

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 23rd April, 2010

MEETING OF Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

- Members present: Councillor Hartley (Chairman);
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Lavery); and
Councillors Adamson, Attwood, Austin, D. Browne,
M. Browne, W. Browne, Campbell, Convery, Crozier,
Hendron, N. Kelly, C. Maskey, McCann, Newton,
Rodgers and Rodway.
- Also attended: Councillor Robinson.
- In attendance: Mr. P. McNaney. Chief Executive;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mr. C. Quigley, Director of Legal Services;
Mrs. J. Thompson, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. L. Steele. Head of Committee
and Members' Services; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior committee Administrator.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 5th, 16th and 19th March 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 April, subject to:

- (i) the omission of the minute of the meeting of 19th March under the heading "Finance – Budget Monitoring Report" which, at the request of Councillor Rodgers, had been referred back to the Committee to enable further consideration to be given to a report on the appropriate level of financial reporting which should be made to Committees on a regular basis;
- (ii) the omission of the minute of the meeting of 19th March under the heading "Publication of Information on Payments made to Council Officers" which, at the request of Councillor D. Browne, had been taken back to the Committee for further consideration;
- (iii) the omission of the minute of the meeting of 19th March under the heading "Members' Declarations of Interest" which, at the request of Councillor McCausland, had been taken back to the Committee for further consideration; and
- (iv) the amendment of the decision of 19th March under the heading "Request to Address the Council – Unison Northern Ireland" to include representatives from other Trades Unions representing the Council workforce being invited to the Committee meeting.

Budget Monitoring Report

The Committee considered further the minute of the meeting of 19th March under the heading "Budget Monitoring Report". An extract of the minute in that regard is set out hereunder:

The Director of Finance and Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

'Relevant Background Information

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee needs regular updates on capital and revenue expenditure throughout the year. The most recent report on the 2009/10 position was presented in December 2009. This report updates Members on the current year's position at Period 10, the forecast outturn for the current year and reserves position.

Key Issues

Revenue Budget Position to January 2010

BCC has a net departmental budget of £106m for the period to January 2010. Outturn for the period is £103.1m giving an under-spend for the period of £2.9m.

Forecast Outturn

The forecast out-turn for 2009/10 reported at period 7 was an under-spend of £1.6m, after the application of some £2.3m to fund the council wide voluntary redundancy exercise. At period 10, the current forecast under-spend for 2009/10 has increased to £1.9m, an increase of some £300k from the previously reported position. There have been several factors that have contributed to the £300k improvement in the forecast, most notably the improvement in the forecasts for both the Development and Parks and Leisure departments, which were mitigated by a reduction in the forecast income from LPS. Such movements are to be expected given the size of the BCC total budget.

Impact on Reserves

As reported at SP&R Committee on 20th November 2009, the planned reserves at the end of 2009/10 were £2.7m (after planned contributions from reserves of £2.4m to ease the rate burden). If the forecast under spend of £1.9m above is achieved, this would lead to reserves at 31 March 2010 of £4.6m (compared to £5.3m at 31 March 2009). This is some £300k higher than the position used to inform the rate setting exercise for 2010/11 and therefore does not represent a significant change.

A paper on the strategy for replenishing the reserves in 2010/11 and future years was taken to SP&R on the 11th December 2009. As a result of this, a contribution to reserves of £4.5m was included in the 2010/11 rate, of which some £1m could be used to fund the capital programme.

Capital Programme 2009/10

The draft Capital Programme for 2009/10 and future years outlines total budgeted expenditure for the year of £12.3m.

Capital expenditure for the period to 31st January 2010 amounts to £13.9m. The most significant areas of expenditure were Ulster Hall Major Works of £2.077m and City Hall Major Works of £3.1m.

Forecast Capital Out-turn 2009/10

The total actual capital expenditure for 2009/10 is forecast to be £18.3m. This is £6m over the approved budget and relates mainly to an under spend of £5.1m in 2008/09 that has rolled forward into 2009/10.

There have also been a number of new schemes added to the capital programme since the original capital programme was planned. However, due to the timing of taking out loans, the forecast capital financing requirement for the year including this additional expenditure can be met by the existing budget.

Resource Implications

As outlined above.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the current revenue and capital financial positions to date, the forecast out-turns, and the implication for the reserves position.

Decision Tracking

Regular updates on the financial position in 2009/10 have been provided to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. A final report on the year end position for 2009/10 will be presented in the first quarter of 2010/11.'

The Committee noted the contents of the report."

The Members were advised that the matter had been referred back to the Committee at the request of Councillor Rodgers to enable consideration to be given to a report on the appropriate level of financial reporting which should be made to Committees on a regular basis. The Senior Committee Administrator reported that this matter would be dealt within a separate report later in the meeting and therefore recommended that the Committee affirm its decision of 19th March to note the contents of the report.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Publication of Information on Payments made to Council Officers

The Committee considered further the minute of the meeting of 19th March under the heading "Publication of Information on Payments made to Council Officers". A copy of the minute in this regard is set out hereunder:

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

'Relevant Background Information

Members will recall that the Committee, at its meeting on 19th February, 2010, agreed to the following revised headings under which the details of Councillor's allowances and expenses would be published:

Allowances

Basic

Special Responsibility

District Policing Partnership

Transition Committee

Civic Dignitaries Personal Allowances

Conferences/Visits

Subsistence (including the cost of accommodation and out of pocket expenses)

Travel (by public transport or car)

Conference Fees

Travel and Other Miscellaneous Claims

Mileage, etc., to and from meetings

Home Phone Rental/Broadband Fee

Hands Free Car Kits

At the Council meeting on 1st March, concerns were expressed in relation to a perceived differential in respect of the information being published for Councillors and that being published for officers and it was agreed that a report be presented to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee setting out the extent of the information included currently in the Council's Publication Scheme in relation to payments made to Council officers and comparing and contrasting this with the information to be published in relation to elected Members.

Key Issues

At its meeting on 19th September, 2008, the Committee approved the publication of costs incurred by the Council as a result of employees attending events outside of Northern Ireland so as to demonstrate the Council's commitment to accountability and openness.

This information, which is published annually, details payments made to employees in connection with expenditure incurred on travel which is outside their day-to-day operational duties.

The following details are included:

- *Department*
- *Job title and staff number*
- *Date of event*
- *Description of event*
- *Event location - for example, Great Britain, Republic of Ireland, Europe or Rest of World*
- *Travel Costs*
- *Accommodation and subsistence - hotel and meal costs*
- *Gross cost - the total cost before any deductions are made in respect of funding received from external bodies*
- *Percentage actual funding - the percentage of any external funding received, for example, EU funding or charges to customers*
- *Funding body - organisation which provided the external funding*
- *Net cost*

The following table illustrates for comparison purposes the information which is published currently in relation to payments made to Councillors and those made to officers:

<u>Councillors</u>	<u>Officers</u>
<p>Allowances</p> <p><i>Basic Special Responsibility District Policing Partnership Transition Committee Civic Dignitaries Personal Allowances (Members identified individually by name)</i></p>	<p>Salaries and Wages</p> <p><i>This information is published within the Annual Financial Report in respect of the number of employees within specific £10,000 salary bands from £50,001 upwards.</i></p> <p><i>(This information does not identify individual officers either by name or employee number)</i></p>

<u>Councillors</u>	<u>Officers</u>
<p>Conferences/Visits</p> <p><i>Subsistence (including the cost of accommodation and out of pocket expenses)</i></p> <p><i>Travel (by public transport or car)</i></p> <p>Conference Fees</p> <p><i>(Members identified individually by name)</i></p>	<p>Conferences/Visits (outside of Northern Ireland)</p> <p><i>Subsistence (including the cost of accommodation and out of pocket expenses)</i></p> <p><i>Travel (by public transport or car)</i></p> <p><i>(Officers are identified by Job Title and Employee Number but not by name)</i></p>
<p>Travel and Other Miscellaneous Claims</p> <p><i>Mileage, etc. to and from meetings</i></p> <p><i>Home Phone Rental/Broadband Fee</i></p> <p><i>Hands Free Car Kits</i></p> <p><i>(Members identified individually by name)</i></p>	

The Council does not publish the specific details of officers' personal salaries in order to protect the rights of individuals under the Data Protection Act. Furthermore, a difference exists in terms of the legal status of Members as opposed to officers. Members are elected for the full term of the Council, and because they are elected they are subject to a higher level of accountability to the public. Officers on the other hand are employed under contract of employment and are subject to a different level of public scrutiny, which is reflected by the provisions of the Data Protection legislation.

The information which is published in respect of officers' attendance at conferences and visits is restricted currently to those which take place outside of Northern Ireland, whereas the information in relation to Councillors is in respect of attendance at conferences and visits regardless of their location.

Options

- 1. The Publication Scheme should remain unchanged so long as Members are content with the current level of information being published.*

2. *Extend the Publication Scheme to include payments made to staff for attendance at events within Northern Ireland.*
3. *Extend the Publication Scheme to include payments made to staff for attendance at events within Northern Ireland and to include payments made to officers in respect of miscellaneous items, namely, home phone rental, broadband fee and hands free car kits.*

Members should be aware that, in respect of Options 2 and 3, there will be a cost associated with the compilation and publishing of this information and that because of data protection legislation, this information would have to be provided by job title and employee number and not by individual name. Furthermore, the extension of the Publication Scheme to include this additional information will require consultation with the trade unions, as was the case before the current policy was agreed by the Committee on 19th September, 2008. This will require a future report to be submitted to the Committee on the outcome of the consultation before any change can be made to the existing scheme.

Variation of Previous Decision

In carrying out this exercise I have had to scrutinise closely each of the elements listed in terms of both Members and officers and to satisfy myself that the entry is relevant. In doing so it has become apparent to me that the publishing under 'Payments to Councillors' of conference fees is misleading in that while it may be useful to capture and publish that information as part of the Council's Publication Scheme it is not accurate to include those amounts on the Council's website under 'Payments to Councillors' since these monies are not paid to them. Accordingly, I would apologise for this inaccuracy and would seek the Committee's authority, irrespective of any other action which may be felt necessary in terms of the perceived differential between Councillors and officers, to vary the decision taken by the Committee at its meeting on 19th February in order to omit the insertion of Conference Fees from the Section on the Council's website referring to 'Payments to Councillors'.

Resource Implications

N/A.

Recommendation

To agree to omit conference fees from the section on the Council's website referring to 'Payments to Councillors' and to determine which of the available options is the most appropriate having taken account of all the relevant information.

Decision Tracking

- Option 1 – No change required.**
Option 2 or 3 – The Director of Finance and Resources to submit a further report to Committee by June, 2010.'

The Committee adopted the recommendation in relation to the omission of conference fees from payments to Councillors and agreed to adopt Option 1 in that the Publication Scheme should remain unchanged in so far as it related to attendance at conferences and visits by officers."

Councillor D. Browne, who had requested that the matter be referred back to the Committee, asked the Committee to consider amending the Publication Scheme to include details of the salaries and other expenses, similar to those which it had agreed would be published in relation to Councillors, which were paid to officers graded Head of Service and above.

Several Members expressed the view that such information was not a matter for public concern. The Members accepted that, whilst they were publicly elected and subject to a higher level of accountability to the public, such information was not required in relation to officers as it was a matter for the Councillors to monitor such expenditure.

After further discussion, during which the Chief Executive undertook to provide to the Members information on the types of financial information which was already published in relation to officers and details on how such information was released to the public and to provide Councillor D. Browne with the information which he had requested, the Committee agreed to affirm its decision of 19th March.

Members' Declarations of Interests

The Committee considered further the minute of 19th March, under the heading "Members' Declarations of Interest". A copy of the minute in this regard is set out hereunder:

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st March, had agreed that a Notice of Motion on Members' Declarations of Interest be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration and report.

The Head of Committee and Members' Services explained that there was no doubt that the public in general and the press and media in particular were focusing more than ever before on the behaviour of all publicly elected representatives. That could be demonstrated by the protracted press reporting of the expenses which Members of Parliament claimed and the subsequent damage which had been caused to the public perception of the democratic process. The Council had recognised that increased public scrutiny and had agreed recently to revise and enhance the information which was published on payments made to Members.

He pointed out that another area of public life where scrutiny by the press and media had been increasing over recent months was the requirement for elected representatives to be seen not to seek personal advantage by virtue of the public office which they held. For Councillors elected to local Councils that was dealt with under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972, whereby Councillors were expected to declare both pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any matter being considered by the Council and, where such an interest existed, not to take part in the discussion or vote on the matter.

The Head of Committee and Members' Services explained that Members of the Council had been abiding by that principle. However, Members were increasingly being asked to represent the Council on a range of Outside Bodies and it was not always clear when such membership gave rise to pecuniary or, more frequently, non-pecuniary interests. It was accepted that the guidance available to Members in helping them to determine when such an interest existed was somewhat sparse and not easily understood and it was considered that the issuing of a Members' Guide to Declarations of Interest would help Members to ensure that they always abided by the highest principles of behaviour in public life and would provide practical assistance to Members.

The Head of Committee and Members' Services indicated that there was another related but separate matter which the Council might wish to give some consideration to which was the possibility of publishing a Members' Register of Interests, which would require Members to declare all business and other interests which they held. Such registers were used in Westminster, in the Northern Ireland Assembly and in most Councils in England and Wales.

The Committee agreed the draft Guide to Members' Declarations of Interest be submitted in the first instance to the Audit Panel, together with a report on the steps to be taken to establish a Members' Register of Interests, with a view to such a Register being introduced with effect from the commencement of the next Council term."

The Committee was advised that Councillor McCausland, at whose request the matter was taken back to the Committee, was not in attendance at the meeting.

The Chief Executive pointed out that he had raised the matter with the Director of Legal Services who was preparing currently for consideration by the Committee a report on governance procedures within the Council. The Chief Executive confirmed that officers were already required by Council Policy to declare interests and that the report on governance would benchmark the Council's current policy against best practice.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed to affirm its decision of 19th March.

Human Resources

Representatives from Trades Unions

The Committee agreed to defer until a future meeting the receipt of a deputation from the Trades Unions in relation to the pay freeze for Local Government workers.

Standing Order 55 - Employment of Relatives

It was reported that, In accordance with Standing Order 55 and the authority delegated to her, the Director of Finance and Resources had authorised the appointment of a number of individuals who related to existing officers of the Council.

Noted.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel of 15th April.

Finance

Review of Financial Reporting to Members

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st April, had agreed that consideration be given to a report on the appropriate level of financial reporting which should be made to Committees on a regular basis.

The Director of Finance and Resources pointed out that financial reports were provided currently to Members on a regular basis. However, it had been recognised that that could be further enhanced and that there was a need to ensure that consistent information was available across the Council for Members' consideration. The future financial reporting needs of the Council were already being reviewed by officers as part of a number of proposed financial improvement projects which would be submitted for consideration to the Budget and Transformation Panel and the Committee in future months. It would be important that any changes to financial reporting were supported with appropriate training and guidance, if required. It was important also that financial reporting was seen in the context of the wider performance management of Council activities.

The Director explained that the Chartered Institute of Finance and Accountancy's Statement of Professional Practice indicated that "the objectives of financial reporting are the production of accurate, complete, relevant, timely and reliable information to demonstrate and maintain accountability, to meet statutory reporting requirements, to account to an organisation's stakeholders for financial performance and to support decision making".

The Director explained that, in order to meet that objective in the context of Members' information needs, it was proposed that issues such as the content and timing of reports, the role of the Committees and training needs would be discussed with Members over the coming months.

Accordingly, it was recommended that:

- (i) the Director of Finance and Resources work with the Budget and Transformation Panel and the Party Groupings on the Council during May and June to discuss the key issues which had been raised in this report;
- (ii) specific recommendations on financial reporting be submitted to the Committee for consideration in June; and
- (iii) financial reports be made available from the end of the first quarter in 2010/2011.

Request for Funding - Common Purpose Belfast (Bursaries)

The Committee was advised that a request for financial assistance in the sum of £6,000 had been received from Common Purpose Belfast in connection with its 2010 Navigator Emerging Leaders Programme. The application sought support to fund three bursaries for course applicants, usually from the community or voluntary sector, who were unable to meet the participation costs. The Programme, which had in the region of thirty to thirty-five participants per year, was designed to draw together local leaders, emerging leaders and senior managers from all walks of life who could potentially play a role in shaping the future of Belfast. The Council had supported the organisation since its inception in 1996 through hosting elements of the Programme, the funding and participation of one Member and one officer on an annual basis and providing bursaries for candidates selected by the Common Purpose Programme Board.

The Director of Finance and Resources reported that, until 2008, the Council had funded two bursaries. However, in view of the other demands on resources and the fact that Common Purpose had benefited from support for some considerable time, the Council did not fund any bursaries in 2008 and had provided for one bursary only in 2009.

The Regional Director of Common Purpose Belfast had written recently to the Council seeking support for the 2010 Programme. She had emphasised the importance of the Council endorsing the Programme and had outlined the following reasons for an increase in the number of bursaries requested:

- (i) the need to develop strong leadership skills and collaboration to enable Belfast to prosper beyond the current economic downturn;
- (ii) the need to create and promote partnership working; and
- (iii) the need to learn from best practice internationally as provided by linkages to Common Purpose programme participants in England and in India.

The Programme evaluation amongst Councillors and staff who had attended the Common Purpose course had concluded that they were generally highly regarded and deemed beneficial to the Council. Against this, the Council was aware of pressures on resources and might wish to curtail expenditure on Common Purpose courses to Members and Council staff only.

In light of the above information, it was recommended that the Committee consider the following options:

- (a) accede to the request for £6,000 in respect of three part-funded places for emerging leaders from the community and voluntary sector in Belfast; or
- (b) agree to a lesser amount of £2,000 to enable one part bursary to be funded; or
- (c) revert to the position which had been adopted in 2008 whereby the Council had not supported the bursaries in view of the current budget restrictions and its existing commitments to Common Purpose.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor McCann,
Seconded by Councillor C. Maskey,

That the Committee agrees to adopt Option (a).

On a vote by show of hands seven Members voted for the proposal and six against and it was accordingly declared carried.

Accordingly, it was

Resolved – That expenditure in the sum of £6,000 for the Common Purpose Navigator Programme be approved under Section 115 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972, it being the opinion of the Committee that the expenditure would be in the interest of, and would bring direct benefit to, the District and inhabitants of the District, with the Committee being satisfied that the direct benefits so accruing would be commensurate with the payments to be made.

Infrastructure to Deliver Housing Benefits Services for the Northern Ireland Housing Executive

(Mr. P. Gribben, Information Services Portfolio Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered a report which outlined the commercial arrangements currently in place to provide IT services to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. The services included provision of Housing benefits, Rate Relief and Lone Pensioner Allowances to claimants across the region. The Committee was advised that a refresh of the infrastructure was required to ensure that service quality was maintained and that the arrangements allowed for flexibility to upgrade hardware quickly to keep pace with legislative changes and software upgrades.

The Committee considered the proposals and adopted the recommendation to enter into a twenty-four month rental agreement.

Transition Committee Business

Northern Ireland Local Government Association - Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 Members will recall that the Committee had previously agreed, at its meeting on 19th February 2010, that the Council would continue to engage with the Northern Ireland Local Government Association and that its subscription contribution for 2010/2011 would be based on the following conditions:

- 1. calculation of subscription payment would be based on population based and not penny rate product; and**
- 2. that NILGA enter into an outcome based Memorandum of Understanding which would provide a framework for NILGA and the Council to work in a spirit of collaboration to deliver them**

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 Council officers have been engaged in ongoing discussions with NILGA officials to progress the proposed development of an effective MOU. It has been suggested that such an approach be broadened and considered within the context of an overall route and branch review of the future role of NILGA and its relationship with its constituent councils including a strengthened performance framework.

- 2.2 Furthermore, the Chief Executive of NILGA has recently resigned to take up a new post as Director of the NHS Confederation and it would be the intention that this post will also be considered as part of a wider review of NILGA.
- 2.3 It is understood that the NILGA Office Bearers would intend to commission an independent review of the post of Chief Executive and set within the context of the potential future role of NILGA. It is also understood that NILGA would intend to establish a sectoral task group (with BCC representation) to oversee and input into this process.
- 2.4 Members will note that NILGA has requested the direct assistance and support from the Council, in terms of both procurement and HR advice, in progressing such work. In addition, NILGA has written to BCC party group leaders seeking bilateral meetings with its Office Bearers to enable wider information sharing and discussions on this issue.

NILGA Annual Plan and Subscriptions

- 2.5 The Council has recently received correspondence from NILGA which set out proposals in regards to its draft business plan for the period 2010/2011 and proposed increase in annual subscription. It should be noted that the business plan has been drafted in the context of the issues raised above and, therefore has a focus on strengthening relationships with councils, developing a customer focused approach to service delivery and has identified the need to review and redesign NILGA as a prioritised activity.
- 2.6 The business plan is also heavily focused on the role of NILGA in supporting the effective delivery of the RPA process and the modernisation of local government. Clearly, the degree of focus on such areas will be dependent upon whether or not the RPA progresses as currently scheduled. The business plan should therefore be a living document and subject to ongoing review.

Subscription Fee

- 2.7 NILGA has also informed the Council that it has been agreed that its total annual subscription fee for the period 2010/2011 would increase by 2.5% (below inflation) rising from £373,613 in 09/10 to £382,972 in 10/11. NILGA have sought the amount of £106,627 from the Council based on a percentage of penny product. In keeping with the previous decision taken by the Committee at its meeting on 19th February 2010 (i.e. that the Council's subscription payment would be based on population base and not the penny rate) this would equate to £76,500 (approx) for the Council.

3.0 Resource Implications

If agreed, payment of the NILGA annual subscription fee will be approximately £75,000.

4.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- (i) note the contents of the foregoing report; and
- (ii) agree that the Council continue its engagement with NILGA in regards to the development of a Memorandum of Understanding set within the context of a wider review of the future role of NILGA (refer to para. 2.1 above)
- (iii) pay a subscription fee based on population base ie £76,500 for the coming year.”

Moved by Councillor M. Browne,
Seconded by Councillor McCann,

That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendations.

On a vote by show of hands fourteen Members voted for the proposal and one against and it was accordingly declared carried.

Corporate Plan and Performance Management

Corporate Plan Update 2010/2011

(Mrs. S. McNicholl, Strategic Planning Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report in relation to the Corporate Plan update for 2010/11:

“Purpose of the report

1. To present, for approval, information about the Corporate Plan update for 2010/11.

Background

2. As Members are aware, the corporate plan is refreshed annually on the basis of up to date performance and activity information, new financial parameters and any pressing external factors. This is the final year of the current corporate plan and therefore the last refresh that will take place before the creation of the new plan that will take the organisation forward from 2011. As such, the strategic themes and objectives of the organisation,

3. set by Members in 2008, have remained largely the same between 2009/10 and 2010/11; however the actions and performance measures aligned to the themes and objectives have been updated to ensure that they remain relevant and continue to be consistent with Members' priorities for the city.

Update of Corporate Plan 2010/11 – Appendix 1

3. Appendix 1 to this report (a copy of which has been circulated) contains the information that will form the basis of the corporate plan update for 2010/11. As in previous years, a public-friendly version of the update will be produced, including appropriate corporate messages, a summary of achievements to date and information about Council services and Members of Council, this will be placed on the Council's website.
4. The updated corporate plan is based upon information in departmental plans which have been brought to individual Committees for approval during March and April. In this way it is connected to service delivery across the Council. All actions and performance measures within the corporate plan are also in relevant departmental plans; allowing Members to see clearly where responsibility rests at Chief Officer level for the implementation of the plan. The departmental plans for the Chief Executive's Department, Finance and Resources Department and Property and Projects Department form a separate item on the Committee's agenda for this meeting. The corporate plan has been updated to also reflect the focus that the Committee has placed upon efficiency and value for money in the year ahead.

Implementation of the corporate plan – performance management

5. Reports will be brought to the SP&R Committee on the implementation of the plan on a regular basis throughout 2010/11. These reports will provide updates on how projects within the plan are being progressed and on performance against the indicators which the plan contains.

Development of the new corporate plan 2011 and beyond

6. As previously mentioned, this is the final year of the current corporate plan which means that over the coming months Members will lead the development of a new corporate plan for 2011 and beyond. This will be a key activity for the Committee, which has responsibility for setting the overall strategic policy, direction and priorities of the Council, in the months ahead.

Work is already underway to support Members in this process and provide the evidence base necessary for development of a new plan. As with previous plans, up to date perception data is a fundamental building block; there are three key elements – Members; the public and employees.

- Members: As in 2007, a survey will be held across all elected Members to gain individual views on how the Council is performing and what future priorities for the city and the organisations should be. As in previous years, an external consultant will be appointed to undertake this work to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. The information from this survey will sit alongside work that will be undertaken with party groups and Committees in the development of the new plan.**
- The public: capturing what the public feel future priorities should be is essential and; as with previous corporate planning exercises, this will take the form of a household survey in the latter part of May 2010; the last such survey took place 2007. The survey will to help to ensure that the Council's duty to consult, part of Best Value legislation, is fulfilled.**
- Employees: information from the employee survey, currently underway, will also inform development of the new plan, ensuring that the new plan is relevant from a front-line service perspective and that any barriers to the implementation of priorities can be addressed.**
- City profile information: work is also underway to ensure that members have a comprehensive socio-economic profile of the city, and the plans and strategies that impact upon it with which to begin consideration of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.**
- Review of performance to date: a year-end report on the corporate plan 2009/10 will be brought to Members in June with an overview and explanation of performance over this period. This information will help Members consider the issues currently facing the organisation in terms of performance and the strengths and weakness the organisation has displayed in implementing the current corporate plan – which will be essential to ensuring an improved process for the development of the new plan.**

7. A timetable for developing the new corporate plan will be brought to the Committee in May 2010..

Recommendation

8. The Committee is asked to approve the updated corporate plan information contained at Appendix 1 (a copy of which has been circulated and is available on the Council's Modern.gov website.) To note the work that is underway to prepare for the development of the new corporate plan for 2011 and beyond and agree that a survey of Members be carried out to support this work.

Resource Implications

Financial

All plans have been drafted against agreed revenue estimates for 2010-11; these estimates include provision for development of the new corporate plan.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Departmental Plans 2010-2011

Chief Executive's; Finance and Resources; and Property and Projects

The Committee was reminded that the Council's Performance and Planning Framework required all Departments to prepare Plans which linked to both the Corporate and Service Plans and outlined the key tasks which the Departments would be delivering during the next year.

The content of the Plans reflected the key supporting actions contained within the Corporate Plan 2008-2011 and provided a mechanism to enable the Committee and senior managers to performance manage the key work of Departments in line with the Corporate Plan. In addition, they should assist managers and officers in the relevant Departments to take decisions and allocate resources in line with the agreed objectives and activities. Departments would provide regular updates to the Committee on the progress of their Plan and key work as appropriate.

The Committee approved the Department Plans for the Chief Executive's Department, the Finance and Resources Department and the Property and Projects Department. A copy of the key achievements for 2009/2010 and the key actions and performance indicators for 2010/2011 as detailed in the Plans for each of the Departments is set out hereunder:

Chief Executive's

"6.0 Key Achievements 2009/10

Better Leadership

Key achievements

- Contributed to the preparation of the Council for RPA focusing on those issues which relate to the department's functions – communications; legislative consultation, operational and financial issues affected by proposed boundary changes/functions transfer
- Commenced and supported the delivery of the Peace Plan to meet expenditure targets working with SEUPB to maximise the value of available EU funding
- Organised a successful 'hate crime' conference and commissioned a new training programme
- Prepared for an updating of the inter-agency Good Relations Plan for Belfast in anticipation of delayed OFMDFM strategy

Better Care for Belfast's Environment

Key achievements

- Significant progress on preparation of North Foreshore for further development
- Settled funding documentation for use by the Council in its role as Lead Partner of COMET
- Took a lead role in providing corporate legal advice to Arc 21 and the relevant bodies
- Significant progress on land acquisition for Connswater Greenway project
- Completion of major contract documentation in relation to large waste disposal and recycling contracts

Better Opportunities for Success

Key achievements

- Lead role in relation to funding agreement for TSP

Better Support for People and Communities

Key achievements

- Shaftesbury Recreation Centre – resolving major legal impediments and the extension of the Shaftesbury Recreation Centre
- Supported the introduction of 5 on-line transactional services for the public
- Working with all departments to ensure that good relations principles are mainstreamed into all aspects of Council service.
- Introduced RSS feed to deliver news and updates to media as website is updated to give timely and accurate information to the public (especially valuable during incidents such as flooding)
- Enabled Lord Mayor to improve communication through a weekly blog
- Surveyed Councillors to ensure that we aligned our communication approaches with their desire to keep in contact with the views of their electorate on council services

Better Services

Key achievements

- Nine structural reviews to implement the Review of the Centre proposals and other decisions of the Committee were undertaken within two months
- Surveyed Councillors to ensure that the support services provided matched their requirements
- Won 2 Gold Awards and 1 Silver Award for council communications in the CIPR 2009 Awards reflecting the value of greater collaborative working between departments

Better Value for Money – An Organisation Fit to Lead and Serve

Key achievements

Finance

- Achieved c£150k savings through improved management of advertising and publications
- Achieved c£360k savings through restructuring to permit voluntary redundancies

Communication and Engagement

- Developed an integrated communications framework for civic dignitaries
- Significantly improved communication of key corporate and service issues within the council by launching a new 'interlink' website; expanding 'intercom' magazine and training 150 managers to deliver briefings as well as implementing the 'getting people connected' programme for non-office based colleagues
- Improved publication and graphic design services to present a common image and branding for the council and the city through the promotion of the 'B' brand
- Improved access and communication with the public by opening social networking sites of Facebook; Twitter; Flickr and You Tube and procuring an e-mail marketing solution for all departments.

Assets

- Delivered the arrangements for the return to the City Hall on time and without any break in services. This involved a major advertising campaign across a range of media and the organisation of a significant number of events by the department's services, including a visit by the US Secretary of State, to ensure that the programme was balanced and appropriate for all communities in the city.
- Commenced work on a strategy for the display of existing memorabilia within the City Hall and the acquisition of additional items to reflect the desire for a balanced and inclusive environment.

Governance & Risk

- Implemented the tracking of decisions taken by Council and committees which require further action by departments
- Undertook a review of the council's governance arrangements and drafted a report
- Developed a draft digital strategy for the council

7.0 Key actions for 2010/11

The Department's key actions have been defined against the background of the Value Creation Map. Each key task has a relationship with one or more of the themes described in the Value Creation Map.

Better Leadership

Key actions

- Engage and influence the RPA and local government modernisation processes and avail of emerging opportunities
- Develop and deliver, in partnership with communities and key stakeholders, a community planning framework and shared vision for the city in relation to RPA
- Provide policy advice and support to the Council's Transition Committee and Transition Team and to the wider local government sector in relation to the RPA
- Update and deliver activities within the Belfast Good Relations Plan
- Deliver the work from the Peace III programme in line with SEUPB expenditure targets
- Continue work with Community Safety on Safer City issues, with particular reference to hate crime
- Contribute to the public enquiry listed for June 2010 on Sprucefield
- Make arrangements for the Local Government Elections in 2011
- Prepare for the new Governance arrangements arising out of the introduction of the Local Government Reorganisation Bill
- Contribute to RPA Strategic Leadership Board and Project Development Panels and consultation process
- Act as the leader for the local government sector in respect to RPA
- Develop an external relations strategy

Better Care for Belfast's Environment

Key actions

- Continue to engage with central government, in liaison with other Council services, to ensure the Clean Neighbourhoods legislation in Northern Ireland is fit for purpose
- Take the lead in development of environmental management plan for North Foreshore
- Input to site selection, options and acquisition of land process for cemetery provision
- Be principal point of contact for all procurement matters in relation to Arc21 including residual waste, waste disposal alternatives and site selection

Better Opportunities for Success

Key actions

- Land assembly and possible public enquiry for Connswater Community Greenway project
- Use of North Foreshore site and draft agreement for May concert

Better Support for People and Communities

Key actions

- Update Equality Scheme including Disability action plan
- Continue to mainstream good relations' principles into every aspect of Council business
- Develop a digital strategy for the Council

Better Services

Key actions

- Continue to ensure City Hall is welcoming and inclusive for all
- Develop and implement a consultation and engagement strategy for the Council
- Establish the new structure identified in the departmental review and implement specific section changes as required
- Review financial and personnel procedures/policies of the various sections in the re-structured department to ensure that agreed common approaches are in place
- Prepare the Induction Programme for the new Council in 2011

Better Value for Money – An Organisation Fit to Lead and Serve

Key actions

Policy, Planning and Performance

- Develop the Corporate Plan 2011 and beyond
- Further integrate various Council planning frameworks
- Support Members in the delivery of the new Corporate Plan
- Support the development of an Organisational Development Framework

Finance

- Achieve efficiencies through conducting more graphic design work in-house and increasing our role in Council-wide advertising
- Contribute to the overall council efficiency programme as determined
- Resolve issue on potential claims re. Landfill Tax credits

Human Resources

- Provide further advice in respect of ongoing potential equal pay claims

Corporate Assets

- Continue programme to ensure that the City Hall is welcoming to everyone and that displays and exhibitions are inclusive and diverse
- Arc 21 – potential for sale of 14 acres

Governance and Risk

- Commence planning for local government elections in 2011
- Lead and influence governance arrangements to ensure the Council has an effective and efficient decision making process post RPA
- Review emerging legislative changes arising from the RPA
- Prepare the induction programme for the new Council in 2011

Communication and Engagement

- Develop and implement new advertising policy and procedures
- Develop the Council's presence on Facebook and Twitter
- Promote the City through the Belfast Brand Platform
- Implement the key actions in the Consultation and Engagement Strategy
- Undertake residents', employees' and Councillors' surveys

8.0 Key performance indicators 2010/11

The department is responsible for collating and monitoring the following corporate indicators

Leadership

- Number of hate crimes in the city
- Number of interface barriers across the city

Better Support for People and Communities

- Number of equality complaints -

Better Services

- % of complaints responded to within corporate target at each of the 3 stages of the Procedure
- % Committee decisions assigned to departmental officers that are actioned at the right time
- Legal Services – internal client satisfaction levels
- Number of unique external visitors who access Modern.gov

HR Management

- Average number of working days per employee lost due to absence
- % of Councillors with Personal Development Plan – annually
- Overtime costs
- Agency costs

Finance

- Net expenditure to be within 3% of budgetary totals - annually

Communication and Engagement

- Visits to Council website – monthly
- % media releases used – quarterly
- positive media coverage – quarterly
- Number of followers of Council's Twitter site – quarterly
- Number of fans of Council's Facebook site – quarterly

Governance and Risk

- % Committee decisions that are actioned at the right time - quarterly
- % Committee decisions deferred – quarterly”

Finance and Resources

“Key achievements 2009-10

6.1 Better Leadership

- Strategic Finance Group established to streamline Council processes and identify efficiencies and secure cost savings.
- Officers continue to liaise with statutory agencies to represent Council-interests with regard to RPA implementation.

6.2 Better opportunities for success across the City

- Memorandum of Understanding signed with Land and Property Service establishing mutual agreement on levels of service to ensure optimum availability of information for rate setting.

6.3 Better care for Belfast’s environment

- Printer strategy under development with the aim of reducing the number of printers and consumables.
- Sustainable Development Action Plan 2009-11 completed and accepted by Council
- Recognition achieved as top performing Council in 2009 Arena bench-mark survey.
- Staff Travel Smartcard Scheme established.

6.4 Better support for people and communities

- Ongoing Portal development aimed at improving online access to Council services.

6.5 Better services - listening and delivering

- Intranet online forms developed to improve customer access to online information and services.

6.6 Better value for money - an organisation fit to lead and serve

Corporate Human Resource Management

- Council interests re RPA represented on the Local Government Reform Joint Forum.
- Approach agreed with regard to the effective management of vacancies arising from RPA.
- Chief Officers performance reviews ongoing, 360 degree approach finalised for Heads of Service and senior managers.
- Work ongoing on the implementation of a corporate approach to the IIP framework.
- New Attendance Policy introduced to better manage and monitor absence
- Work continuing on implementation of Member Development Programme.
- Member PDP process put in place.
- Completion of voluntary redundancy exercise and related reviews of structures

Corporate Financial Planning

- Efficiency savings of £2m identified for 2010/11.
- Internal trading agreed and implemented for all non-demand led services for the financial year 2010-11 to ensure greater transparency, management control and potential cost savings.
- Work ongoing to review Council travel procurement processes with a view to consolidating and improving processes and achieving potential efficiency savings.
- Financial management training developed and a number of training sessions completed.
- Year end accounts completed and unqualified audit opinion obtained

Corporate Information Management

- Land line rental and call charges moved to OGC tariffs.
- Mobile phone policy agreed. Telephony Review carried out Council-wide to achieve rationalisation and cost savings
- VoIP rolled out to City Hall. Other locations to follow.
- Tender process completed for virtualisation of Servers.
- Disaster Recovery Plan created.

- Business Continuity Plan tested.
- Planning underway for move to Windows 7 and Office 2007.
- IT Health Check completed December 2009 to review the effectiveness and value for money of IT services.
- Modern.gov implementation of decision tracking.

Corporate Governance and Risk

- On target to complete 70% of plan.
- Regular reporting to DMTs, COMT and Audit Panel regarding VFM currently on target.
- Annual Governance Statement completed.
- Fraud Awareness training delivered to approximately 170 managers and staff.
- High level assurance framework in place Council-wide and for major projects.

7.0 Key actions for 2010-11

7.1 Leadership

- Ensure financial, human resources, and ICT aspects of the implementation of RPA are addressed as required.
- Assess the financial affordability of the City Investment Strategy and the Capital Programme.
- Lead on the organisational development programme to make improvements and increase capacity of officers and members.

7.2 Better care for Belfast's environment

- Implement virtualisation of pcs / servers.
- Further develop and implement printer management strategy.

7.3 Better opportunities for success across the City

- Continue to work with Land and Property Service to implement the Memorandum of Understanding.

7.4 Better services - listening and delivering

- Expand range of e-enabled customer services.
- Implement actions from Customer Focus Strategy.
- Improve timeframe for creditor payments.
- Develop an approach to demonstrating value for money.
- Develop VFM performance indicators

7.5 Better value for money - an organisation fit to lead and serve

Corporate Human Resources

- Implement absence management initiatives.
- Implement the corporate approach to personal development planning.
- Continue implementation of the corporate approach to IIP.
- Develop a framework for the control of employee costs, including agency and overtime costs.
- Complete all outstanding single status issues.

Corporate Financial Planning

- Implement efficiency programme for 2010-11 and develop and take forward efficiency programme for 2011-12.
- Improve strategic financial planning and budgetary control processes.
- Assess and develop financial capacity of members and officers.
- Further integrate financial planning with corporate planning.
- Develop further and implement a Medium Term Financial Plan including a capital financing strategy and treasury management strategy

Corporate Information Management

- Improve information management and governance
- Continue to improve and rationalise council telephony services
- Conduct VFM review of ISB services

Corporate Policy, Planning & Performance

- Support the VCM cascade process 10/11 and the development of a thematic working approach
- Introduce performance reporting and monitoring at Departmental and service level
- Develop Performance Capacity of Councillors and Officers

Corporate Governance and Risk

- Enhance quarterly risk reporting
- Further roll out of fraud awareness training
- Improve process of monitoring of outstanding audit recommendations
- Facilitate business continuity management process
- Improve processes around corporate health and safety.

8.0 Key performance indicators 2010-11

The Department has developed the following set indicators for collection, monitoring and reporting through the 2010/11 financial year. These indicators will be monitored frequently at departmental level and will be reported on a quarterly basis to SP&R.

8.1 Better care for Belfast's environment

- % reduction in volume of colour print
- % increase in volume of duplex print
- Ratio of printers to employees

8.2 Better services - listening and delivering

- Average days taken to pay creditors
- % Creditor invoices paid by volume
- % Creditor invoices paid by value

8.3 Better value for money - an organisation fit to lead and serve

Corporate Human Resources

- Employee Turnover Rate - all contracts
- Employee Turnover Rate - permanent contracts
- % Chief Officers with a current personal development plan
- % Heads of Service (and Senior Managers) with a current personal development plan
- % Chief Officers who receive (at least) annual feedback on their performance
- % Heads of Service and Senior Managers who receive (at least) annual feedback on their performance
- The average number of working days per employee lost due to absence - monthly
- The average number of working days per employee lost due to absence - monthly (Corporate Total)
- Overtime Costs
- Agency Costs

Corporate Financial Planning

- Net cost of BCC services per head of population
- Monthly gross expenditure of each service compared to budget
- Monthly gross income of each service compared to budget
- Net monthly expenditure of each service compared to budget
- % Variance between monthly gross expenditure and budget
- % Variance between monthly gross income and budget
- % Variance between net monthly expenditure of each service and budget
- % Non-compliance of GRNs after invoicing (by service)
- % Non-compliance of purchase orders raised on time (by service)
- % of employee leaver information received within 5 working days of leaving the Council (by service)
- % of properly completed overtime sheets received per the timetable (by service)
- % variation between forecast outturn at period 6 and actual outturn at period 12 (Corporate Total)
- Average debtor days
- % Debt greater than 90 days old
- Growth of the rate base
- % collectable rate collected

Corporate Information Management

- % of time key systems available (uptime)
- Number of transactional based activities which are e-enabled
- Reduction in number of mobile phones and Blackberrys deployed in the Council

Corporate Policy, Planning & Performance

- Number of services with completed Value Creation Maps
- % PIs with valid data collected and reported upon
- Number of dashboards (develop, agreed and implemented)
- Number of performance reports to COMT/ SP&R

Corporate Governance and Risk

- % of AGRS plan completed annually
- % audit recommendations accepted
- % agreed audit recommendations implemented.”

Property and Projects

“6.0 Property & Projects – Key Achievements 2009 / 10

Better Leadership

Review of Public Administration (RPA)

- Secured and supported Council representation (both Members and senior officers) on the RPA policy development and implementation structures including the Strategic Leadership Board, Policy Development Panels, Regional Transition Coordinating Group, Local Government Reform Joint Forum, Transfer of Functions Working Group and Finance and Estates Working Group.
- Provided strategic support to the established internal RPA governance and implementation structures e.g. RPA Transition Committee (Strategic Policy and Resources Committee), Transition Management Team (Chief Officers’ Management Team) and project teams;
- Established engagement mechanisms between the Transition Committees for Lisburn/Castlereagh and Belfast to examine RPA transition related issues;
- Established internal programme management and support structures to drive forward the RPA process;
- Informed and shaped the policy agenda of Local Government through ongoing proactive and constructive engagement with the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) and Society of Local Authorities Chief Executives (SOLACE); and
- Secured £150,000 grant funding from DoE to support the RPA implementation process.

City Investment Projects

- £10 Million funding secured by BCC towards the £100 Million fund for the Titanic Signature Project (TSP);
- Connswater Community Greenway (CCG) - Infrastructure to support the delivery of CCG established and £4.2 Million of Council funding achieved;
- Funding secured for Lyric - £1.25M and Old Museum Arts Centre – £0.5M; and
- Accountability framework for key projects established.

Further projects

- The successful re-occupation of the City Hall on time and to budget, which involved the decant of nearly 200 elected members and officers;
- City Hall – practical completion on 10th August 2009;
- 9 decant and refurbishment exercises involving 210 staff from a range of completions complete;
- Ulster Hall Awards: International Silver award for the brand construction employers federation, first prize for excellence in the heritage category. Also shortlisted for NILGA best improvement in service Construction Excellence and Nationally for Best Construction;
- Collaborative procurement – 12 public sector organisations using stationery framework and four Councils to use Employment Agency Framework;
- In conjunction with EBP select list compiled for CCG by mid-Jan 2010;
- Ballysillan: completion of a 3G football pitch unique in Northern Ireland in that it has achieved FIFA 2* rating in conjunction with Parks & Leisure
- Infrastructure for electricity generation plant at North Foreshore with Development Department
- Overseeing of Shaftesbury recreation centre Extension and Refurbishment with Development Department
- Approximately 31 schemes completed of the Arterial Routes Programme with Development Department

Better Care for Belfast's Environment

Key achievements

- The procurement of a number of new 'green' energy contracts which have ensured that 100% of BCC's electricity supply is from renewable sources;
- As at 19th Feb 2010 the only Council in Northern Ireland to be fully compliant with DEC (Display Energy Certification) regulations and all relevant BCC buildings have been assessed and are displaying DEC certificates

Better Support for People and Communities

Key achievements

- Safer City - supported the Chief Executive;
- Children and Young People working groups; and
- Policy and planning support to thematic groups.

Better Services

Key achievements

- Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) Silver award for Best Event Category for the staff 'Making a Difference' (MAD) awards;
- Award of ISO 9001 (Quality Systems), ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Systems) and ISO 18000 (Workplace Health) accreditations in the Fleet Management Unit.
- Presentation to suppliers on Environment Procurement
- The rationalisation of the City Hall tour offering, which has produced a more coherent tour experience and helped increased tour numbers by 20%

Better Value for Money – An Organisation Fit to Lead and Serve

Key achievements

Human Resources

- The implementation of an agreed corporate approach to the management of the impending Operators' Licensing and EU Drivers' Hours legislation in the Fleet Management Unit

Finance

- Efficiency savings of £2 Million identified for 10/11;
- Total Rental income for 2009/10 will be approximately £4.7m. This represents 3.76% on the Rates Income of Belfast City Council. The increase in rental income for 2009/10 increased by £131k as opposed to the previous year 2008/09 (£372k). Given the marked downturn in the economy and particularly the property market this is an exceptional performance.
- Twenty four corporate contracts in place;
- Twenty four catalogues on SAP/SRM;
- Integration of financial planning with business planning ongoing;
- Negotiation of operational changes within security unit (affecting numbers, pay and grading, shifts, control of overtime, duties, job descriptions, location and pool cover) helping to improve service delivery and reduce costs by up to £100,000 per annum;

- Review of facilities staffing costs resulted in a saving of £256,275 per annum through the deletion of vacant posts and some voluntary redundancies;
- Rate guidance to Members published.

Policy, Planning and Performance

- Corporate plan update 10/11 complete;
- Thematic corporate plan budget established of £500,000;
- Integrated policy framework developed and agreed;
- Strategic planning and performance frameworks implemented;
- Theme work programmes established;
- Performance management system developed and implemented – phase one complete;
- 80 corporate performance indicators being collected through performance system and being reported to COMT on a quarterly basis;
- 16 service and departmental VCMs developed across the council, aligned to the corporate strategy and being reported on through the performance system;
- VCM 09/10 cascade complete;
- Ongoing policy support across the organisation on major consultation and emerging strategic issues;
- Programme management framework developed with a focus on governance and roles and responsibilities for the year ahead;
- Contributed to the development of the Chief Officer appraisal scheme; and
- Responded to 13 corporate consultations.

Communication and Engagement

Internal Communications

- Community engagement and consultation review ongoing.

Assets

- Asset management strategy being developed;
- Compensation received M1 widening Scheme (Over £1M) and former vested property; (£580,000)
- Rent roll increase (awaiting figure from Philip) Rent reviews settlement in 08/09 resulted in an increase in the rent base by £300,000 and a windfall of £600,000;
- Connswater Community Greenway (CCG)– agreed terms for acquisition of a number of portions of land;

- Disposal of land at Glen Road £750,000 Capital Sum;
- Rationalisation of leased accommodation including Callendar Street and University Street;
- Primrose Street and Seapark Avenue (former CAS) agreed for sale;
- Beechmount and Land at Lyric Wood agreed for sale;
- Templemore Ave and Boucher Crescent planning permission obtained – on market;
- Restructuring of service charge in Gasworks to assist tenants. Worked with CTU to agree payment plans for tenants in Industrial Estates to protect both the Council's income and assist business in economic downturn;
- Collaborative working ongoing with Cliftonville FC; Lyric; Duck Tours; DSD – Glen 10; East Belfast; CCG; Beechmount and NI Water Service.;
- Gates process established and initiated with 18 internal reviewers trained throughout the organisation;
- Implementation of P2 Net
- The design and construction of an exhibition area in the City Hall, delivered in time and to budget, together with the successful franchising of the associated coffee-shop area on an income generating basis;

7.0 Property & Projects – Key Actions 2010 / 2011

Better Leadership

A key role for the Property & Projects Department will be to ensure that the Council is prepared to respond to and take advantage of the out workings of the RPA. The Department will also help to establish the Council's place shaping role through better use of the city's assets.

Key actions

- Continue to co-ordinate the implementation and shape the outcomes of the Review of Public Administration and Community Planning within the Council;
- Establish the Belfast 'Statutory' Transition Committee which will provide political oversight of the RPA process;
- Secure and support the Council's representation (both Members and senior officers) on the newly formed RPA implementation structures including the Regional Transition Committee and Regional Transition Management Team and associated Working Groups;
- Agree an accommodation plan for transferring function staff?

- Develop and implement an affordable City Investment Framework which will benefit strategic projects in the North, South, East and West of the City. Projects include: Titanic Signature Project (TSP); The Lyric; Connswater Community Greenway (CCG); The Museum Arts Centre (MAC); and Peace III projects
- Continue representation on project board for OMAC and Lyric to protect Council's interest
- Continue with collaborative procurement
- Develop and implement an Asset Management Strategy – proceed with phase II: improve existing processes and procedures to ensure that recommendations are implemented and deployed.
- Develop and Implement a capital financing strategy.

Better Environment

The Project Management, Estates and Facilities Management sections within the Department will help to protect the city's natural and built heritage by promoting environmentally friendly design, sustainable site usage and the preservation of old buildings.

Key actions

- Achieve BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Model) / CEEQUAL (Civil Engineering Environmental Quality Assessment) excellence standard on applicable projects
- Implement Green Purchasing and Green criteria in specifications
- Seek to take all available opportunities to further reduce CO2 emissions from BCC buildings via energy conservation and other measures and from fleet in terms of fleet levels, utilisation and management;
- Deliver Green Procurement Training
- Regeneration of the North Foreshore
- Develop an integrated community focused approach to the delivery of the Connswater Community Greenway as an active, living and environmental asset. Achieve land assembly and continue to provide Client Representation for East Belfast Partnership Board (EBPB)

**Better Value for Money – An Organisation
Fit to Lead and Serve**

HR

- Implementation of the IIP Framework by Jul '10 ready for corporate assessment in Sep '10
- Participate constructively in the rationalisation of the Property & Projects sectional and departmental business-support functions;
- Implement IPM framework with management staff until a corporate approach is agreed

Finance

- Development of Business Cases to support Capital commitment
- Develop a strategic plan for procurement spend
- Identify potential procurement efficiency savings
- Undertake a review of all space leased in by the Council with a view to realising efficiencies
- Explore potential for income stream to the Council via utilisation of the Council's land and buildings e.g. advertising.
- Formulate a collaborative policy position, on Contaminated Land in terms of development, acquisition and disposal.
- Undertake a review of all miscellaneous leased assets
- Effective Capital Programme forecasting and Capital Programme costing
- Effective use of finance resources in relation to capital proposals – lead the Council in economic appraisals
- Consider 'whole life costing' in the longer term management of future projects at design stage;
- Seek to centralise BCC maintenance budgets in order to improve efficiency & governance and enhance overall maintenance budget provision in line with RICS indices;

Policy, Planning and Performance

- Provide quarterly performance reports and analysis to COMT on corporate projects and indicators
- Implement the Programme Management Framework – governance and roles and responsibilities for 10/11

Assets

- Carry out Gate reviews in line with project milestones
- Develop a training strategy for future Gate reviewers
- Carry out preparation for ISO 9001 standard
- Capital Assets Realisation (Cross Departmental) Group to take forward options for disposal, redevelopment or reuse of Council assets
- Develop and propose models for further integration of property-related structures within the new department and/or better co-ordination of effort;
- Explore options for re-gearing of leases in Industrial Estates to provide for equity rent basis in order to sustain longer term rental growth
- Develop a policy for sale and leasing of community assets
- Manage the Corporate land bank
- Manage the Capital Programme
- Create and manage the capital programme

8.0 Property & Projects – Key Performance Indicators 2010 / 2011

The Department has developed the following set indicators for collection, monitoring and reporting (via the Performance Management System) throughout the 2010/2011 financial year. These indicators will be monitored frequently at departmental level and will be reported on a quarterly basis to SP&R.

Leadership

- Increase in the amount of money leveraged through the City Investment Strategy

Environment

- Number of BCC Vehicles emissions tested
- CO2 emissions by BCC fleet
- Total tonnage of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from Council premises

Economy

- Number of City Hall tours
- Number of City Hall tours visitors

Better Services

- Number of complaints received
- % overall residents satisfaction with services provided by Belfast City Council

HR Management

- Average number of working days per employee lost due to absence
- % Staff with LDPs

Finance

- Procurement: % savings from selected employment agency contracts in place
- Procurement: Top 20 suppliers by spend value who have contacts

Policy, Planning and Performance

- % identified Programme milestones on target

Assets

- Individual projects on time / budget
- Corporate (?) Value of contracts
- Rent from industrial estate
- Number of BREEAM / CEEQUAL approved projects
- Number of gates performed in line with project milestones”

Democratic Services and Governance

Filling of Casual Vacancies on District Councils

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 20th November, 2009, it had responded to a consultation paper entitled “Filling Casual Vacancies on District Councils” which had been issued by the Northern Ireland Office. The consultation paper had sought to examine proposals for reforming the process used currently in Northern Ireland for the filling of casual vacancies arising on District Councils.

The Head of Committee and Members’ Services reported that, following the consultation process, the legislation governing the filling of casual vacancies on District Councils in Northern Ireland had been amended by the introduction of the Electoral Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1962 (Amendment) Order 2010, which provided that vacancies arising on or after 1st April, 2010 would be filled by Party nomination, thus avoiding the need for the holding of By-Elections. That would mean that when a letter of resignation from a Councillor had been received by the Chief Executive, he would advise the Chief Electoral Officer who would then contact the appropriate Party nominated Officer to request that a replacement be nominated.

The Head of Committee and Members' Services reported that he had, the previous day, received a copy of the Guidance Notes issued by the Northern Ireland Office in relation to the operation of the legislation and he would be circulating this to the Party Group Leaders in due course.

He pointed out that, while there was a limited role for the Council to play in the process, it would be important to set out for the Members' information the process which would apply in the future. Accordingly, he suggested that the following procedure be adopted:

- when a letter of resignation from a Member of Council is received by the Chief Executive, he shall, within twenty-four hours, write to both the Chief Electoral Officer and the other Members of the Council advising of the vacancy which has arisen;
- when the Chief Electoral Officer has obtained from the appropriate Nominating Officer the name of the replacement and when that person has completed the Declaration against Terrorism, the Chief Electoral Officer will advise the Chief Executive of the Council of the details of the appointment. The Chief Executive shall, again within twenty-four hours of receiving this information, notify in writing the remaining Members of Council and appropriate Council officers of the name of the replacement; and
- the replacement Councillor would fill the places left vacant on the Committees on which the departing Councillor had been a Member. If any change in Committee membership were required, that could be reported to and approved by the Council at any subsequent meeting.

The Committee approved the process which would be applied to the filling of Casual Vacancies in the future.

Membership of the Housing Forum

At the request of Councillor D. Browne, the Committee agreed to defer until a future meeting consideration of a report in relation to the membership of the Housing Forum.

Appointment to the Lyric Theatre Education Advisory Panel

The Committee was advised that correspondence had been received from the Chairman of the Lyric Theatre inviting the Council to nominate two Members to the newly established Lyric Theatre Education Advisory Panel. The role of the Panel was to oversee the education and outreach operations of the Theatre's Creative Learning Department, which was a core area of activity for the Theatre, particularly at this stage in its development.

The Head of Committee and Members' Services reminded the Members that the Council, following the Local Government Elections on 5th May, 2005, had determined through the application of the d'Hondt System of proportionality its representation on a large number of Outside Bodies. Those nominations had been approved formally at the Annual Meeting on 26th May. A total of 90 such appointments had been made in that way across a range of organisations.

He reminded the Committee further that, at its meeting on 19th August, 2005, in considering the nomination of a Member to make application to represent the Council on the Drainage Council for Northern Ireland, it had authorised him to continue the application of the original d'Hondt process to determine the Party Groupings which would be entitled to appoint nominees to any subsequent invitations of a similar nature which might be received during the Council term.

Accordingly, under the current system for determining appointments to Outside Bodies, the next two choices fell to the Ulster Unionist and Democratic Unionist Party Groupings.

The Committee approved the appointment of one Member from each of the aforementioned Party Groupings as the Council's two representatives on the Education Advisory Panel of the Lyric Theatre.

Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland - Annual Conference 2010

The Committee was advised that the Association of Municipal Authorities of Ireland was holding its 97th Annual Conference in Buncrana, County Donegal from 9th till 11th September. The theme of the Conference was "Local Government for the Future" and the agenda would include sessions on Local Government in Europe, democratic accountability for the health services and the future of Local Government. It would be opened officially by John Gormley, T.D. and it was expected that a number of high profile Local Government spokespersons from all Political Parties would be in attendance. The approximate cost per delegate of attending was £591.

The Committee agreed that it not be represented at the Conference.

Notice of Motion re: St. Gall's Gaelic Athletic Club

The Committee agreed to defer until its meeting scheduled to be held on 21st May consideration of a report in relation to a Notice of Motion regarding St. Gall's Gaelic Athletic Club which had been referred to the Committee by the Council.

**Requests for the Use of the City Hall
and the Provision of Hospitality**

The Committee was informed that the undernoted requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality had been received:

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date Number Delegates/ Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Queen's University Belfast	Questor Industrial Advisory Board Conference 11 th May, 2010 Approximately 100 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception.	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £400
Queen's University Belfast	Food Integrity and Traceability Conference 2011 22 nd March, 2011 Approximately 200 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception.	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £800
Belfast Solicitors' Association	The Belfast Solicitors' Association Tri-partite Conference 2 nd April, 2011 Approximately 200 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception.	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £800

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date – Number of Delegates/ Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Systematics Association	Systematics Association Biennial Conference 7 th July, 2011 Approximately 300 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception.	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £1,200
Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau	Ambassador Programme Reception 2010 2 nd June, 2010 Approximately 140 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception.	This event seeks to acknowledge the vital role played by local ambassadors in attracting national and international conference to the city. These conferences are of major economic benefit to the city and the ambassadors are in a large part responsible for drawing new visitors and in encouraging repeat visits. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £560
The Gerry Rogan Initiative Trust	The Gerry Rogan Initiative Trust Awards and Graduation Ceremony 28 th May, 2010 Approximately 120 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.	This Awards ceremony seeks to recognise the achievements of the young people who have completed the Gerry Rogan Initiative Trust Project. This project aims to address issues pertinent to these young people such as lack of self esteem and encourages them to have a sense of belonging by developing them into positive and active citizens of our society. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'Better support for people and communities' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits. Approximate cost £240

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date – Number of Delegates/ Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Include Youth	'Give and Take Scheme' Certificate Presentation 9 th June, 2010 Approximately 300 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.	The 'Give and Take Scheme' is organised for young people who have been assessed as being unable to participate in mainstream training and employment opportunities. The Scheme seeks to improve the self esteem and confidence of marginalised young people and to improve the prospect of of long term employability through appropriate training and work experience. The Certificate Presentation seeks to recognise those young people who have successfully completed the Scheme. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'Better support for people and communities' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits. Approximate cost £600
Federation of Small Businesses	25 th Anniversary Dinner 7 th October, 2010 Approximately 200 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception.	This event seeks to celebrate the 25 th Anniversary of the Federation of Small Businesses in Northern Ireland and to acknowledge its contribution to the general life and well-being of the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £800

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date – Number of Delegates/ Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Institute of Revenues, Rating & Valuation	of 'Meeting the Challenges of improving service provision in challenging times' 3rd June, 2010 Approximately 70 attending	The use of the City Hall	The Institute of Revenues, Rating & Valuation (IRRV), which works closely with Belfast City Council on a range of issues, seeks to influence the course of legislative and professional matters through dialogue with government bodies and other professional organisations. This event aims to discuss in detail and define best practice in respect of the challenges facing Belfast as a result of the economic recession and the potential implications arising from the Review of Public Administration. Furthermore, the event will focus on how Local Government is striving towards improved public services despite the financial challenges; whilst providing a platform which will help to encourage greater strategic partnerships with the relevant government bodies. The purpose of this event is integral to the current and future functions of the Council and would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Services – listening and delivering'.	The use of the City Hall

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Armed Forces Day

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 24th April, 2009, it had considered a request from the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff on behalf of the Ministry of Defence for the Council to fly the Armed Forces Day flag for the week commencing 22nd June. The Committee had agreed not to accede to the request. However, the Council, at its meeting on 5th May, had rejected the decision of the Committee and had agreed that, in accordance with existing Council policy, the request to fly the Armed Forces Flag at the City Hall be acceded to but that approval be for one day only.

The Head of Committee and Members' Services reported that a letter had been received from the Chief of the Defence Staff making a similar request for the flying of the Armed Forces flag at the City Hall from 21st till 26th June this year. As in 2009, the Ministry of Defence had offered to provide the Council with the flag. The existing Council policy on the flying of flags allowed for flags other than the Union Flag to be flown on specific occasions. For example, the Cross of St. Patrick was flown on 17th March, the European flag was flown on Europe Day on 9th May and the Red Ensign was flown on National Merchant Navy Day on 3rd September each year.

There were a number of options open to the Committee which were:

- (i) to accede to the request from the Ministry of Defence for the Armed Forces Flag to be flown at the City Hall for the period from 21st till 26th June; or
- (ii) in line with the decision which had been taken last year, to accede to the request but to limit the period during which the flag be flown to the Armed Forces Day itself, that is, 26th June; or
- (iii) to refuse the request.

The Head of Committee and Members' Services explained that it was now clear that requests for the flying of the Armed Forces Flag would continue to be received on an annual basis and the Committee might also wish to determine a policy for future years so that it would not be necessary for individual requests to be brought before the Committee year on year.

Moved by Councillor M. Browne,
Seconded by Councillor C. Maskey,

That the Committee agrees to adopt Option 3, that is, to refuse the request.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Newton,
Seconded by Councillor D. Browne,

That the Committee agrees to adopt Option 1 and accede to the request from the Ministry of Defence for the Armed Forces Flag to be flown at the City Hall for the period from 21st till 26th June.

On a vote by show of hands seven Members voted for the amendment and eight against and it was accordingly declared lost.

The original proposal standing in the name of Councillor M. Browne and seconded by Councillor C. Maskey was thereupon put to the meeting when seven Members voted for and eight against and it was accordingly declared lost.

Further Proposal

Moved by Councillor Hendron,
Seconded by Councillor Crozier,

That the Committee agrees to adopt Option 2, that is, in line with the decision which had been taken last year, to accede to the request but to limit the period during which the flag would be flown to the Armed Forces Day on 26th June.

On a vote by show of hands eight Members voted for the proposal and seven against and it was accordingly declared carried.

It was agreed further that any future requests to fly the Armed Forces Flag be submitted to the Committee for consideration.

Gaeltacht Quarter Steering Group - Annual Conference 2010

The Committee was advised that the Gaeltacht Quarter Steering Group was holding its Annual Conference in Coláiste Feirste, Belfast on Friday, 14th May. The theme of the Conference was "The Destiny Decade – 100 Years On" and would, amongst other things, explore:

- the challenges and opportunities of asset-based community development;
- the benefits of a radical approach to education infrastructure planning; and
- how regeneration could contribute to and benefit from the good relations agenda.

A number of expert speakers from the public, private and academic sectors would address the Conference. In addition, a political perspective would be provided by Martin McGuinness, MP, MLA, Margaret Ritchie, MLA and Gerry Adams, MP, MLA. The cost per delegate of attendance at the Conference was £75.

The Committee agreed that any Member of the Committee who so wished, together with appropriate Council officers, be authorised to attend the Conference.

Asset Management

London 2012 Olympics – Position of Live Sites Screen

(Mr. G. Copeland, Events Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 23rd October, 2009, it had agreed that a Live Sites Screen should be placed in the grounds of the City Hall for a three year period. The screen, which would be supplied by the London 2012 Olympic Games organisers at a cost of £500,000 to the Games, would be part of a series of

Live Site LED screens located in regional Capitals and key cities. The Development Committee had agreed to allocate £20,000 per annum for the three year duration in relation to the maintenance and security of the screen. Subsequently, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had agreed that an appraisal be undertaken of all possible sites in the grounds of the City Hall for the location of the Live Sites Screen in order to ascertain the most appropriate location.

The Events Manager reported that, after detailed consultation with the Council's Property and Projects Department, it was recommended that the 25 square metre screen should be positioned facing in from Donegall Square West. That location had been recommended in order to overcome any possible difficulties in relation to the planning application. The pertinent issue was that if the screen was located at the Donegall Square East end of the grounds it would affect traffic flows by diverting drivers' attention due to the images being relayed.

Moved by Councillor N. Kelly,
Seconded by Councillor C. Maskey,

That the Committee agrees to approve the recommended location, that is, Donegall Square West, for the positioning of the Live Sites Screen in the grounds of the City Hall.

On a vote by show of hands eight Members voted for the proposal and one against and it was accordingly declared carried.

Continental Market

The Committee was advised that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda.

Noted.

Request for the Use of the City Hall – Mammoth Screen Northern Ireland

The Committee was informed that a request had been received from Mammoth Screen Northern Ireland seeking permission to use the City Hall as a backdrop for a television documentary. The drama, which was being made for the British Broadcasting Corporation, would tell the story of the author Christopher Isherwood and the time he had spent in 1930s Berlin while writing the book "Goodbye to Berlin" which inspired the musical "Cabaret". The company would be filming outside the Scottish Mutual Building on Donegall Square South on Sunday, 16th May at approximately 8.00 a.m. and, in order to convincingly recreate Berlin at that time, it was proposed that swastika flags be hung from the second floor windows of the City Hall. The applicant appreciated the sensitivity surrounding such an issue and therefore planned major publicity exercises to ensure that the public would know that the flags were being displayed for filming purposes only.

The Director of Property and Projects explained that the film company had requested also to film a second scene in the courtyard of the City Hall. That would involve a scene which took place in the Opera House Square in Berlin when the Nazis had burned books.

During discussion in the matter, several Members expressed concern in relation to the late submission of the request and pointed out that every effort should be made to ensure that the Members were aware of the content of issues to be raised at the Committee meetings. A number of Members pointed out that the Council had been keen to promote the City as a film-making location and had recognised the economic benefits associated therewith. In addition, it was recognised that the nature of the film industry required such requests to be made at short notice.

After further discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor C. Maskey,
Seconded by Councillor M. Browne,

That the Committee agrees to accede to the request by Mammoth Screen Northern Ireland for the use of the City Hall as outlined for the filming of its drama entitled "Christopher and his Kind".

On a vote by show of hands nine Members voted for the proposal and four against and it was accordingly declared carried.

Use of the City Hall Grounds – Belfast Festival at Queen's

The Director of Property and Projects reported that a request had been received from the Belfast Festival at Queens to use the City Hall west lawn as a venue for the Chopin "Sound Traveller" Pavilion from 11th till 31st October, 2010.

The Director pointed out that the pavilion would be constructed from inflated translucent polyester with aluminium framing and, when lit, would have a Chinese Lantern effect. The pavilion would be open from 10.00 a.m. until 7.30 p.m. daily and admission would be free. The audience capacity would be 40 at any one time and it was anticipated that 5,000 people would visit the pavilion during its stay.

The organisers would be required to provide the usual necessary assurances in that:

- an appropriate level of indemnity in respect of loss, damage or personal injury would be provided for the Council;
- the impact on the normal operation of the grounds would be minimal; and
- all incidental costs associated with events, including additional stewarding costs, would be borne by the organisers.

The Committee agreed to accede to the request by the Belfast Festival at Queen's for use of the City Hall grounds for the purpose outlined, subject to the Director of Property and Projects being satisfied as to the level of indemnity and other necessary safeguards and obligations being provided by the organisers.

Rent Review - Land at Tamar Street, Ballymacarrett

The Committee was advised that approximately 0.125 acres of land at Tamar Street, Ballymacarrett, which was held by the Development Committee, was leased to the Scout Association. The Association held the site under a 25 year lease dated 1st October, 1994. Under the terms of the Lease the rent for the site was to be renewed every five years. A rent of £680 was payable currently, with a review having been due from 1st October, 2009.

The Committee was advised that, following negotiations between the District Valuer, Land and Property Services, who was acting on behalf of the Council, and the Scout Association, a revised rent of £900 per annum for five years from 1st October, 2009, had been provisionally agreed, subject to the Committee's approval.

The Committee approved the revised rent of £900 per annum for the five year period from 1st October, 2009 until 30th September, 2014.

Land at Boucher Crescent

The Committee was advised that a Council-owned site of approximately 0.437 acres at Boucher Crescent in the Balmoral Industrial Estate had been advertised on the open market to be let by way of a long lease. The site had been marketed by a commercial property agent inviting offers of over £35,000 per annum. Following a bidding process with a number of interested parties, the bidding had ended at £38,000 per annum on the basis of a 125 year lease with five yearly rent reviews. That equated to a rental of approximately £87,000 per acre which represented an extremely good return for the Council.

The Committee approved the letting of the site at Boucher Crescent on the terms as outlined, subject to the completion of a legal agreement by the Director of Legal Services.

Capital Programme:
Alderman Tommy Patton Memorial Park –
Public Toilet

The Committee was advised that the Parks and Leisure Committee, at its meeting on 15th April, had considered the question of public toilet facilities at the Alderman Tommy Patton Memorial Park. An extract of the minute in this regard is set out hereunder:

In accordance with Notice on the Agenda, Councillor Rodgers raised concerns in relation to the lack of public toilet facilities at the Alderman Tommy Patton Memorial Park and referred to the Child Protection and Health and Safety issues associated therewith. He stated that provision for the toilets had been made within the Capital Programme and requested that the Committee agree that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be requested, as a matter of urgency, to bring the scheme forward.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting scheduled to be held on 23rd April, be recommended to advance, as a 'committed' capital project, the Alderman Tommy Patton Memorial Park Public Toilet Scheme, as a matter of urgency."

The Director of Property and Projects advised the Members that both he and the Director of Finance and Resources had been reviewing the question of affordability in terms of borrowing in respect of the Capital Programme and that a report in this regard would be submitted to the meeting of the Committee scheduled to be held on 21st May. The report would include any other additional projects which might be advanced and the Committee could consider, at that stage, whether the Public Toilet Scheme at the Alderman Tommy Patton Memorial Park should be progressed.

Noted.

Good Relations and Equality

(Mrs. H. Francey, Good Relations Manager, attended in connection with these items.)

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of the Good Relations Partnership of 16th April and adopted the recommendations in respect of the following:

Islamic Cultural Centre

The Committee approved the Partnership's recommendation that a letter be forwarded on behalf of the Lord Mayor and the Council supporting, in principle, the development of an Islamic Cultural Centre within the City.

Peace III – The Guidelines for Building Positive Relations at a Local Level

The Committee approved the commencement of a procurement exercise for consultancy support in relation to the guidelines for building positive relations at a local level.

Peace III – Funding for Interface Work

The Committee adopted the Partnership's recommendations to approve:

- (i) the proposed approach for funding for interface work and to the publication of an open call for proposals for Shared Cultural Space Inter-faith and Inter-cultural Projects, in line with the proposed assessment criteria; and
- (ii) the use of external consultancy support in respect of the assessment of applications received.

Creative Legacies Programme

(The Chief Executive declared an interest in this item in that he was acting in the role of interim Chairman of the Belfast Metropolitan College although he hoped to be able to step down from that role in the near future.)

The Committee approved the Partnership's recommendations in relation to the funding of the following organisations under the Shared Public Arts Projects:

Belfast Metropolitan College	-	£5,000
Clanmill Housing Association	-	£5,000
Dee Street Community Centre	-	£5,000
Donegall Pass Community Forum	-	£5,000
Greater Shankill Partnership	-	£5,000
North Queen Street Community Centre	-	£1,500

The Committee approved also the reallocation of the Personal Development Budget of £10,000 to support the six Shared Public Arts Projects (£6,000) and for documenting the creative processes involved in each project (£4,000); and the extension of the Creative Legacies Programme period until the end of June, 2011.

Suicide Awareness

During discussion on the grants awarded under the Programme, a Member expressed concern that the application submitted by Suicide Awareness had not been awarded funding because of an omission in the application form. He felt that more assistance could be given to such groups by officers to ensure that these types of issues did not occur. However, he welcomed the fact that other elements of funding would be identified in order to assist the Group with their project.

After further discussion, the Chief Executive undertook to submit to the Committee in due course a report on actions the various Council Departments were undertaking in relation to suicide awareness and prevention.

Noted.

Good Relations Plan 2010-2013

The Committee approved the Framework and Good Relations Plan 2010-2013 and agreed that it be issued for consultation.

International Day of Peace

The Committee approved the holding on 21st September of an event to mark the International Day of Peace and the costs associated therewith.

Somme Resolution

(Councillor Adamson declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item in that he was Chairman of the Somme Association.)

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of a report in relation to proposed amendments to the Somme Resolution to enable the Party Group Leaders and the Chairman of the Good Relations Partnership, Councillor Hendron, to consider the matter, with a further report thereon being submitted in due course.

Cross-Cutting Issues

Derry/Londonderry City of Culture 2013 Bid

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

In July 2009, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport launched a national competition to find the UK’s first City of Culture.

The winning city will become the focus for national attention in 2013 and could become the focus of high profile media events, such as the Turner prize, Sports Personality of the Year and the RIBA Stirling Prize, as part of their year in the spotlight. The successful host city will be provided with the title of UK City of Culture for 2013, with scope to tailor the UK City of Culture brand to meet the needs of that city.

On 24th February, 2010 the Culture Minister, Margaret Hodge, announced that 4 cities had been short-listed from the 14 bidders; they are Birmingham, Derry/Londonderry, Norwich and Sheffield.

The deadline for full and final bid documentation from the short-listed cities is the end of May. During the summer, the advisory panel tasked with selecting the winning bid will receive presentations from the short-listed cities and will make their final recommendation to the Secretary of State by the end of the summer.

In order to maximise the potential of producing a winning bid Derry City Council is seeking the support of the 25 other local authorities in Northern Ireland.

Key Issues

A key element of the Derry City Council's bid is the benefits which will be gained not only by the city, but all areas of Northern Ireland. It is important that this is recognised and validated by the other local authorities. Given Belfast's scale and influence it is of particular importance that Belfast City Council is seen to be supportive of the Derry/Londonderry bid.

As the City of Belfast is the principal gateway and tourist attraction in Northern Ireland a successful bid by Derry City Council will have a positive impact on Belfast as it is most likely that those attracted to Derry will also spend time visiting Belfast and other parts of the province.

Derry/Londonderry's range of venues are limited in terms of capacity and it is probable that any very large event secured as part of the City of Culture celebrations may have to be staged in the Odyssey Arena.

Within the city's campaign, there is also the opportunity for Belfast-based individuals and organisations to showcase their talent.

Derry City Council is very supportive of the proposals to promote Belfast in 2012 as this will form a platform for Derry/Londonderry to promote its activities the following year.

In order to obtain the support of Belfast City Council the Chief Executive of Derry City Council has written to Belfast City Council seeking the Council's formal endorsement for their bid and has highlighted a number of ways in which Belfast could assist their bid.

They include:-

- Registering the Council's support on the City of Culture 2013 website.
- Including a sign-off as part of Belfast City Council's e-mail system.
- Identifying Cultural Champions to create cultural linkages between the 2 cities.

- The involvement of Belfast-based creative talent in a range of events, using the City Hall and other Council venues as appropriate.
- Raising awareness through –
 - Creating a link between the Belfast City Council website and the City of Culture 2013 website;
 - Providing an information point in City Hall and displaying literature as to how people may get involved;
 - Profile the City of Culture bid at forthcoming events and in venues;
 - Providing an endorsement statement and appropriate photograph for use by Derry City in promoting their bid.

Derry City Council also believe it would be most useful to have a letter of endorsement from the Lord Mayor supporting their bid.

Resource Implications

Financial

None.

Human Resources

A limited amount of staff time would be required to implement the actions set out above.

Recommendations

It is recommended the Committee supports the Derry/Londonderry City of Culture 2013 bid and approves that officers undertake the above actions as requested by Derry City Council.”

The Chief Executive highlighted the benefits to the whole of Northern Ireland of the bid, the fact that Belfast was a key gateway to the province and the need for the capital City to work in active partnership with other parts of the province for the benefit of all.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Expression of Sympathy

The Chairman advised the Members that Councillor Lavery had just received news that his brother had died suddenly and, on behalf of the Committee extended to the family circle his condolences and deepest sympathy.

Chairman