

# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 24th March, 2023

## MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND  
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Heading ( Deputy Chairperson in the Chair);  
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly);  
Aldermen Dorrian and Haire; and  
Councillors Beattie, Bradley, Bunting, Ferguson,  
Garrett, Long, Lyons, McLaughlin,  
McMullan, Murphy, Spratt, Thompson and Verner.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, Chief Executive;  
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal  
and Civic Services;  
Ms. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building  
Control  
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;  
Ms. C. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet;  
Ms. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and  
Development;  
Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services;  
Ms. C. Sheridan, Director of Human Resources;  
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;  
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported for the Chairperson, Councillor McDonough-Brown and Councillor Groogan.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 17th February were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council, at its meeting on 1st, March subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Beattie declared an interest in respect of item 2g in that he was a Council representative on the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners.

Councillor Thompson declared an interest in item 6c Area Working Update in that she was on the Board of the Greater Shankill Community Council and the Glencairn Community Project.

### **Restricted Items**

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

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

### **Belfast Local Development Plan – Plan Strategy (PS) Adoption**

The Committee was reminded that in March last year it had endorsed a draft of the proposed new Policy (SP1A) and supporting justification for public consultation in response to the Planning Appeals Commissions (PAC recommendations and Direction from the Department for Infrastructure (DfI). This was hoped to be the final stage of the dPS development in advance of it being finalised for potential adoption.

The Director of Planning and Building Control reported that, in the period since the Public Consultation had closed in July 2022, the engagement with the DfI, required under the terms of their February 2022 Direction, has proved challenging. However, the most recent engagements, at the end of January and beginning of February, had engendered a more positive response and progress to the extent that preparations had commenced towards the formal submission to the DfI. The proposed changes that would result in a final Plan Strategy for potential adoption had been considered by the Planning Committee on the 16th March 2023 and it had agreed to endorse it for submission to this Committee as the basis for the consideration of the formal adoption for the Plan Strategy.

The Committee:

1. noted the Technical Documents to be published alongside the adopted Local Development Plan - Plan Strategy as set out in Appendix 1;
2. noted the Timetable of required actions to support the potential formal adoption and publication of the Plan Strategy by May 2023 as detailed in Appendix 2;
3. noted the Post Independent Examination consultation report outlining the response to the public consultation and engagement with the DfI Appendix 3;
4. noted the formal Direction and covering letter issues by the DfI on the 9th March 2023 set out at Appendix 6;
5. endorsed the proposed modifications set out in Parts 1-4 of Appendix 4; and
6. endorsed the final Plan Strategy set out in Appendix 5 for adoption in accordance with provisions of the timetable set out in Appendix 2.

### **Outstanding Accounts**

The Director of Finance advised the Committee that, inevitably, a number of debtors who received services from the Council failed to pay. This was despite the Central Transactions Unit having implemented the Council's procedures for the recovery of outstanding debt. The amounts being recommended to Committee for write off totalled £2,334.53. Those amounts related to contract rebates and were a result of the company having been dissolved. The advice from the Central Transactions Unit and from Legal Services was that it is very unlikely that the Council would receive any payments in respect of these debts.

The Committee granted authorisation for the outstanding accounts, as listed within the appendix to the report, to be written off, in accordance with Section M12 of the Council's Financial Regulations

### **Medium Term Financial Plan**

The Committee considered a report which provided members with an update on the corporate approach to medium term financial planning, outlining the work to be undertaken to identify and deliver opportunities for cost savings, income generation and service delivery review across departments.

The Committee:

- noted the ongoing work outlined below to address the 2023/24 budgetary gap in advance of the 2024/25 rate setting process;
- noted the ongoing work on the development of a Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) as part of the 2024/25 rate setting process; and
- agreed to quarterly update reports on reducing the budgetary gap and the development of the MTFP.

### **Refresh of Belfast Agenda Update**

The Committee considered a report which provided an update regarding the progress which had been made following phase 2 of the Continuing the Conversation engagement programme and the next steps in preparing the refreshed Belfast Agenda before it was issued for formal consultation.

The Committee:

- (i) noted the development of the draft Belfast Agenda strategy document and action plans, based on the Continuing the Conversation engagement programme and subsequent partnership engagement;
- (ii) noted the engagement activity over the next number of months with partners before completing the draft refreshed Belfast Agenda;
- (iii) agreed to the continued political engagement over the next three months with a view to finalising the draft refreshed Belfast Agenda;
- (iv) to support the co-ordination of the draft refreshed Belfast Agenda, agreed that the Council renews its membership and contribution to the work of the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre for a 2-year period; and
- (v) noted the intent to issue for formal consultation in early July 2023.

**Advertising Spend**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 17th February, it had deferred the awarding Of Single Tender Actions related to advertising at bus stops and for bus internal and external advertising to enable information to be provided on the previous expenditure for those contracts.

Accordingly, the Director of External Affairs, Communications and Marketing submitted a report in this regard.

After discussion, the Committee approved the following:

Title	Duration	Total Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
Advertising at bus stops	18 months	£140,000	L Caldwell	Advertising council initiatives to the citizens of Belfast and areas of Northern Ireland as required. Clear Chanel is the only company that provides advertising at bus stops in Northern Ireland	Clear Channel
Bus internal and external advertising	18 months	£140,000	L Caldwell	Advertise council initiatives to the citizens of Belfast and in areas of Northern Ireland as required. Global Outdoor is the only company to provide advertising on Metro and Ulsterbus buses in Northern Ireland	Global Outdoor

### **Signage at Olympia Leisure Centre EQIA**

The Interim City Solicitor submitted a report which provided the Committee with the proposed next steps to be taken following the Committee's decision on 21st January 2022 to proceed with an Equality Impact Assessment on the erection of bilingual external naming and internal directional signage at Olympia Leisure Centre.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and the proposed next steps.

### **Asset Management**

The Committee:

#### **North Foreshore – Proposed variation to disposal terms**

- approved a variation to the terms of the disposal agreed with Belfast Harbour Commissioners to bring forward a portion of the lands within Phase 2B to facilitate their current film studio extension works.
- i) **Belfast Stories Site, North St – Proposed meanwhile use of vacant land by BRINK**
- Approved, in principle, the use of part of the vacant land on the Belfast Stories site by BRINK for meanwhile use, subject to a further report on the BRINK proposals being brought to Committee and a short-term licence/tenancy at will being agreed.
- ii) **City of Belfast Playing Fields – Lease of land for a play park to Antrim and Newtownabbey BC**  
approved the lease of c2,400 sq m (0.59 acres) of land situated at City of Belfast Playing Fields to Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council to enable the construction of a play park.

### **Bid to Host the European Football Championships 2028**

The Director of Economic Development provided the Committee with an update regarding a UK and Ireland bid to host the European Football Championships in 2028 and sought approval to sign a number of legal binding documents relating to Belfast potentially being a host city for five groups matches during the European Football Championships in 2028

The final bid was to be submitted by the Central Bid Team to UEFA by the 12th April 2023. The Central Bid Team required all regional final bid documents and associated guarantees and contracts with them no later than the 24th March to allow for final collation and review prior to submission.

The Committee:

- noted the details of this report and provide approval for the Belfast City Council to sign the legally binding host city guarantees associated with the bid;
- granted approval for BCC to act as the lead on all matters (as far as is Council responsibility lies) associated with the host city requirements, including governance, budget, marketing, volunteering, mobility, transport including associated risk and sign the host city guarantees that manifest these responsibilities;
- given the timescale required to enter the contractual obligations associated within bid, agreed to suspend call in in line with standing order 48;
- approved the future allocation of £4m toward the costs of hosting the UEFA European Football Championships in 2028 and that this will be factored into council's medium term financial planning; and
- noted that a report will be brought to members regarding the outcome of the full bid when it is known, estimated to be in October 2023, and that future reports will be brought to committee if the bid is successful.

### **Gaelic Games Pitch at Henry Jones Playing Fields**

The Director of Neighbour hood Services submitted a report which outlined the preferred option for providing a gaelic games pitch within the parks estate at Henry Jones Playing Fields and seeking a decision on an associated implementation approach. The report outlined also the background, the current position, the displacement effects, the timing considerations and the engagement options.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Beattie,  
Seconded by Councillor Lyons.

That the Committee:

- agrees that the East Belfast GAA Gaelic games club be granted the use of the pitches at the Henry Jones Playing Fields with effect from mid-April and that the soccer bookings be rescinded, with clubs displaced to alternative facilities and work commenced immediately to reconfigure the site: and
- officers and elected members (from the Lisnasharragh DEA/East Belfast area) arrange a meeting with secretaries of the main clubs affected, provide the list of suggested options for the clubs and agree their preferred location moving forward.

On a vote eleven Members voted for the proposal and six against and it was declared carried.

### Physical Programme Update

The Committee considered a report which was seeking stage approvals under the Capital Programme, procurement approvals for non recurrent and externally funded projects in 2023/24, overviews of recent funding secured and contracts awarded and a request for dual language signage at the Forth Meadow Community Greenaway.

A member referred to the proposals in relation to the signage along sections of the Greenway which were within the Gaeltic Quarter and expressed the view that these should be dual language signs, that is , English and Irish.

Accordingly, it was

Moved by Councillor Beattie,  
Seconded by Councillor Walsh,

That the Committee agrees the proposals in respect of signage for the Forth Meadow Community Greenway as outlined in paragraph 3 of the report, subject to the Beacons, Information Panels and the Directional Finger Post Signs located in the Gaeltacht Quarter area (that is Section 3 – Fall Park, Section 4 – Bog Meadows, Section 5- Westlink to City Centre and Springfield Park/Dam) all being in dual-language, that is, English and Irish.

On a vote, eight Members voted for the proposal and eight against.

As there was an equality of votes, the Deputy Chairperson exercised his second and casting vote in favour of the proposal and it was declared carried.

A Member also raised the issue of the spectator fencing at the Cherryvale Playing Fields and requested that the spectator fencing around the pitch and a path along the eastern boundary be progressed under permitted development.

Accordingly, the Committee:

- **Capital Programme:** Agreed the following movement under the Capital Programme:
  - **City Hall Statues - Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken** project (*Stage 3 – Committed*) proceeds to contract award with a maximum £300,000 budget allocated.
  - **Fire Service Belfast Blitz** project – add as a *Stage 1 – Emerging* project under the Capital Programme.
- **Forth Meadow Community Greenway** – agreed the proposals in respect of signage for the Forth Meadow Community Greenway as outlined in paragraph 3 of the report, subject to the Beacons, Information Panels and the Directional Finger Post Signs located in the Gaeltacht Quarter area (that is Section 3 – Fall Park, Section 4 – Bog Meadows, Section 5- Westlink to City Centre and Springfield Park/Dam) all being in dual-language, that is, English and Irish. Also noted that it had previously been agreed that the information plaque on the ‘Carry Each Other’

sculpture would be in English/Irish but it was now proposed that this in now in English/Irish and Ulster Scots. The Committee agreed accordingly,

- **Cherryvale Playing Fields** – noted the project update and agreed that the spectator fencing around the pitch and a path along the eastern boundary be progressed under permitted development.
- **Non-Recurrent Programme:** Agreed that the necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate ‘framework’ arrangements) be initiated for any non-recurrent projects for 2023/24, with contracts to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.
- **Externally Funded Projects:** Agreed that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate ‘framework’ arrangements) be initiated for any Physical Programme projects, including externally funded projects for 2023/24, as required, with contracts to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.

### **Freedom of the City Request**

The Committee agreed to delegate authority to the Interim City Solicitor to progress a Freedom of the City request which had been agreed at the meeting of the Party Group Leaders’ Consultative Forum on 16th March, 2023.

### **Matters referred back from Council/Motions**

#### **Motion – Maternity Leave Provision for Mothers of Babies defined as Premature**

The Committee was advised that the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 21st February, had referred the following motion which had been proposed by Councillor Spratt and Seconded by Councillor Bunting to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration;

“This Council will amend maternity leave provision for mothers of babies defined as premature so that maternity leave will not commence until the certified due date of the child. All/any leave required from delivery date of a premature baby by parents will be considered compassionate leave and not reduce an employee’s right to standard parental leave.”

The Committee adopted the motion and agreed that a further report outlining the financial and other implications be submitted to a future meeting.

### **Governance**

#### **Revisions to Scheme of Allowances**

The Committee considered a report in relation to amendments to the Council’s Scheme of Allowances to increase the rates of Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances and Dependents’ Carers’ Allowance.



The Committee:

1. agreed not to increase the Basic Allowance paid to each Councillor from £15,486 per annum to £16,394 with effect from 1st April, 2022;
2. agreed not to increase the total maximum Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) from the current £117,774 per annum to £124,676 as set out in Appendix 2 with effect from 1st April, 2022; and
3. approved the increase to rate of Dependents' Carers' Allowance in line with the National Living Wage for 2023-2024

### **Local Government Elections May 2023 – Update**

The Committee considered the following report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update on the Local Government Elections in May, 2023.**

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 **The Committee is asked to:**
  - **Note the contents of the report.**

#### **3.0 Main report**

##### **Background**

- 3.1 **The Committee will be aware that the Returning Officer (EONI) appoints the Chief Executive to be the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) for the Local Government Elections. It is therefore his responsibility to organise the Election Count, amongst other things, from the Notice of Election through to the Counting of the ballot papers to determine the 60 Councillors who are elected to serve the Belfast District for the next Council term: May, 2023 till May, 2027.**
- 3.2 **To assist him in this process, the DRO has appointed Jim Hanna and Stephen McCrory as Assistant Deputy Returning Officers who are authorised to take all decisions in relation to the election in his place. The Chief Executive will be present throughout the count.**

##### **Date of Election**

- 3.3 **This year's Local Government Election poll was scheduled to take place on Thursday, 4th May, with the Counts to each of the 10 District Electoral Areas to take place on Friday, 5th and Saturday 6th.**

- 3.4 However, due to the Coronation of King Charles III on Saturday 6th May and the possible impact on the count, the Northern Ireland Minister has determined that the date of the Election will be moved as follows:

Polling Day	Thursday, 18th May
Overnight verification of unused ballot papers	Thursday, 18th – Friday 19th May
Count - Day 1 (5 DEAs)	Friday, 19th May
Count - Day 2 (5 DEAs)	Saturday, 20th May

- 3.5 The election timetable is attached at Appendix 1 for information.

**Count Venue**

- 3.6 The venue for all of the counts will be the City Hall. This would require 3 counts to take place in the Great Hall and 1 each in the Banqueting Hall and the Reception Room.

**Order of Counts**

- 3.7 It is recognised that most Members would prefer the count for the DEA in which they are standing to take place on the Friday rather than the Saturday. In deciding which 5 DEAs should be counted in which room, there are some logistical matters which need to be taken into account:

3.8

- The Reception Room is being used as a count venue and it is significantly smaller than the other count venues in the City Hall. The Banqueting Hall is the largest of the venues being used.

3.9

- The 10 DEAs do not all elect the same number of councillors. Black Mountain and Ormiston DEAs elect 7 members each; Balmoral and Botanic DEAs elect 5 members each; and Castle, Oldpark, Court, Collin, Lisnasharragh and Titanic DEAs each elect 6 members.

- 3.10 It is accepted that the number of members to be elected to a DEA does not necessarily mean that the count will take less time to complete but that is the only variable which can reasonably be used to assess which counts should be held in which venue. Accordingly it is suggested that the following breakdown is agreed:

Reception Room – Balmoral and Botanic DEAs (5 members each)

Banqueting Hall – Black Mountain and Ormiston DEAs (7 members each)

Great Hall (1) – Castle and Oldpark DEAs (6 members each)

Great Hall (2) – Court and Colin DEAs (6 members each)

Great Hall (3) – Lisnasharragh and Titanic DEAs (6 members each)

- 3.11 In 2014 the Committee agreed which counts would be held on which day. It was agreed also that the counts held on the Saturday in 2014 would be held on the Friday in 2019 and this was subsequently confirmed at that time. Again, it is recommended that the counts should alternated and be held as follows:

Friday 18th May, 2023

Reception Room – Balmoral DEA

Banqueting Hall – Black Mountain DEA

Great Hall 1 – Castle DEA

Great Hall 2 – Court DEA

Great Hall 3 – Lisnasharragh DEA

Saturday 20th May, 2023

Reception Room – Botanic DEA

Banqueting Hall – Ormiston DEA

Great Hall 1 – Oldpark DEA

Great Hall 2 – Colin DEA

Great Hall 3 – Titanic DEA

Pre-Election Period of Heightened Political Sensitivity

- 3.12 The Pre-Election Period of Heightened Political Sensitivity (previously known as Purdah) will commence with effect from 6th April. Whilst there is currently no legislation in Northern Ireland which governs the publicity and council activity during the pre-election period for local government, the Council has previously approved an Election Protocol which provides guidance in dealing with issues which might impact on the election process and a copy is appended to this report.

Motions and Issues raised in advance by Members

- 3.13 In previous years, Motions and issues raised in advance by Members have been perceived as publicity which could influence public opinion or to promote the public image of a particular candidate or group of candidates. Therefore, it is extremely unlikely that these will accepted for inclusion on

the agendas for Committees during the month of April (please note that this will require the meeting of the Standards and Business Committee on 18th April to be cancelled).

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.14 The costs of the Local Elections in May 2023 will be met out of the existing elections budget.

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

None associated with this report.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed the order of the Counts and the noted the proposals in relation to the Pre-Election Period of Heightened Political Sensitivity

**Strategic Issues/Belfast Agenda**

**City Region Growth Deal – update**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 This report is to provide an update to Committee on the progress of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD).

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note:

- The progress being made on the Contracts for Funding which are required for each of the capital projects delivered through the Deal and the update on project development and delivery across the pillars of investment.
- The update in relation to the BRCD Annual Report.
- The update in respect of the BRCD Council Panel.

**3.0 Main report**

**Contracts for Funding**

- 3.1 As previously noted by the Committee, a number of contracts for funding have now been approved and signed which will allow for funding to begin to flow to projects. Since the last update to Members in January the first funding

drawdown requests for the City Deal to the Department for Economy and Department for Communities have now been submitted marking another significant milestone for deal delivery.

3.2 It was also noted by the Committee that Members would be advised of progress to agree the funding agreements for each project. Since the last update to the Committee progress has continued to prepare and agree a number of contracts as outlined below.

- The contract for The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre (AMIC) has now been approved and signed.
- The Contract for Mourne Mountain Gateway is at a very advanced stage and it is anticipated this will be submitted this month to Newry, Mourne & Down District Council for their agreement.
- Contracts for the Institute for Research Excellence in Advanced Clinical Healthcare (iREACH), and the Global Innovation Institute have been finalised and are expected to be signed during this month.

#### Progress across BRCD Pillars

##### Innovation

3.3 AMIC has been advanced by Queen's University through to the detailed design stage and has now concluded the end of RIBA Stage 3, with the final report being considered by the Department of Finance and Invest NI. The invitation to tender for the prime contractor for the project has now been published since the last update to Members.

3.4 The Outline Business Case for the Centre for Digital Healthcare Technology is currently being revised to reflect proposed changes to the scope since Department of Finance approval in May 2022, including the consideration of early procurement of equipment for the Royal Victoria Hospital Living Lab. The updated Outline Business Case (OBC) is expected to be submitted in April.

3.5 As previously reported to Members construction work on Studio Ulster commenced on site in October 2022. Following the publication of the Prior Information Notice in November, and the successful completion of the Pre-Qualification phase, the Invitation to Participate in Dialogue is now under development in advance of the commencement of the competitive dialogue process.

### Digital

- 3.6 Since the last update to Members, OBC for the Investment Fund element of the Innovation Challenge Fund has progressed well, with a Strategic case review completed with key Government and partner stakeholders in December and a detailed workshop focusing on delivery held in early March. The first draft of the business case is expected to have been prepared by April after which a detailed review involving key stakeholders, including economists will take place. Members also previously approved the commencement of a separate business case for the Augment the City pilot project in October 2022. Since then and following consideration by the Digital Advisory Board a draft business case has been shared with the Department for the Economy and the Belfast City Innovation team are currently finalising the OBC following feedback from the Department. The OBC is expected to be submitted to the BRCD Digital Advisory Board on 29th March and a further update will be brought to committee in April.

### Tourism and Regeneration

- 3.7 As previously reported a number of the Tourism and Regeneration projects now have a signed contract for funding or are progressing towards finalising contract for funding signing.

The development of procurement documentation is ongoing, with a number of key project procurements now live.

- 3.8 The prequalification stage for the procurement of Integrated Consultancy Teams (ICT) for Carrickfergus Regeneration and the Gobbins Phase 2 has now been commenced with documentation now published by Mid & East Antrim Borough Council.
- 3.9 Development of the prequalification stage for the procurement of ICT for Bangor Waterfront and the Mourne Mountain Gateway is ongoing with publication of documentation expected in the coming months.
- 3.10 Newry Regeneration are preparing their PQQ documentation for the Integrated Supply Team, with appointment of Contractor expected later this year.

3.11 Belfast Stories, the Council's flagship project continues to progress against the agreed programme. The procurement of professional services continues with tender reports for the pre-qualification stage completed and approved and Invitation to Tender documents expected to be published later this month.

3.12 The OBC for Destination Royal Hillsborough approved by the Department for the Economy Minister in late October has now received Department of Finance supply approval allowing the Contract for Funding to be actively progressed.

#### Employability and Skills (E&S)

3.13 Members were updated in January on the skills assessment process developed through the E&S pillar to understand the labour and skills implications of the city deal investment projects. The first assessment was focused upon the construction opportunities arising through the city deal investment and the assessment informed a series of recommendations which relate to BRCD partners, as well as to wider stakeholders. An early action as a result of this assessment is the delivery of two events taking place on the 21st March (jointly hosted with the Construction Employers Federation) and 23rd March. These events will help to ensure that local businesses are aware of:

- the construction pipeline arising from the Belfast Region City Deal capital investment programme with a specific focus on opportunities that will be brought to market in the coming 12 months
- communicate the inclusive growth ambitions of the Deal, including expected social value commitments;
- the employability and skills support available through the Belfast Region City Deal, council, college, and university partners to help the sector respond to labour and skills challenges, including those relating to social value commitments.

3.14 Both events were widely communicated to key stakeholders and on the BRCD website and both events were fully booked.

3.15 Following discussions with partners, the relevant Government Departments and key stakeholders plans to establish a Cross Deal Skills Group to oversee and manage skills assessments relating to City and Growth Deals at the Northern Ireland level are well advanced. These Assessments will consider the projects emerging across all 4 Deals and focus on the sectors where city deal investment is aligned. A preliminary meeting of this group took place in late January in order to consider the draft Terms of

Reference and to inform the schedule of skills assessments. The BRCD will play a key role in supporting this group – finalising terms of reference, agreeing the initial work programme and fulfilling the role of secretariat. The draft Terms of Reference for the Group was presented to the Executive Board for consideration at its March Meeting. Aligned to the establishment of this group two further skills assessments are currently underway for Advanced Manufacturing and Creative Industries (Virtual Production) and Members will be kept updated as both assessments progress

- 3.16 It is anticipated that the OBC for Digital Transformation Flexible Fund will progress to casework in early April through Invest NI. Concurrently Newry, Mourne and Down District Council who will lead the delivery of the project continue to progress with pre-development work to establish the application and funding process and developing marketing materials in preparation for the launch of the fund.

#### Infrastructure

- 3.17 Following the announcement by the then Minister on the preferred route for Belfast Rapid Transit Phase 2, feasibility studies are being completed and the OBC is being updated and reviewed by Department for Infrastructure (DfI). The procurement of the design and build contract for Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge will commence in the early summer with appointment expected early in 2024. DfI has now confirmed that its preferred option for the bridge on the Newry Southern Relief Road is a non-opening 50m fixed bridge, allowing work on the statutory orders, public consultation and Environmental Impact Assessment to progress.

#### Annual Report

- 3.18 The agreed reporting arrangements for all City and Growth Deals requires the production of an Annual Report and the requirement to meet with the Northern Ireland Delivery Board in order to discuss deal progress as part of an 'Annual Conversation' which is envisaged to take place in June. The Programme management team have been actively engaging with the Department of Finance in order to agree the timeframes and content of the annual reporting process and required documentation now that the BRCD is in delivery phase.
- 3.19 Members are asked to note that a high level, outward focused Annual Report will be produced following the end of the 2023 reporting year. The programme management office will lead on the development of the report and will engage



with individual partners on project specifics where required in advance of consideration of the Executive Board and by partners through their own governance structures.

#### BRC D Council Panel

- 3.20 A hybrid meeting of the BRC D Council Panel was held on 25 January hosted by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council. Panel Members considered a detailed programme update and received presentations on the BRC D investments in Newry, Mourne and Down and also on Communications & Engagement which included a live demonstration of the newly dedicated BRC D website. A link to the new website was circulated to all BCC Members following the January panel meeting. The minutes of the previous Panel meeting hosted by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council were also approved and are attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.21 The next Council panel meeting was due to be held in April and hosted by Ards and North Down Borough Council, however due to the upcoming Local Government Elections and the timeframes involved it has been agreed to postpone this meeting and reschedule for later in the year. Members will be kept informed when the date and host council has been confirmed.

#### Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.22 All costs associated with the BRC D are within existing budgets.

#### Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The approach taken to develop the City Deal has been subject to independent equality screening and rural proofing and states that;

*'BRC D is inherently inclusive, affording an opportunity for the region to grow in a way that will benefit the economy of Northern Ireland as a whole, thereby enhancing the lives and well-being of its citizens. If during further development of the programme it becomes apparent that there may be an adverse impact on certain groups or communities then the partnership commits to carrying out further Section 75 work and including screening and EQIAs as and when appropriate.'*

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Community Ownership Fund**

The Director of Organisational and City Strategy provided the Committee with an update on a bidding window, Window 3 Round 2, to apply for the Community Ownership Fund recently opened by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

The Committee:

- noted the update in relation to Window 3 Round 2 funding under the Community Ownership Fund;
- agreed that Members share this information with relevant local organisations through their existing area networks if appropriate; and
- agreed that this information is shared with relevant partners through the Community Planning network.

### **Modern Slavery Act 2015 - updated Modern Slavery Statement and update on corporate action plan**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with the updated annual Modern Slavery Transparency in Supply Chains Statement to meet the obligations of the Modern Slavery Act, 2015 and an update on the related corporate action plan.**

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:**

- **Note the updated annual Modern Slavery Transparency in Supply Chains Statement (the ‘Transparency Statement’).**
- **Approve the addition of the Transparency Statement to the UK Government’s online registry.**
- **Note the progress made on the action plan.**

#### **3.0 Main report**

##### **3.1 Background**

**The Modern Slavery Act 2015 (the ‘Act’) aims to address slavery and trafficking by enhancing support and protection for victims, giving law enforcement the tools needed to target**

today's slave drivers and ensuring perpetrators can be severely punished. It also includes a provision in Section 54 to encourage organisations to ensure their supply chains are slavery-free, known as the Transparency in Supply Chains arrangements ('TISC').

### 3.2 Key Issues

The Council has voluntarily published an annual Transparency Statement on our website since 2015. This sets out what the Council has done to ensure there is no modern slavery in its supply chains or any part of its business.

This year, the annual Transparency Statement has been reviewed by Commercial and Procurement Services, the Council's Safeguarding Officer and the Equality and Diversity Officer and has been refreshed to reflect current guidance on its content. An updated version for 2021-22 is set out in Appendix 1.

### 3.3 Recent changes to the Transparency Statement requirements

The TISC provisions currently apply to commercial organisations, however, in recent years both the UK Government and the Northern Ireland Department of Justice have reviewed and consulted on these provisions and their potential application to the public sector:

- In July 2018, the Home Secretary undertook an independent review of the Act and made recommendations, one of which was to strengthen Section 54 by extending the requirement to publish Modern Slavery Statements to government and the public sector.
- In July 2019 the UK Government launched a consultation on measures to strengthen the TISC arrangements and published its proposals on how it planned to take this work forward. Many of the proposed changes will require legislative change which has not happened to date. The proposed changes would see a strengthening of the TISC arrangements for commercial businesses, and would, for the first time, extend them so they apply to the public sector.
- In January 2022, the Northern Ireland Department of Justice ('DOJ') published its report, summary of responses and next steps in response to its consultation on TISC. It found that overall, there is widespread support for the strengthening of TISC arrangements.

### **3.4 Approach to Modern Slavery in Northern Ireland**

In October 2022, in accordance with Section 12 of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015, (as amended by the Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2022), the DOJ launched a public consultation on a new three-year draft Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Strategy. This is a multiagency collaboration, with actions to be delivered by members of Northern Ireland's Organised Crime Task Force, NGO Engagement Group and other agencies working to address modern slavery and human trafficking.

The DOJ noted in its consultation that the UK Government plan to make additional changes to the TISC provisions in the Act when parliamentary time allows. The additional changes that the UK Government plan to legislate for include:

1. Reporting on specific topics;
2. Publishing the MS statement on a public registry;
3. Setting a deadline for submitting a statement annually;
4. Extending the requirement to publish a statement to public sector organisations with a turnover of over £36million; and
5. The introduction of financial penalties for those that do not publish a slavery statement.

### **3.5 It should be noted that the Legislative Consent of the Northern Ireland Assembly will be required to extend any UK Government changes to Northern Ireland.**

Alongside the consultation, the DOJ published a progress report on the commitments laid out in the 2021-22 Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Strategy for Northern Ireland. The Progress Report states in part that the DOJ 'will engage further with public sector procurement leads once the additional measures to strengthen TISC are progressed in legislation and will become mandatory for all businesses with an annual turnover of over £36million.'

### **3.6 In March 2021, the UK Government launched an online modern slavery statement registry. Since its launch, over 7,000 statements have been submitted covering over 23,350 organisations on a voluntary basis.**

Members asked to approve the addition of the Belfast City Council Transparency Statement to this registry.

**3.7 Action Plan**

In October 2021, Council approved an action plan to tackle modern slavery to be taken forward by various departments. This was based on guidance from NILGA. An update on the proposed actions is set forth in Appendix 2.

Members should note that an initial awareness session for relevant Belfast City Council managers on recognising Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking was held on 17 November by the Department of Justice.

**3.8 Reporting**

The Governance & Compliance Manager co-ordinates an annual report on progress to be brought to CMT and the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee.

**3.9 Financial & Resource Implications**

The implementation of the action plan will involve staff from City and Neighbourhood Services, Legal Services, Governance & Compliance Services, Commercial and Procurement Services, Corporate HR and Marketing and Corporate Communications.

**3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment**

Any equality, good relations or rural needs implications will be identified using the council's usual screening process."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Physical Programme and Asset Management**

**Area Working Update**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the Area Working (*West – 23 February, South – 27 February North – 28 February*); and

**West AWG**

In relation to the West Working Group, adopted the following recommendation to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee:

**Expansion of Belfast Bikes Scheme 2022/23 –**

- I. To note that **Coláiste Feirste** was content with the Belfast Bikes docking station to be placed on its land, with the agreement that the Council tidy up the entrance and maintain in the area before the docking station is installed. C&NS has agreed this approach.
- II. **Shankill Road** –agreed that further consideration be given to a docking site located closer to Glencairn with the potential for a location at the entrance to Glencairn Park at Forthriver Road as part of the Forth Meadow Community Greenway

**Finance, Procurement and Performance**

**CIPFA Prudential Code Capital Strategy and Treasury Management Indicators 2023-24**

The Director of Finance submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 and the supporting Prudential and Treasury Codes produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), require the Council to consider the affordability and sustainability of capital expenditure decisions through the reporting of prudential and treasury management indicators.
- 1.2 The Prudential Code requires the Council to produce a Capital Strategy for 2023/24. This report provides information for Members on the Capital Strategy, incorporating the prudential indicators for Belfast City Council for the period 2023/24 to 2025/26, and the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- note the contents of this report and the prudential and treasury management indicators included within the appendices to the report.

**And agree:**

- The Authorised Borrowing Limit for the Council of £140m for 2023/24.

- **The Treasury Management Strategy for 2023/24, which has been included as Appendix B to this report.**

**3.0 Main report**

- 3.1 The Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 requires the Council to adopt the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. In doing so, the Council is required to agree a minimum revenue provision policy annually and to set and monitor a series of Prudential Indicators, the key objectives of which are to ensure that, within a clear framework, the capital investment plans of the council are affordable, prudent and sustainable.**
- 3.2 At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 9 December 2011, Members approved the Council’s Treasury Management Policy which is based on the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice. The Treasury Management Policy requires that a Treasury Management Strategy be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on an annual basis and that it is supported by a mid-year and year end treasury management reports. Recent changes in the CIPFA Prudential Code recommends best practice that treasury management reports are submitted on a quarterly basis and this will be effective from 1 April 2023**
- 3.3 The Capital Strategy, incorporating the prudential indicators, is included as Appendix A, while the Treasury Management Strategy and treasury management indicators have been included as Appendix B.**
- 3.4 The comparison of ‘Gross Debt’ to ‘Capital Financing Requirement’ (CFR) is the main indicator of prudence when considering the proposed capital investment plans of the Council. Estimated gross debt should not exceed the CFR for the current year plus two years. The Council’s estimated gross debt position, illustrated in Table 6, Appendix A, is comfortably within the CFR in the medium term. The Director of Finance therefore considers the estimated levels of gross debt as being prudent.**
- 3.5 Table 10 (Appendix A) shows the estimated financing costs for capital expenditure as a percentage of the estimated net revenue stream for the Council, based on the medium financial plan. These illustrate that in the medium term, capital financing costs will represent an average of 6.35% of the Council’s net running costs. On this basis the Director of Finance is satisfied that the level of capital expenditure is affordable.**

- 3.6 The Finance Act requires the Council to set an affordable borrowing limit, relating to gross debt. The Prudential Code defines the affordable limit as the 'Authorised Borrowing Limit' and gross borrowing must not exceed this limit. Table 8 (Appendix A) sets out the recommended 'Authorised Borrowing Limit' for the Council as being £140m for 2023/24.

**Financial & Resource Implications**

- 3.7 As detailed in the report

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

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Business Cluster and Community Grant Scheme Re-allocation**

The Director of Finance advised the Committee that the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, at its meeting on 11th January 2023, had agreed that the Business Cluster and Community Grant scheme would not be reopened to new applications, and that any realised underspend be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committees for reallocation.

A further report was submitted to City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 8th February 2023 approving the final tranche of grants. As a result, the reserve that was set up would no longer be fully utilised and an amount of £220,254 was no longer required for this purpose.

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 17th February 2023, had agreed that reallocations of forecast departmental underspends would be considered as part of year end reporting taking into consideration the 2023/24 budgetary gap. However, in this instance, as the underspend was from a specified reserve and not a departmental underspend then members could agree to reallocate this for other purposes or to include as a reserve to partly offset the 2023/24 budgetary gap.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Garrett,  
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the Committee agrees:

- to reallocate the sum of £220,254 to deliver a pilot project replicating the model used in Dunville Park to reduce levels of ASB in parks. The pilot will create permanent park warden teams dedicated to already identified parks experiencing high levels of anti-social behaviour (asb); and



- that the resource should be directed to those parks in the city already identified through the People and Communities Committee as having high levels of reported asb. From a west Belfast perspective that would include Dunville Park and Páirc Nua Chollan, with additional areas in the north, east and south of the city to be included.

**Amendment**

Moved By Councillor Long,  
Seconded by Councillor McMullan,

That monies be reallocated and used towards the expansion of the kerbside glass recycling project.

On a vote, three Members voted for the proposal and fifteen against and it was declared lost.

The original proposal standing in the name of Councillor Garrett was put to the meeting and passed.

**Audit and Risk Panel Report and Minutes  
of meeting of 7th March 2023**

The Committee:

- Noted the key issues arising at the meeting and approved and adopted the minutes of the March meeting of the Audit & Risk Panel at appendix A; and
- Approved the updated Terms of Reference for the Audit & Risk Panel at appendix B.

**Social Value Procurement Policy  
Delivery Report**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 To update the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee following consideration by the Social Policy Working Group at their meeting in February on the delivery of social value outcomes via open tender competitions awarded in accordance with the Council’s Social Value Procurement Policy ‘SVPP’**
- 1.2 The report also provides an update on tenders awarded by Physical Programmes where, due to project funding rules, social value has been considered and included in accordance with the CPD Buy Social Model.**

1.3 It is intended that this report will be provided every 2 months in line with Social Value Working Group meetings. This report covers the reporting period 1st December 2022 to 31st January 2023.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Note the update provided in the report

3.0 Main Report/Background

Background

3.1 The SVPP was approved by Committee in April 23 with a 'Go Live' date of 1st June 2022.

3.2 SVPP applied to any new applicable open tender exercises with approval dated from 1st June 22.

3.3 To help Officers understanding the SVPP and how to apply this to applicable tender competitions, the Commercial and Procurement Services 'CPS' team has developed a step-by-step guidance document which takes Officers through key considerations in line with the SVPP. This guidance was developed and communicated to Officers ahead of the 'Go Live' date in June 22.

3.4 As outlined in the guidance to Officers application of the SVPP is considered in 2 key parts:

3.5 Part 1 – For all tender competitions valued over £30k, consideration by Officers about whether to:

1. Reserve the tender competition to a social enterprise/ VCSE sector taking into consideration levels of market competition in this sector
2. Include organisational behaviours (i.e., ethical procurement, environmental and HR policies and procedures) taking into consideration relevance of these policies and procedures to the goods, services or works being purchased and relevance to the market. When selected for inclusion in the tender these social value organisational behaviours are mandatory pass/fail questions for suppliers to demonstrate rather than scored questions.

- 3.6 **Part 2** – the inclusion of a social value weighting (10% or 15%) and scoring for tenders valued over £250k.
- 3.7 The social value offer made by suppliers using the list of social value initiatives and points is then evaluated and scored with a minimum scoring threshold required to be met.
- 3.8 Note from April 23 for all tender competitions valued over £30k the following be included (in addition to the above in Part 1):
1. Payment of the Real Living Wage by suppliers to their employees
  2. The prohibited use of zero hours contracts by suppliers
  3. The inclusion of a social value weighting (10% or 15%) and scoring

**CPD Buy Social Model**

- 3.9 The CPD Buy Social Model is applied where external central government funding of 50% or greater is provided for a capital/ works project managed by Physical Programmes.

**Main Report**

- 3.10 Appendix 1 of this report set out details of tenders valued over £30k which have been awarded during the Reporting Period and associated SVPP data/information

- 3.11 Appendix 1 includes:

**Table 1 - Tenders awarded during Reporting Period**

- 3.12 This sets out details of tenders awarded during Reporting Period and whether SVPP was applied or not.

- 3.13 For ease of reporting this shows tenders awarded by Commercial and Procurement Services ‘CPS’ team and the Physical Programmes department.

**Table 2 – Summary of key data and findings associated with application of SVPP**

- 3.14 This shows a summary of key findings from the tenders set out in Table 1; in particular a summary of the Part 1 SVPP considerations i.e. reserved contracts and social value organisational behaviours.

**Table 3 - Summary of Supplier's Social Value Offers (Scored submissions)**

- 3.15 This shows a summary of the tenders that included a social value weighting (10/ 15%) and the social value offers put forward by suppliers for evaluation as explained under Part 2.
- 3.16 A summary of each applicable tender has been set out in a table.

**Lessons Learned and Continuous Improvement**

- 3.17 A Social Value Review Team has been established to review how the SVPP is being implemented and any lessons learned that need to be applied following conclusion of tender competitions. Areas the team are currently reviewing include, but not limited to:
1. Trends in the use of Reserved Contracts and any further guidance required for Officers on when these should be used
  2. Trends in the selection of Social Value Organisational Behaviours by Officers when using the Social Value Toolkit and any further guidance required for Officers on when these should be applied
  3. The quality of social value offers by suppliers (the scored submissions) and if further guidance is required in terms of how these are evaluated by Officers. In addition any further guidance required for suppliers to improve their understanding BCC expectations in line with Belfast Agenda aims and associated strategies.
  4. Updated changes to templates and guidance ahead of the upcoming changes in April 23 i.e. Social value weighting for all tenders and Real Living Wage and Zero Hours Contracts provisions.
- 3.18 The Social Value Review Team will meet every 2 months in line with scheduled SPWG meetings and the production of this report.
- 3.19 The content/ format of this report will be reviewed with further information included as more social value data becomes available i.e. social value delivery by suppliers using SIB reporting database.

**Financial & Resource Implications**

**3.20 The financial resources for these contracts are within approved corporate or departmental budgets**

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

**3.21 None.”**

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Contracts Update**

The Committee:

- Approved the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (**Table 1**);
- Approved the award of STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Appendix 1 (**Table 2**) and agreed the STA in relation to ballots and associated documentation would not be subject to call-in due to statutory obligations;
- Approved the modification of the contract as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (**Table 3**);
- Noted the award of retrospective STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Appendix 1 (**Table 4**); and
- Noted the award of contracts by Arc 21 on behalf the council (**Table 5**):

**Table 1: Competitive Tenders**

<b>Title of Tender</b>	<b>Proposed Contract Duration</b>	<b>Estimated Total Contract Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Short description of goods / services</b>
Window Cleaning across BCC sites	Up to 4 years	Up to £60,000	S Grimes	To clean and maintain the window at various locations across BCC
Mobile Catering Contracts across BCC park sites	Up to 3 years	Up to £53,000 (income)	D Sales	There is a need & expectation from park users to provide mobile catering services within parks to complement the park facilities
The supply and delivery of grounds maintenance plant and equipment	Up to 4 years	Up to £400,000	D Sales	Supply and delivery of grounds maintenance plant and equipment to enable the replacement of end of lift machinery servicing the Open Spaces and Streetscene operation

The distribution of City Matters (Belfast City Council's resident's magazine)	Up to 2 years	Up to £140,000	L Caldwell	Secure and effective delivery of City Matters is required for over 160k homes in Belfast and boundary areas within Belfast City Council district area
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**Table 2: Single Tender Actions**

Title	Duration	Total Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
Advertising at bus stops	Up to 18 months	Up to £140,000	L Caldwell	Advertising council initiatives to the citizens of Belfast and areas of Northern Ireland as required. Clear Chanel is the only company that provides advertising at bus stops in Northern Ireland. Value indicated is a budget ceiling figure to cover any unplanned advertising requirements.	Clear Channel
Bus internal and external advertising	Up to 18 months	Up to £140,000	L Caldwell	Advertise council initiatives to the citizens of Belfast and in areas of Northern Ireland as required. Global Outdoor is the only company to provide advertising on Metro and Ulsterbus buses in Northern Ireland. Value indicated is a budget ceiling figure to cover any unplanned advertising requirements.	Global Outdoor

Annual asset valuations	Up to 3 years	Up to £165,000	S Grimes	LPS are the only suitable provider of this service due to conflicts of interests that exist with other local agencies.	Land and Property Services (LPS) NI
Legal Case Management System	Up to 3 years	Up to £64,271	P Gribben	Continued use of the Tricostar case management system to support Legal Services including facilities for document management, communications and reporting. Continued use of proprietary system required whilst a strategy is developed to procure and implement replacement system	Tricostar
NI agreement for proprietary mapping requirements & planning	Up to 2 years	Up to £154,000	T Wallace	LPS are the only provider of this service	Land & Property Services (LPS) NI
Electronic Document and Records Management 'EDRM' for NI Housing Executive – hosting, maintenance and support (Fully Funded)	Up to 1 year	Up to £62,000	P Gribben	EDRM system used by NI Housing Executive to link to Housing Benefits System. Licences are perpetual. This is fully funded by NIHE. NEC Systems are the only suitable provider.	NEC Systems
T2414 - Printing and delivery of Ballot Papers and associated documentation	One off Purchase	Up to £33,300	N Largey	Due to a change in election date, associated delay in ballot paper print specifications being issued and higher than anticipated costs there is insufficient time now to procure via an open tender competition.	The Foundation

Table 3: Modification to Contract

Title of Contract	Duration	Modification	SRO	Description	Supplier
T2213 - Bobbin Catering City Hall Reported verbally to Feb 2023 SP&R - approved for 3 months.	Up to 18 months	Up to a total of 12 months and up to £25,000 income (includes 3 months verbally approved)	N Largey	In line with legislation the Bobbin had to close numerous times because of the Covid pandemic which presented significant financial and operational challenges and changes to the hospitality industry. The re-tender exercise of this service will be delivered within the next 12 months.	Now Group
T2291a Development and submission of the Belfast PEACEPLUS Local Community PEACE Action Plan (STA) Fully Funded	Up to 1 year	Additional 4 months and £7,125	D Sales	A 4-months extension of Contract Period to facilitate ongoing work to develop the PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan	Locus Management
T2201 Provision of an Activities Co-ordinator for Forth Meadow Community Greenway PEACE IV Programme Services	Up to 4 years	Additional 1 month	D Sales	An extension is required to allow delivery partners to continue to deliver activity in order to fulfil the deliverables. Request is retrospective	ArtsEkta Ltd
T2084(b) A Key Deliverable of the PEACE IV Shared Space & Services	Up to 22 months	Additional 6 months	D Sales	An extension is required to allow delivery partners to	Mediation NI



theme (Intergenerational project)				continue to deliver activity in order to fulfil the deliverables. Request is retrospective	
T1925 Peace IV On the Right Track; Good Relations through Sports	Up to 43 months	Additional 6 months	D Sales	An extension is required to allow delivery partners to continue to deliver activity in order to fulfil the deliverables. Request is retrospective	Active Communities Network

**Table 4: Retrospective Single Tender Actions**

Title of Contract	Duration	Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
Requirement for temporary Assistant Manager (Houses of Multiple Occupation)	Up to 12 months	Up to £64,500	S Toland	The existing contracted provider for T1792 Provision of Temporary Agency Resources: Matrix SCM have confirmed they are unable to fulfil the required role of HMO assistant manager within the contractually agreed time period.	Honeycomb Recruitment

**Table 5: Contracts awarded by Arc 21 on behalf of the Council**

Title of Contract	Duration	Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
The supply of services relating to the treatment and energy recovery/disposal of residual waste arisings	Up to 7 years. Initial 3 years with option to extend up to a further 4 years (2 + 2 year periods)	Up to £107m	C Matthews	Contract for the bulking, loading, transfer and processing of residual waste from the council's waste transfer station.	Contract managed by Arc 21

**Equality and Good Relations**

**Minutes of Shared City Partnership Meeting on 6th March 2023**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership of 6th March, including the following:

### **PEACEPLUS**

- To note the high-level feedback from the public meeting on 27th February at 2pm in City Hall; and the updated process Stage 2 development of the Local Action Plan, including forthcoming Thematic Working Group meetings.

### **PEACE IV**

#### **Secretariat**

To note the contents of the report and agree contract extensions for:

- i. ArtsEkta for the provision of activities for Forth Meadow Community Greenway to 31/10/2022;
- ii. Mediation NI contract for the Intergenerational Shared Spaces project to 31 March 2023 and
- iii. the Good Relations through Sports contract with Active Communities Network to 31 March 2023

#### **CYP Theme**

- To note the contents of the report and note that *discussions with SEUPB have progressed and the further details presented as outlined in Appendix II Update NIHE position.*

#### **SSS Theme**

To agree:

- That a request for a 3-month extension to 30 September 2023 is explored with SEUPB to enable the installation of signage;
- The target audience for the SSS narratives publication as the local community and visitors to the Forth Meadow Community Greenway; and
- The name of the bridge at Springfield Dam as the 'Foundry Bridge'.

#### **BPR Theme**

- BPR 1 - NIHE- Cross Community Area Networks

To note that discussions have progressed with SEUPB relating to proposed mitigations and next steps

- BPR 2 - Culture Unit - Creative Communities

To note the quotation for an artist for the Short Strand/Walkway received nil submissions and therefore delivery of this project element is no longer viable.

- BPR6 St Comgall's

To agree the updated Educational Resources and Exhibition Materials as agreed by the Programme Board on 9 February 2023 via delegated authority. The exhibition materials (website) are to be approved, subject to SEUPB approval.

### **GOOD RELATIONS**

#### **Good Relations Action Plan Q1 Expenditure:**

- To agree to proceed with the delivery of the Good Relations Action Plan 23/24 under delegated authority of the Director of Neighbourhood Services, allocating up to 25% of the total Plan until a formal Letter of Offer had been received by TEO.
- Approve the increase in the allocation of Grant Aid under BCC1, to incorporate an additional £23,000 from the BCC9 Strategic Intervention Programme in order to include projects that met the objectives of the programme.

#### **Cultural Inclusion Programme:**

- To note the contents of the report and the activities that were being delivered during March 2023 as part of this project, to which the Members were welcome to attend.

#### **Update on the Belfast Agenda:**

- To agree that the feedback analysis template relating to the Good Relations priority would be circulated to Members with a deadline of receipt for feedback and comments by 15th March 2023, to allow for papers to be prepared in advance of the findings being brought to the Community Planning Partnership in March 2023;
- To note that community planning partners would be asked to make a nomination to sit on a group which would oversee the delivery of the action to develop an inclusive Belfast intervention plan to address inequalities and support the inclusion of Minority Ethnic communities and to progress the delivery of the findings from the Report, launched in December 2022, 'Inequalities Experienced by Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Traveller people residing in Belfast.' The Shared City Partnership would receive regular updates on progress; and
- To agree that Ms. A. M. White and Ms. B. Arthurs be nominated from the Shared City Partnership to sit on the above group.

#### **Storage Costs for donations to refugees and asylum seekers:**

- To agree to allocate support costs to assist with storage for donations relating to the Northern Ireland Refugee Resettlement Scheme, of £300 for this financial year.

### **Equality and Diversity- Equality Screening and Rural Needs Outcome Report Q3 22-23**

The Committee was reminded that the Council had a duty to have, under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998:

- Due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity in relation to the nine equality categories; and
- Regard to the desirability of promotion good relations

In addition, under section 1 of the Rural Needs Act (Northern Ireland) 2016:

- Due regard to rural needs when developing, adopting, implementing or revising policies, strategies and plans, and when designing and delivering public services

To this end, the Council had a process to carry out equality screening and rural needs assessment of new and revised policies. This allowed any impacts related to equality of opportunity, good relations or rural needs to be identified and addressed.

An equality screening and rural needs impact assessment template was completed by the relevant officer, in collaboration with the Equality and Diversity Unit. On a regular basis, the Unit collates all completed templates into a screening outcome report and publishes it onto the Council's website, along with the relevant completed templates.

The Committee noted the Quarterly Screening Outcome Report which would be published on the Council's website

**Operational**

**Minutes of Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum of 16th March, 2023.

**Requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality**

The Committee adopted the recommendations in respect of those applications received up to 10th March, 2023:

<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION</b>	<b>FUNCTION DATE</b>	<b>FUNCTION DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>CRITERIA MET</b>	<b>ROOM CHARGE</b>	<b>HOSPITALITY OFFERED</b>	<b>CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND</b>
<b>2023 EVENTS</b>						
Telugu Cultural Society of Northern Ireland	23 April 2023	<b>Ugadi 2023</b> – New Year Celebration event for the people of Deccan, India people living in Belfast including a cultural program.	D	No charge as community group	No (There is no catering planned for this event)	Approve, No charge No hospitality

**B**  
**4518**

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee**  
**Friday, 24th March, 2023**

<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION</b>	<b>FUNCTION DATE</b>	<b>FUNCTION DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>CRITERIA MET</b>	<b>ROOM CHARGE</b>	<b>HOSPITALITY OFFERED</b>	<b>CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND</b>
		Numbers attending 300				
BTC - Belfast Tamil Community	29 April 2023	<b>BTC 10-year anniversary and Tamil New Year Celebration -</b> – an evening of food and entertainment to celebrate Tamil New Year  Numbers attending 300	C & D	No charge as community group	Yes, Soft drinks reception.	Approve No Charge Soft Drink Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer.</i>
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	7 June 2023	<b>Belfast Trust Staff Remembrance Service 2023</b> for staff and volunteers who have died.  Numbers attending – 300 – 400	C	Charge £825 <i>waivered due to nature of the event</i>	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
Disasters Emergency Committee	20 June 2023	<b>Launch of Ukraine Exhibition</b> of photography depicting humanitarian assistance in Ukraine, the Pakistan Floods and the Turkey-Syria earthquakes. Launch will thank corporate and political supports of DEC's appeals.	D	No charge as charity	Yes, Soft drinks reception.	Approve No Charge Soft Drink Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer.</i>

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee**  
**Friday, 24th March, 2023**

**B**  
**4519**

<b>NAME OF ORGANISATION</b>	<b>FUNCTION DATE</b>	<b>FUNCTION DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>CRITERIA MET</b>	<b>ROOM CHARGE</b>	<b>HOSPITALITY OFFERED</b>	<b>CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND</b>
		Numbers attending 300				
OMNI (Organisation of Malayalees in Northern Ireland)	29 August 2023	<b>PONNONAM 2023</b> - A Cultural dinner and entertainment programme to celebrate Onam.  Numbers attending 400	D	No charge as community group	Yes, Soft drinks reception.	Approve No Charge Soft Drink Reception  <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer.</i>
British Society of Immunology	5 December 2023	<b>BSI Congress Speakers Dinner</b> for guests attending their 3-day congress taking place in ICC  Numbers attending - 150	A & B	No (Waiver as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
<b>2024 EVENTS</b>						
Ulster University	17 June 2024	<b>SPEA12 12th European Conference Dinner</b> for guests attending their 4 day conference taking place in Ulster university on Solar Chemistry and Photocatalysis: Environmental	A & B	No (Waiver as linked to Visit Belfast and Charity)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
		Applications (SPEA). Numbers attending - 250				

**Minutes of the meeting of the Installations Working Group 22nd February**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Installations Working Group of 22nd February, 2023.

**Minutes of the Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore 27th February**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore Working Group of 27th February, 2023.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Language Strategy Working Group**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Language Strategy Working Group of 2nd March, 2023.

**Attendance at Horizon 2020 UPSURGE**

The Committee:

- I. Noted that, as the project lead for the Horizon 2020 UPSURGE project, Alan Wardle would be attending the Project Group meeting in 28th – 29th March in Maribor, Slovenia.
- II. Noted that all costs associated with the attendance at the event were covered within the EU Horizon 2020 UPSURGE grant funding.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the City Centre Working Group**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the City Centre Working Group of 3rd March, 2023.

**Update on dual language street signs**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

- 1.1 **This report is a further update to members on the dual language street signs applications.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- Note the contents of the report.

**3.0 Main report**

**Key Issues**

**Applicants and current status**

- 3.1 The total number of live requests for dual language street signs received as of 22nd March 2023 is 458.**
- 3.2 The first dual language street sign under the new policy was agreed by P&C Committee on the 7th February and ratified by Council on 1st March 2023, with a further 3 street signs agreed at P&C Committee on 7th March.**
- 3.3 There are currently 4 applications due to go to P&C Committee in April, subject to the results of the surveys. Officers expect that number to increase at future meetings once there is a full complement of staff in place.**
- 3.4 The third member notification for the next 10 streets was issued on 24th February and a further list will be issued at the end of March. Officers will review the frequency and number of applications on these lists once there is a full complement of staff.**
- 3.5 Initial assessments to check for any potential adverse impacts on the grounds of equality or good relations were carried out on a further 20 streets on 28th February 2023 and a further session for 20 streets is scheduled for the first week in April 2023. These assessments involve officers from across the council including Good Relations, Equality and Diversity Unit, Place and Economy and Building Control and include significant preparatory work and for decisions made to be fully documented.**

**Workloads**

- 3.6 Survey work is the most labour-intensive part of the process. Analysis of the surveys carried out before the adoption of the new policy identified an average of 43 surveys per street. This was due to the fact that requests tended to be for smaller streets due to the requirement to get a third of residents to sign the initial request. As there is no longer a requirement to provide the initial petition, applications for larger streets have increased significantly. Currently the**



average surveys per street is 116, which is significant additional workload per street.

**Timeframe for the process**

- 3.7 Measures are in place to ensure that each stage of the process is progressing in a consistent manner, and bottlenecks are avoided. As many of the tasks as possible are being done in parallel to shorten the overall timeframe from application submitted to consideration by committee. However, given the multiple stages of the process and set timeframes, it does take at least 4 months to get through the process, from when we start to process an application through to reaching decisions and have the signs erected. Timeframes for each application also vary due to the specific circumstances for each application. For example, the number of occupiers and therefore the numbers of surveys to be carried out. This makes it difficult to confirm a set number of surveys that will be processed in any month, but numbers will increase as resourcing is fully completed.
- 3.8 Officers also intend to reduce the time period for responding to the survey from the current 30 days to 14 days. While this would reduce the overall processing time for each application, it may not impact on the number of applications processed as the staffing resources to administer the process remain the same. However officers are keen to explore all possible options for reducing application processing times.

**Translations**

- 3.9 Officers met with Queens University (QUB) in February regarding the translation of street names. QUB confirmed that additional staffing resource will be in place in March and May and will have a focus on carrying out the necessary research to provide the translations that we require.
- 3.10 The full list of 458 streets applied for has been provided to QUB, and we have agreed operational arrangements to ensure that we can progress applications in the order received and processed.
- 3.11 Some translations are more complex and where there is a delay in receiving these, surveys and Committee reports will be progressed without the translations seeking delegation to the Director to agree the translated street name once it is available.

### Electoral Office

- 3.12 The electoral register available at the Electoral Office is used to confirm that the applicant is a resident of the street, and also to identify the number of people who will be surveyed.
- 3.13 The current procedure is to arrange appointments with the Electoral Office and inform them of which streets are required for viewing. These are then provided to staff to view during the appointment.
- 3.14 Discussions have previously taken place with the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) to look at easier ways of getting access to the register and reducing the time taken and the need for appointments to be made. This was done in conjunction with other local councils, through the Chair of Building Control Northern Ireland. In June 2021 the CEO confirmed that having liaised with her legal representatives, they were not aware of any other way to inspect the register except under supervision, in the current practice. Therefore, a data sharing agreement cannot be used. It was also confirmed that while the legislation permits the sale of the register to government departments, this does not apply to councils.
- 3.15 Building Control also sought the advice of the Council's legal services when having these discussions, who agreed with the legal advice provided to the CEO.

### Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.16 In December, three additional staff members were recruited on a temporary basis to deal with the volume of applications received. However, as two of these posts were from within the existing team, the process for backfilling and covering their duties is still ongoing. While they are being trained and are processing dual language street sign applications, there are also other duties in their substantive posts to be undertaken. This includes processing property certificate applications, a key part of the conveyancing process, and the provision of street naming and numbering, which are important in terms of house sales progressing and allowing new homeowners to set up their utilities and amend address critical documentation. When these staff members are fully released to their new roles and training completed, this will allow for an increase in the number of applications being processed.

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

- 3.17 The process for carrying out initial assessments on the ground of equality and good relations is in place. Where adverse impacts are identified, a further screening will take place and finding presented to Members. This work has been developed working with colleagues in our Equality & Diversity Unit together with an external consultant.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

**Issues raised in advance by Members**

**Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service –  
Councillor Ferguson to raise**

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Ferguson raised the issue of the funding of the Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service. She referred to a report which had been presented at the meeting of the People and Communities Committee on 7th March which had indicated that the Service would only receive funding in the sum of £70,400 from the Department of Communities in 2023/24. She stated that this would leave the Service of a shortfall of up to £279,315 for that period. She requested that the Committee consider funding the shortfall the year-end underspends and/or the Council's reserves.

The Committee was advised that the Committee had, the previous month, agreed that reallocations of forecast departmental underspends would be considered as part of the year end reporting, taking into consideration the 2023/24 budgetary gap and the Committee would be required to rescind that decision. In addition, the Chief Executive stated that, as Chief Financial Officer, he would not be prepared to use the Council's reserves for that purpose.

After further discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Ferguson,  
Seconded by Councillor Lyons,

That the Committee agrees to rescind its decision of 17th February in relation to the reallocation of departmental underspends and agreed further to use any in-year underspend to commit to covering the shortfall of up to £279,315 to fund the Citywide Tribunal Service in 2023/24.

On a vote, twelve Members vote the proposal and none against, with six no votes and it was declared carried.

Chairperson