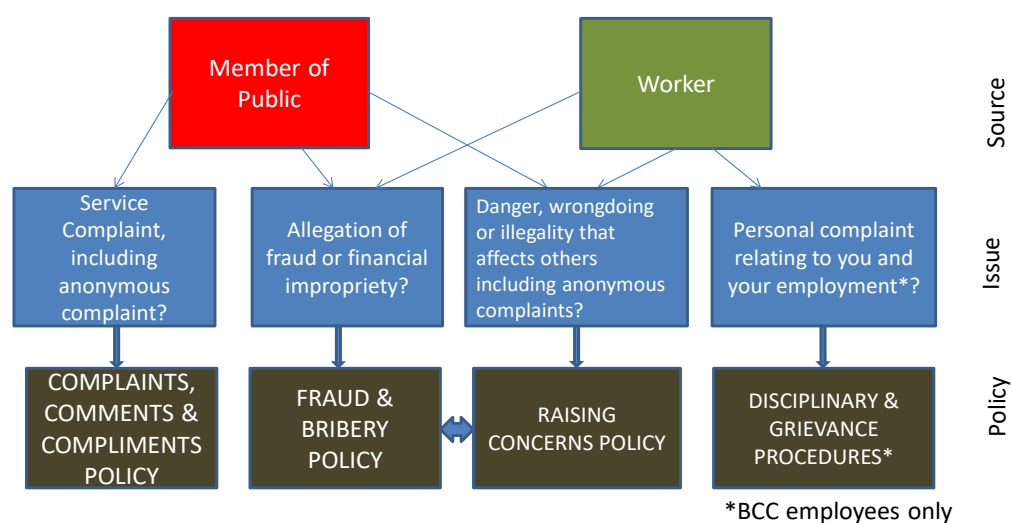
NB: To be completed by the relevant business area as soon as possible after the completion of initial enquiries / investigation into any concern made under the Raising Concerns Policy. Please provide as much information as possible and e-mail the completed form to raisingconcerns@belfastcity.gov.uk and cc the Head of AGRS.

Private and Confidential		
	Case reference number (assigned by AGRS):	
1	Date initial enquiries / Investigation completed (please attach a copy of the report):	
2	Outcome of initial enquiries / investigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - irregularity found (other than fraud) - no irregularity - fraud 	
3	Summary of findings of the investigation:	
4	If an irregularity / fraud was found, who was responsible? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worker - Contractor - Funded body / grant applicant - Other third party (please specify) - Collusion between internal and external parties - Unknown 	
5	Date and details of any contact with the person raising the concern:	
6	If appropriate, provide details of the financial implications of the concern raised / quantify any loss to the council:	
7	Type of action recommended as a result of the investigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Control improvements - Too early to determine - No action necessary / possible - Referral for investigation under disciplinary procedure - Referral for police investigation 	
8	Name & contact details in case further information is required:	

9	Notes / further information:	
10	To be completed by the Raising Concern Champion in AGRS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where appropriate, specific details of actions taken to address issues arising from the investigation: - Where appropriate, date and details of referral to other parties / organisations: - Date of final case closure: 	

Appendix 3 Routemap

The diagram below provides an overview of the relationship between the following council policies - Complaints, Comments & Compliments, Fraud and Bribery, Raising Concerns and the Disciplinary & Grievance procedures. Note that only workers are protected by legislation. More detail is provided in each policy.



In addition, any concerns raised in relation to **safeguarding** or **modern slavery**, will be handled in line with the related council policy.



Subject:	Requests for Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality
Date:	16 th December 2022
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Aisling Milliken, Functions and Exhibition 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"/>
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
1.1	This report, together with the attached appendix, contains the recommended approach in respect of each of the requests by external organisations for access to the City Hall function rooms received up to 2nd December 2022.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve the recommendations as set out in the appendix.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Background Information</u></p> <p>The current criteria for use of the function rooms used to review external applications is Functions permitted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> functions which support other events in the city and which are of demonstrable economic benefit to Belfast whether organised by the council or not

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • functions which demonstrably enhance the city's image nationally or internationally as a desirable commercial, business or tourist destination • functions designed to celebrate or commemorate a notable achievement or significant anniversary (25, 50, 100 years) by an organisation or body with close links to the city or province • functions organised by recognised local community or voluntary sector groups for non-profit and non-political purposes
3.2	<p>Functions not permitted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conferences, meetings, seminars, performances, wedding receptions, private parties or receptions and similar booking requests in the prestige function rooms • functions, which have as their principal purpose the generation of commercial gain for the organisers. Charity-fundraising functions are managed by the Lord Mayor's Office. • functions which have no compelling links to the council or the city specifically and which could instead use local private sector facilities • functions which have as their primary purpose the advancement of any political or religious cause or campaign or are otherwise potentially contentious or involve significant reputation risks for the council. • functions which involve exceptionally large or disruptive set-ups or pose a real and tangible risk to the fabric of the building or grounds <p><u>Key Issues</u></p>
3.3	<p>The existing revised criteria and scale of charges have been applied to the various requests received and the recommendations herein are offered to the Committee on this basis for approval.</p> <p>The attached schedule covers 12 applications for functions, scheduled for 2023 and 2026.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None.</p>
4.0	Document Attached
	Schedule of function requests received up to 2nd December 2022.

DECEMBER 2022 CITY HALL FUNCTION APPLICATIONS

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2023 EVENTS						
European Youth Parliament	21 February 2023	NI Regional Session of Youth Parliament - teams of secondary students debate and present their ideas and solutions on current topics. Numbers attending – 100	B & D	No (Charity)	No (they provide their own lunches for attendees)	Approve No charge No hospitality
Donegal Pass Community Forum	2 March 2023	Launch of 'Language Matters' Research – project linked to language provision delivered by community groups. Numbers attending – 60	D	No charge as community group	Yes, tea and coffee reception as community group	Approve No Charge Tea and Coffee Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for tea and coffee</i>
John Hewitt Society	2 March 2023	40th Anniversary Celebration of John Hewitt Freedom of City of Belfast - reception and celebration evening. Numbers attending – 60 – 100 tbc	C	No charge as not for profit group	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>
Belfast Knights	3 March 2023	Belfast Knights 30th Anniversary Celebration - Drinks Reception, Awards, Dinner and entertainment. Numbers attending – 250 - 300	C & D	No Charge as voluntary group	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>
Irish FA Foundation/ GAA and Ulster Rugby	21 March 2023	Sports Inspire Awards Gala Dinner to celebrate and reward volunteers in the Inspire Programme run by Irish FA, Ulster GAA and Ulster Rugby. Numbers attending – 200	C and D	No charge as charity	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

DECEMBER 2022 CITY HALL FUNCTION APPLICATIONS

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	16 May 2023	Involvement Recognition event to acknowledge how service users and advisers have helped develop Trust Services. Numbers attending – 80	C	Charge £115	No hospitality	Approve Charge £115 No hospitality
Public Health Agency	17 May 2023	Cross-border Healthcare Intervention Trials In Ireland Network (CHITIN) Closure Event – celebrating a cross-border partnership between the Public Health Agency (PHA) and the Health Research Board (HRB) in the Republic of Ireland, delivering 11 Healthcare Intervention Trials. PHA is community partner of Belfast Agenda. Numbers attending – 250	A & C	Charge £300	No Hospitality	Approve Charge £300 No hospitality
Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry	23 June 2023	Annual President's Lunch – annual lunch for the NI Chamber of Commerce and Industry to mark economic benefits to the City. Numbers attending – 400	B	Charge £300	No Hospitality	Approve Charge £300 No hospitality
Irish Football Association Foundation	2 November 2023	IFA McDonalds Community Football Awards – Celebrating the volunteers who help deliver their programs – reception, dinner,	C & D	No (Charity)	No Hospitality	Approve No Charge No Hospitality

DECEMBER 2022 CITY HALL FUNCTION APPLICATIONS

		entertainment and awards. Numbers attending - 190				
EAPRIL (European Association for Practitioner Research on Improving Learning)	23 November 2023	APRIL Conference 2023 Dinner for guests attending their 3-day conference taking place in QUB. Numbers attending – 150 - 250	A & B	No (Waivered as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
St Brigid's GAC	25 November 2023	St Brigid's GAC 25th Anniversary Celebration - Drinks Reception, Awards, Dinner and entertainment. Numbers attending - 350 - 400	C & D	No Charge as voluntary group	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>
2026 EVENTS						
NAHT – National Association of Head Teachers	2 May 2026	NAHT Conference 2026 Gala Dinner for guests attending their 2-day conference taking place in ICC Belfast. Numbers attending – 320	A & B	No (Waivered as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

This page is intentionally left blank

Disability Working Group

Tuesday, 22nd November, 2022

DISABILITY WORKING GROUP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor McMullan (Chairperson);
Aldermen Copeland and Haire.

In attendance: Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal
and Civic Services;
Ms. S. Williams, Governance and Compliance Manager;
Mr. R. Connelly, Policy, Research and Compliance Officer;
Ms. S. McNeill, Policy, Research and Compliance Officer;
Ms. J. Beck, Sign Language Interpreter;
Mr. M. Johnston, Language Officer;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer.

Election of Chairperson for November 2022 – May 2023

It was agreed that Councillor McMullan be appointed as the Chairperson to the Disability Working Group from November, 2022 until the Local Government Elections, scheduled to be held in May 2023.

Apologies

There were no apologies received.

Terms of Reference and Membership

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services introduced the Language Officer who would be supported by the Policy, Research and Compliance Officers. She referred to Councillor McMullan's suggested amendments to the Terms of Reference. Discussion followed in relation to the membership of the Working Group and the Senior Democratic Services Officer provided clarity around membership protocol. A Member raised concerns about the optics of the Working Group in relation to disability and stated that it was often inadequate due to those with disabilities not being represented at meetings and that it was important to sustain engagement in this regard.

The Members agreed that external stakeholders would be invited to every other meeting or when the Working Group considered it necessary.

The Language Officer raised the issue of meeting accessibility and informed the Working Group that remote meetings were not accessible or suitable for those with certain disabilities.

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services stated that she appreciated there was much to consider. A Member highlighted the importance of Elected Member engagement in order to engage external groups and individuals.

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services referred to the work that the Language Officer had undertaken in relation to the International Day for People with Disabilities event. She advised the Members that there would be a Q and A session at the end of the event which could be used to understand what is and isn't working from a disability perspective.

The Senior Democratic Services Officer advised that in relation to the suggestion of outside bodies on the membership, the Members give this consideration in order to reach a consensus and an update would be given at the next meeting. He confirmed that Party Leaders had been contacted seeking nominations on the membership of the Working Group and this would be followed up.

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services referred to the wording in the Terms of Reference relating to the Disability Strategy and the paragraph suggested by Councillor McMullan. She suggested inviting the Director of City and Organisational Strategy and representatives from Place and Economy to inform the Working Group about what was already going on in the organisation which would in turn inform the Working Group's Terms of Reference. She further advised that there was a broader piece of work that she would like the Working Group to hear about in relation to how disability was being addressed in strategic policies, however, she was conscious of resource and handling expectations.

One Member acknowledged the work that the Language Officer had delivered. In relation to organisational strategy on disability, the Member welcomed Belfast Agenda engagement. Another Member stated that it was important to see what was already being undertaken in the organisation to avoid duplication.

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services referred to the draft Terms of Reference at appendix 3 and proposed shortening the second bullet point to 'to support the development of a new Council Disability Strategy' which was accepted by the Group. She proposed that a question relating to engagement be asked at the event on 5th December which would help to inform membership.

It was agreed that the Working Group would meet again in January at which point it would be decided on how often the Working Group would meet going forward.

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services advised that she would undertake horizon scanning with the Chairperson and the Governance and Compliance Manager in advance of the next meeting.

International Day for People with Disabilities event

The Language Officer provided the Members with details about the event which would take place on 5th December at the City Hall. The theme for this event was 'Employability for Everyone' which would focus on building an accessible and inclusive world for persons with disabilities working in Belfast.

The programme for this event would include keynote speeches from Sean Fitzsimons, disability advocate and the Project Lead for the Harkin Summit in Belfast

earlier this year and Edyth Dunlop from NI Union for Supported Employment. There would be a Question and Answer session with Sean, Edyth and Catherine Christy, HR Manager.

The Language Officer added that he hoped that the Members could attend the event.

Noted.

**Pavement cafés (this was an issue raised by Member
at Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in October 2022)**

It was noted that an invitation to the Working Group had not been extended to the Deputy Lord Mayor which had been an oversight. The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services advised that she would speak to the Deputy Lord Mayor in relation to the matter raised.

Noted.

The Chairperson thanked the Officers for forming the Working Group and for their contribution.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group

Wednesday, 14th December, 2022

THE CITY HALL/CITY HALL GROUNDS INSTALLATIONS WORKING GROUP MINUTES

HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Beattie (Chairperson);
Alderman Dorrian; and
Councillor O'Hara.

In attendance: Ms. K. Mullen, Project Sponsor;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

There were no apologies received.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 26th October, 2022 were taken as read and signed as correct.

City Hall Statues Update

The Project Sponsor reminded the Members that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 28th March 2022, had agreed that the City Hall Statues – Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken be moved to Stage 3; committed on the Capital Programme; and that the necessary procurement processes be initiated, as required with contracts to be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tenders and full commitment to deliver.

She advised that the first stage of the procurement process had now concluded that is, PQQ (pre-qualification questionnaire), with 5 artists being shortlisted to ITT (invitation to tender) stage. A moderation panel would consider the submitted proposals and would make recommendations to the Installations: City Hall/City Hall Working Group in February 2023 for appointment of a selected artist. Based on previous experience of commissioning public art pieces it was expected that the process could take 6 to 9 months, dependent on the project plan submitted by the appointed artist and subject to obtaining the necessary statutory approvals. It was envisaged that both pieces should be installed in City Hall grounds late autumn 2023. This is caveated by securing all the necessary approvals and that there was no time delay or costs implications of materials selected by the artist for the final pieces. Discussions had been ongoing with subject matter experts. The Mary Ann McCracken Foundation had requested that her statue be placed nearest to Linenhall Library in the grounds. This would be to the righthand side of

front doors of City Hall. Regular updates would be provided to Installations: City Hall/City Hall Grounds Working Group during the process.

The Project Sponsor informed the Working Group that, as the project moved forward, the Members would be asked to give consideration to the planned public unveiling of both pieces. It was expected that there would be significant public interest generated as the project moved forward, therefore, it was essential that a narrative and context was agreed and developed around the installation of the new pieces. The Members would be asked to make a recommendation on the type of unveiling ceremony working in partnership with the Mary Ann McCracken Foundation and Winifred Carney subject matter expert.

£300,000 had been ringfenced in Council's Capital Budget for both statues.

The Chairperson requested that the 5 artists' visuals be circulated to the Members when available.

The Members of the Working Group considered the information provided and:-

- i. Noted that the PQQ stage for the installation of the Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken statues had concluded with 5 artists being shortlisted to ITT (invitation to tender) stage;
- ii. Noted that ITT documents would be issued early December with a return date of end of January, with a selected artist to be appointed February 2023;
- iii. Noted the request from the Mary Ann McCracken Foundation that her statue be placed nearest to Linenhall Library given her connections to the Library;
- iv. Noted the expected timeline for design, manufacture and installation of the two new statues (subject to necessary statutory approvals being in place); and
- v. noted the information in relation the to public unveiling arrangements and the development of a narrative around each of the new pieces.

Frederick Douglass Update

The Project Sponsor updated the Working Group on the current status of the design, manufacture and installation of a statue to commemorate Frederick Douglass in Belfast.

The Members were reminded that, following approvals, a 2-stage procurement process with one artist appointed to undertake the design, installation and manufacture of a statue to Frederick Douglass had concluded.

- Location (junction of Rosemary Street/Lombard Street
- Tender assessed Quality/Cost 80/20

The Project Sponsor provided details of the Stage 2 - ITT (Invitation to Tender) which had involved 3 shortlisted artists who had submitted concept ideas and maquettes which were assessed by the moderation panel.

The artist would be invited to a project initiation meeting in mid-December where discussion would take place on the proposed programme of works to include a confirmed installation date in summer 2023. She explained that this would be caveated by securing all the necessary approvals, that there was no time delay or costs implications of materials selected by the artist for the final piece; and that there were no issues/delays with services given the piece would be located in the City Centre. Regular updates would be provided to the Installations: City Hall/City Hall Grounds Working Group during this process.

The Project Sponsor advised that, as the project moved forward, the Members would be asked to give consideration and make a recommendation to the planned public unveiling in partnership with the Department for Communities and Professor Christine Kinealy Subject Matter Expert on Frederick Douglass. It was expected that there would be significant public interest generated as the project moved forward, therefore, it was essential that a narrative and context was agreed and developed around the installation of the new piece.

The Department for Communities had provided match funding towards the statue. Other avenues of funding were being explored.

It was agreed that the maquette, a small scale model of the successful sculpture's piece, be left in the Chief Executive's office for the Members to view.

The Members of the Working Group considered the information provided and:-

- i. Noted that, following moderation of the ITT (invitation to tender), Endeavour Art Studios had been appointed to undertake the design, manufacture and installation of Frederick Douglass in Rosemary Street; and
- ii. noted the information in relation to the public unveiling arrangements and development of a narrative around the new piece.

Baroness May Blood - Request for Memorial

The Project Sponsor reminded the Members that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 18th November 2022, had agreed to refer to the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group a request from Councillor Murray for the creation of a permanent memorial to the late Baroness May Blood. The Members agreed at this time that this did not have to be within City Hall Grounds and that other locations across the city could be explored.

The Members considered the request for a permanent memorial to the late Baroness May Blood in terms of location and form; and gave consideration to a permanent memorial to the late Baroness May Blood as an emerging project on the capital programme in order that officers could scope potential options to include identification of suitable locations.

A Member commented that significant background work would need undertaken before work commenced, and the family should be contacted in the first instance to ensure that they were content with a permanent memorial. The Project Sponsor advised that she would report back in relation to discussions with the family at the next Working Group in February 2023.

The Members agreed that a permanent memorial, in a form to be agreed in consultation with the family, to the late Baroness May Blood be included as an Emerging Project on Council's Capital Programme for approval by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to allow officers to explore options.

Lord Pirrie Memorial Request to Relocate

The Project Sponsor sought the views of the Members on a request from the Pirrie family to have Lord Pirrie's memorial relocated to City Cemetery. The memorial was currently located in east lawn of City Hall near to the Titanic Memorial.

The Working Group were informed that the Pirrie family had asked that the memorial be returned to its original location on the Pirrie/Carlisle grave plot in the City Cemetery or that the Council made arrangements to have a copy installed there. The family were aware of the Council's recent investment in the City Cemetery and were of the opinion that Lord Pirrie, as one of the most historically notable persons buried in the cemetery, there would be merit in having his memorial returned. This would also link in with the recently completed City Cemetery Heritage Centre project. Lord Pirrie died on 7th June 1924 so the 100th anniversary of his death was approaching and the family would be keen to hold events on the centenary, the main one at the grave.

The Project Sponsor provided background about the Pirrie bust in relation to location and ownership. The Members noted that officers were meeting with the family representatives in the New Year for further discussion and would provide further updates to the Members at the next Working Group.

The Project Sponsor remarked that if the Council could facilitate the request given Lord Pirrie's significance in the city it would be a fitting move. The Project Sponsor would provide an update at the next Working Group.

The Members of the Group noted the request received and provided their initial views and that they would be minded to accede to the request to relocate Lord Pirrie to his graveside in City Cemetery.

Carson Tile and Plaque (Verbal Update)

The Project Sponsor confirmed that she was waiting on confirmation from the Facilities Department in relation to a date for Redhead to carry out the installation of the tile, however, it would be towards the end of January.

Noted.

National Day of Reflection – Families Bereaved Through Covid (Verbal Update)

The Project Sponsor reminded the Members that a request had been received from Families Bereaved Through Covid to hold a remembrance service in the City Hall. The request had gone to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration and a remembrance event was scheduled to take place in City Hall on 23rd March 2023. The Lord Mayor would be in attendance.

In relation to the Lost Lace programme, the Project Sponsor advised that the Council would not be hosting the programme as there was no funding available.

Noted.

Schedule of Meetings

The following dates had been identified for meetings of the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group for the period from January to December, 2023.

- Wednesday 22nd February
- Wednesday 7th June
- Wednesday 9th August
- Wednesday 11th October
- Wednesday 6th December

(All meetings will commence at 12.00 pm)

The Senior Democratic Services Officer advised that if another date was required prior to the May elections this would be facilitated in consultation with the Chairperson.

Noted.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

Social Policy Working Group

Tuesday, 13th December, 2022

MEETING OF THE SOCIAL POLICY WORKING GROUP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor O'Hara (Chairperson);
Councillors Heading, Hutchinson, McLaughlin and Murray.

In attendance: Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mr. K. Heaney, Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty;
Ms. C. Patterson, Inclusive Growth-Policy and
Programme Officer;
Ms. L. Toland, Senior Manager - Economy
Ms. C. Hutchinson, Strategic Planning and Policy Officer;
Ms. N. Irvine, Enterprise and Business Growth Officer;
Ms. C. Sheridan, Director of Human Resources;
Ms. M. Robinson, Employability and Skills Officer;
Mr. L. Murray, Strategic Category Manager; and
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for the inability to attend were received from Alderman Copeland and Councillor Bunting.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 18th October were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Actions Updates

The Working Group noted the actions update report which had been circulated in advance.

Social Value Procurement Reporting

The Strategic Category Manager updated the Social Policy Working Group on the delivery of social value outcomes via open tender competitions awarded in accordance with the Council's Social Value Procurement Policy 'SVPP' for the reporting period, 1st October 2022 to 30th November 2022.

The Strategic Category Manager advised that it was intended that this report would be provided every 2 months in line with scheduled Social Policy Working Group meetings. He referred to Appendix 1 and the tables contained therein which had been circulated in advance with the report. There was discussion about the rationale for the selection of the social value organisational behaviours for inclusion in the applicable contracts, and the need for greater clarity to understand the use of the social value organisational behaviours and the social value weighting. It was suggested that the inclusion of an explanation for the rationale for the selection of organisational behaviours at Table 2 might assist in providing greater transparency and assurance. It was agreed that the Strategic Category Manager would also provide Members with a specific session on worked examples and the application of the Social Value Procurement Toolkit in the New Year to ensure Members were confident with the approach.

The Strategic Category Manager informed Members that as this was an evolving area of work, an internal review team had been set up to capture the learning and continually improve and develop the process.

The Members agreed that officers continue to refine the report in order to further develop the reporting process in advance of it being presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. The report would therefore be presented to the February meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for notation purposes, subject to the discussion at the next Social Policy Working Group.

Belfast Business Promise Current Status

The Strategic Planning and Policy Officer provided an update on the Belfast Business Promise Progress which included details of the dedicated staff resources that would join M Robinson who has been appointed as the Belfast Business Promise Co-ordinator to form the Belfast Business Promise team. She advised that the brand and marketing materials had been updated and referred Members to the engagement pack included at Appendix 1. Details were also provided on the engagement activities and the current status in relation to the accreditation process, partners and programme of support. A detailed update, including the internal Council assessment against the Belfast Business Promise pledges would be brought to the next Social Policy Working Group meeting.

It was noted that the Lord Mayor would host an event for the anchor institutions to secure their support to the Promise on 9th February and the input from the Working Group at this would be valued. In response to a query, the Strategic Planning and Policy Officer provided clarity around anchor institutions being those large locally rooted organisations in the city.

The engagement to date has resulted in a number of organisations expressing interest in becoming early adopters of the Belfast Business Promise for inclusion in the pilot. It was noted that Belfast Trust would be a key anchor and would be included as an early adopter and that NICVA should also be approached. The Strategic Planning and Policy Officer confirmed that NICVA would be included, along with the VCSE Panel. She highlighted the importance of securing a mix of organisations for inclusion in the pilot which would go live in March 2023. The Chairperson welcomed the new staff working on this process.

Noted.

Living Wage Accreditation (Verbal Update)

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy advised Members that the application had now been submitted to the Living Wage Foundation and it was hoped that positive news would be received after Christmas.

Discussion highlighted the value of engaging with the work that was taking place organically within communities, for example, in East Belfast. It was noted that the public relations and positive messaging around the accreditation would be maximised, once the Council's accreditation was secured.

Noted.

Employee Diversity Report

The Director of Human Resources provided the Working Group with information on the diversity of the workforce living within the Belfast City Council area, and detail on the post codes that those staff lived in. This was the bi-annual update to the Working Group, with the next report scheduled for June 2023.

The Members noted that some of the diversity information was collected from staff on a voluntary basis, that is, ethnic origin and disability. This information was collected through the recruitment process or through a voluntary monitoring exercise. A further voluntary monitoring exercise was due to be completed in 2023. The Director of Human Resources agreed to confirm the timing of this exercise.

She advised that there had been minimal change over the past 6 months, with 51.8% of employees residing in the Belfast City Council area. A number of these changes were referenced and, as information from the Census 2021 was released, this would be incorporated into future reports, which may identify more changes.

Clarity was sought in terms of the extent to which positive discrimination could be applied to encourage under-represented groups to apply for jobs, for example, ethnic minorities, and whether there was scope for additional measures to attract younger people into the organisation, for example, graduates, non-graduates and those without 5 GCSEs.

In response, the Director of Human Resources provided details of the activities that were currently used, including welcoming statements on job advertisements. She advised that the organisation carried out a review of the composition of the workforce and employment practices (Article 55) and liaised with the Equality Commission in this regard and that the new census would provide focus. She emphasised the importance of the outreach work in specific areas with under-represented groups to remove barriers.

The Director of Human Resources confirmed that the age profile of the Council was weighted towards the older population, and there was a need to look at how to attract younger people into the organisation. Human Resources was working with Economic Development in relation to establishing academies, graduate schemes and internships, and had engaged with the Belfast Metropolitan College pre-COVID19. However, there were budgetary implications. She stated that the matter needs considered holistically and CMT would be looking at the issue of succession planning. It was suggested that

this might need to be driven centrally in order to develop mechanisms to support succession planning across the organisation.

A recent report at the City Growth and Regeneration Committee 'Improving Employability Outcomes' was referenced and suggested as useful item for consideration at a future meeting of the Working Group. The Director of Human Resources referenced the Council's participation schemes such as the JobStart scheme and agreed to follow up on the report with Economic Development.

A Member raised the matter of sexual orientation and disability and referred to recent statistics showing that Northern Ireland was lagging behind the rest of the UK in terms of disability employment levels. The Director of Human Resources provided assurance that the organisation worked closely with disability organisations and occupational health to ensure reasonable adjustments and support were provided for those with disabilities.

The Working Group noted the contents of the report.

Community Wealth Building

The Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty provided an update on the recent publication of the DFC Ministerial established Independent Expert Advisory Panel on Community Wealth Building recommendations report and how this related to work underway within Council.

The Panel report published set out 26 recommendations of differing scale and complexity covering 6 pillars of policy, legislative and practical changes.

The Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty explained that the report highlighted the need for the principles and practical approaches to Community Wealth Building (CWB) to be incorporated within any emerging Programme of Government. It also acknowledged the challenges around capacity building and that a locally based approach owned by communities should be the focus. The report acknowledged the good practice already underway within the region which should be recognised and built upon. It was noted that the Council was progressing many of the areas and approaches recommended and, whilst not explicitly referred to as community wealth building, the Council's approach to Inclusive Growth and the underpinning enabling levers and key projects being brought forward would help deliver the ambitions of community wealth building.

The Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty advised the Members that further updates would be brought to the Working Group on the continued delivery of the pillars of work as well as how other levers would contribute to the ambitions and principles around Community Wealth Building. It was noted that this model would continue to evolve and be brought forward through the Social Policy Working Group.

Discussion ensued and the Members accepted the report, highlighting that community wealth building needed to benefit the community and that clarity was needed to understand the opportunities, community needs and expectations. It was noted that a more detailed assessment would help to inform an action plan and next steps for the Social Policy Working Group. The Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty agreed to bring back a more detailed assessment and critique of the current position in relation to community wealth building pillars, identifying the gaps and opportunities.

Schedule of 2023 Meetings

The following dates had been identified for meetings of the Social Policy Working Group for the period from January to December, 2023.

- Tuesday 14th February
- Tuesday 15th August
- Tuesday 14th November

(All meetings will commence at 2.00 p.m.)

There was discussion around the agreed schedule in the context of the elections and the mandate of the current and post-election Working Group.

A Member requested that the legal advice on the use of Zero Hours contracts included in the Social Value Procurement Policy be brought to the next meeting, prior to the elections, as the timeframe for the social value weighting to be implemented for tenders over £30k was April 2023.

A Member brought an article to the attention of the Working Group which aligned with the Community Wealth discussion and made use of the circular economy. The article which was circulated to the Working Group related to a Scottish model for foodbanks and might be worth exploring as to whether this is a model that could be applied locally. The Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty advised that work was underway around sustainable food with the Climate team and that a report would be brought back to the Working Group.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank

All Party Working Group on the City Centre

Friday, 2nd December, 2022

ALL PARTY WORKING GROUP ON THE CITY CENTRE MINUTES HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor O'Hara (Chairperson); and
Councillors de Faoite, Long and McCann.

In attendance: Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration;
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mr. S. Dolan, Senior Development Manager;
Ms. D. Kelly, Programme Manager;
Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services ;
Mr. K. Heaney, Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty;
Ms. N. Doak, Portfolio and Programme Co-ordinator;
Ms. K. Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager;
Mr. J. Uprichard, Business and Research Development
Manager;
Mrs. D. Smith, Neighbourhood Service Integration
Manager;
Mrs. C. McKeown, Regeneration Project Officer; and
Mrs. G. Boyd, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was received from Councillor Hutchinson.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 2nd November were agreed.

The Chairperson asked for an update on stats around policing aspects in the City Centre. The Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty agreed to get the information requested and circulate it to the Members of the Working Group. The Chairperson asked and it was agreed that officers include this item as a standard agenda item for future meetings.

Future City Centre Programme - Presentation

The Director of City Regeneration reminded Members of the Working Group of the strategic framework that shaped the focus of the work on the city centre. She highlighted that the footfall within the City Centre had increased by 40% on 2021 and she agreed to circulate a full update to Members of the Working Group. She advised that the Future City Centre programme was reimagining and revitalising the city centre to create a healthy, shared, vibrant

and sustainable environment where people want to live, work, visit and invest. The aim was to create a shared space that would intrinsically connect to, and support, surrounding communities, the wider city and region. She outlined the various elements that the team were focussing on, highlighting a number of 'game changers' that would help drive economic growth within the city centre. She reminded Members of the Working Group of the six pillar approach behind the FCC work and highlighted that behind each pillar were strands of work. She outlined a number of major developments within the City Centre that were in concept and planning stage. Members of the Working Group asked that officers differentiate planning approvals and work that had actually commenced on the ground. The Director of City Regeneration agreed to include this information in future meetings.

The Director then outlined the plans for Belfast's newest tourism destination, Belfast Stories, and reminded Members of the location for Belfast Stories and what the hub would contain. She went on to outline a number of strategic acquisitions that included the site for Belfast Stories and detailed some of the delivery highlights achieved to date, including new active travel enabling infrastructure, Belfast Entries projects, along with many of the projects undertaken as part of the Covid Recovery effort.

Noted.

A Bolder Vision

The Senior Development Manager recapped on A Bolder Vision for Belfast plans and on the visioning principles behind A Bolder Vision for Belfast. He outlined a number of key moves within the vision document – to reimagine the inner ring road, promote city centre living, embrace the river and create a civic spine that would help to connect key institutions, for example, the Ulster University and Queens University. He outlined the next steps for A Bolder Vision for Belfast and asked Members of the Working Group for their feedback. A Member of the Working Group raised a query in relation to residents' parking schemes within the city centre and asked if this was something that should be elevated and asked that this item be referred to the Climate and City Resilience Committee in due course. Officers agreed to circulate the presentation to Members.

Noted.

City Centre Living

The Senior Development Manager gave a brief update setting the context of the work around housing led regeneration and city centre living. He highlighted the scale of opportunity for living in the City Centre. He advised that this item would be discussed in detail at the planned City Centre Living workshop in January.

The Working Group noted the information which had been provided.

Vacant to Vibrant

The Senior Development Manager updated Members of the Working Group on the success of the Vacant to Vibrant project. He highlighted that there had been a 2% year on year rise in vacancy rates since 2019 and currently there was a 22% vacancy rate within the city centre and this equated to £7.85m in lost rates due to vacant units. He outlined that the Vacant to Vibrant scheme was helping to support the city centre's revitalisation. He explained the grants that were available through the vacant to vibrant scheme and the wrap around support available for those applying for the grants. The wrap around services included assistance with preparing business cases, social media and marketing training and match

making occupiers with landlords. He went on to outline the number of applications that had been received to date, the potential boost to the rate base, along with the potential for economic impact. Members of the Working Group asked for more detailed information in relation to the cluster of businesses in a particular area.

Noted.

Night Time Economy (Verbal Update)

The Director of City Regeneration gave Members of the Working Group a high level overview of work that was ongoing to assist the revitalisation effort of the night-time economy. Members of the Working Group asked and it was agreed that the next meeting of Working Group would be in person, to include representation from external bodies involved in the Purple Flag such as the BIDs and to focus solely on a detailed discussion about the night time economy.

Chairperson

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Recruitment of the post of Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services
Date:	16th December, 2022
Reporting Officer:	John Walsh, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Christine Sheridan, Director of Human Resources

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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The Committee will be aware that at its meeting on 23rd September, it agreed a revised structure and implementation plan for the Corporate Management Tier with further updates on progress brought back to committee for Members' agreement at key stages, namely the timeframe associated with the recruitment to vacant leadership roles.
1.2	The purpose of this report is to seek permission to recruit to the post of Deputy Chief Executive/ Director of Corporate Services and agree the names of the Elected Members to constitute the shortlisting and interview selection panel for this post.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	It is recommended that the post of Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services be recruited on a permanent basis and that the Selection Panel for the post comprises the

	Chairperson of the SP and R Committee, the Deputy Chairperson of the SP and R Committee (or their nominees), one additional Member from the SP and R Committee from a Political Party not already represented by the Chair and Deputy Chair, along with the Chief Executive (or his nominee) and a Director.										
2.2	It is important that the Elected Members on the selection panel for this post, provide a balance where practicable in terms of both gender and community background.										
3.0	Main Report										
3.1	The post of Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services will be publicly advertised in accordance with the Local Government Staff Commission's Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection.										
3.2	Recruitment Timetable – Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Public Advertisement / Closing Date</td><td>5 January 2023/ 26 January 2023</td></tr> <tr> <td>Short-listing Meeting (Stage 1)</td><td>W/C 6 February 2023 (2 hours)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Virtual Assessment Centre</td><td>W/C 13 February 2023 (All day)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Short-listing Meeting (Stage 2)</td><td>W/C 21 February 2023 (2 hours)</td></tr> <tr> <td>Final Interviews</td><td>W/C 6 March 2023 (All day, times TBC)</td></tr> </table>	Public Advertisement / Closing Date	5 January 2023/ 26 January 2023	Short-listing Meeting (Stage 1)	W/C 6 February 2023 (2 hours)	Virtual Assessment Centre	W/C 13 February 2023 (All day)	Short-listing Meeting (Stage 2)	W/C 21 February 2023 (2 hours)	Final Interviews	W/C 6 March 2023 (All day, times TBC)
Public Advertisement / Closing Date	5 January 2023/ 26 January 2023										
Short-listing Meeting (Stage 1)	W/C 6 February 2023 (2 hours)										
Virtual Assessment Centre	W/C 13 February 2023 (All day)										
Short-listing Meeting (Stage 2)	W/C 21 February 2023 (2 hours)										
Final Interviews	W/C 6 March 2023 (All day, times TBC)										
3.3	Members will be required to attend on these meeting dates. Elected Members may also be required to attend a 2-hour R and S training course on non-discriminatory R and S techniques in advance of these meeting dates. An observer from the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) and a Professional Assessor may also be in attendance at these meetings but they will not have any voting rights.										
3.4	The selection panel will have the authority to make this appointment and the outcome of the recruitment and selection process will be reported back to SP&R and full Council for notation.										
4.0	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>										
4.1	There are no financial or resource implications associated with this report as the post has already been budgeted for in the revenue estimates and any quotes for Assessment Centres will be managed in line with the Council's agreed procurement thresholds.										

5.0	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u>
5.1	There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications associated with this report. This post will be recruited in full accordance with the LGSC's Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection and be conducted in a fair, systematic and objective manner with all appointments be based strictly on the merit principle.
4.0	Documents Attached
	None

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	NILGA Local Government Conference
Date:	16th December, 2022
Reporting Officer:	John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
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"/>
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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To ask the Committee to authorise the attendance of Members and officer(s) at the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) Annual Conference.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve the attendance of the Council representatives on NILGA, together with one officer, at the Local Government Conference on 23 rd February.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>

3.1	The NILGA Local Government Conference will take place this year in the Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh on 23 rd February. The Council is represented on NILGA by 10 Members across the Political Parties. The normal practice is to authorise those representatives to attend the Local Government Conference if they so desire.
3.2	The theme for this year's conference is "Responding to Future Challenges" and will focus on how local government should innovate and collaborate across all sectors to achieve its ambitions. A copy of the draft agenda is attached.
	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>
3.3	The cost of attendance at the conference is £99 per person and this can be met from within existing budgets.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u>
3.4	None.
4.0	Document Attached
	Draft agenda for the Local Government Conference

“Responding to Future Challenges”

23 February 2023, Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh



9.30 Registration & Networking

10.00 Welcome by NILGA President

10.30 Session 1: Our Future Challenges

10.30 What's ahead for young people

10.40 Our Future Challenges (Kelly Beaver, IPSOS)

11.00 SOLACE Response

11.10 Session 2: Responding to the Challenges

Collaboration & Innovation

11.10 Central & Local Government Collaboration (Jayne Brady, NICS)

11.30 Revolutionising Public Services (Nadira Hussain, SOCITM)

11.45 *Coffee break*

12.15 Panel debate

12.45 Lunch

Culture & Mindset

1.45 Ambitions for the local government sector (Colette Kane, Local Government Auditor)

2.05 Entrepreneurial local government (Dominic Campbell, The Institute for Impossible Ideas)

2.25 Case Study

2.45 SOLACE Response

3.00 Launch of Councillor Survey report

3.15 Conference close, NILGA President

3.20 *Coffee break*

3.45 Closed learning sessions for officers & members



This page is intentionally left blank