

Document Pack

**Committee and Members' Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



17th May, 2010

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room (Room G05), City Hall on Friday, 21st May, 2010 at 10.00 am, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

PETER McNANEY

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

- (a) Apology
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Local Government (Disqualifications) (Amendment) Bill (Pages 1 - 2)

(To consider further the minute of the meeting of 15th April which, at the request of Councillor Robinson, was taken back to the Committee for further consideration by the Council at its meeting on 4th May).

2. Transition Committee Business

- (a) Review of Public Administration - Update (Pages 3 - 40)
- (b) Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework Seminar (Pages 41 - 44)

3. Democratic Services and Governance

- (a) Member Development Framework Update (Pages 45 - 52)
 - (b) Transitional Governance Arrangements for the Education Sector (Pages 53 - 54)
 - (c) The Provision of Hospitality to External Organisations using the City Hall (Pages 55 - 58)
 - (d) Requests for the Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality (Pages 59 - 62)
 - (e) Submission of Late Reports (Pages 63 - 64)
 - (f) Notice of Motion re: St. Gall's Gaelic Athletic Club (Pages 65 - 66)
 - (g) Notice of Motion: Mr. Noel Bailie (Pages 67 - 68)
 - (h) Allowances for the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff (Pages 69 - 70)
4. **Finance**
- (a) Minutes of Meeting of Budget and Transformation Panel (Pages 71 - 80)
 - (b) Big Lottery - Outcome of Application for Funding to Deliver Community Planning Projects in Northern Ireland (Pages 81 - 90)
5. **Asset Management**
- (a) Land Contamination, Gasworks Site (Pages 91 - 94)
 - (b) Asset Realisation Update (Pages 95 - 114)
 - (c) City Hall - Major Works Programme (Pages 115 - 118)
 - (d) Connswater Community Greenway Update (Pages 119 - 122)
6. **Good Relations and Equality**
- (a) Minutes of Meeting of 10th May (Pages 123 - 124)
 - (b) Minutes of Meeting of 14th May (Pages 125 - 126)
 - (c) Minutes of Meeting of Good Relations Partnership (Pages 127 - 142)
7. **Cross-Cutting Issues**
- (a) Suicide Awareness and Prevention (Pages 143 - 146)
 - (b) Response to "Local Partnership Working of Policing and Community Safety - A Consultation Paper" (Pages 147 - 216)

To: The Chairman and Members of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

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Extract from minutes of -

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

15th APRIL, 2010

**“Local Government (Disqualifications)
(Amendment) Bill”**

The Director of Legal Services advised the Committee that correspondence had been received from the Committee for the Environment seeking the Council’s views on the draft Local Government (Disqualifications) (Amendment) Bill. He explained that the sole purpose of the Bill was to amend the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 to make provision to disqualify Elected Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly from holding office as Councillors.

The Director pointed out that Section 4(1) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 currently prescribed a range of circumstances which would disqualify a person from holding office as a Councillor. The Bill would extend the 1972 Act to preclude MLAs from being, or being elected, as a Councillor. Following Royal Assent, it would be the intention that the Bill would be operative on the day of the next District Council Elections, which were expected to take place in May, 2011.

The Director of Legal Services stated that the Bill addressed a political issue and an excess of 140 individuals and organisations, including political Parties, had been consulted. The comments received were strongly in favour of the proposal. Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee agree not to offer any objection to the introduction of the Bill.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.”

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources (Transition) Committee
Subject:	Review of Public Administration Update
Date:	21 st May 2010
Reporting Officer:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Kevin Heaney, RPA Coordination Manager (ext. 6202)

1.0	<u>Relevant Background Information</u>
1.1	Members will be aware of the ongoing discussions within the NI Executive in regards to the Review of Public Administration and how the reform of local government within Northern Ireland will be progressed. It is understood that there remains an absence of decision on important implementation issues including, for example, the new local government boundaries and how the reform programme will be funded.
	<u>Key Issues</u>
1.2	The Environment Minister intended to submit a report to the Executive, at its meeting on 13 th May 2010, setting out options on a proposed way forward for the RPA. As it happens, the report did not actually appear on the agenda.
1.3	It is understood that the report indicated that the reform of local government as currently proposed (particularly the reorganisation of councils from 26 to 11) is no longer deliverable by May 2011 and should be postponed until 2015. Two options had been outlined for Ministerial consideration:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Option 1:</i> reorganisation of councils postponed until 2015 with shadow councils being put in place from 2014. Consideration to be given to the interim transfer of some functions (e.g. Planning, DSD functions and the duty off Community Planning) to councils from 2011 onwards. ○ <i>Option 2:</i> reorganisation of councils and transfer of functions deferred until 2015 with consideration given to potential shadow period being introduced from 2014.
1.4	Any postponement or reconfiguration made to the RPA programme requires Executive approval.
1.5	There has been considerable media speculation and discussion within the Executive over recent months in regards to the RPA. Attached at Appendix 1 is an extract from Hansard outlining the Environment Minister's responses to RPA related questions raised within the Assembly on 11 th May 2010.
1.6	As previously agreed by the Committee, a letter has been sent to the Environment Minister (copy attached at Appendix 2) outlining the Council's concerns regarding the continued delay and absence of decisions around the RPA and seeking an urgent announcement on the way forward.
1.7	A verbal update will be provided at the SP&R Committee meeting on 21 st May, on any further RPA developments since the report was drafted.

<i>Collaboration and Efficiency</i>	
2.8	Members will be aware of the recent discussions in regards to how local government would intend to take forward the creation of a service-delivery model that would provide efficiencies through collaboration. This work was initiated in response to the sector's strong opposition to the proposed establishment of a centralised Business Services Organisation.
2.9	The local government proposed approach outlined in the paper ' <i>A Practical Approach to Securing Local Government Efficiencies and Improvements through Collaboration</i> ' (copy attached at Appendix 3) was accepted in principle by the Environment Minister at the Strategic Leadership Board meeting of 14 April 2010. The Minister indicated, however, that further work was now required on the detail of the proposals put forward in regards to delivering efficiencies through voluntary collaboration.
2.10	It is understood that the Environment Minister is minded, in moving forward with a reconfigured RPA programme, to place a greater focus on securing efficiencies within local government. A detailed business case and work programme needs to be developed which clearly sets out how a local government efficiency agenda may be taken forward.
2.11	As previously agreed by the Committee, Council officials are engaged in the ongoing discussions on this issue and will ensure that Members are kept fully updated as it moves forward. Members will note that work is underway to identify and explore the potential collaborative opportunities which may exist to the Council as part of its wider efficiency programme which has already recognised collaboration as one approach. Within this context, it would be the intention to also explore the potential opportunities with other statutory service providers within the city as part of a total place approach.
2.12	The current financial pressures facing the local government and wider public sector will undoubtedly act as a compelling driver for encouraging greater collaboration where real benefits, greater value for money and efficiencies can be demonstrated at no detriment to councils.
2.13	Any collaborative approach or models put in place should be subject to a robust value for money test for participant councils and, therefore, the Council will reserve the right to be autonomous in moving forward.

3.0 Resource Implications

There will clearly be resource implications (in terms of officer time) attached to the Council's continued engagement and work on the key issues outlined within this report.

4.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

5.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Hansard report on Assembly discussion, 11th May 2010

Appendix 2: Correspondence to Environment Minister, dated 22nd April 2010

Appendix 3: SLB report, 14th April 2010: '*A Practical Approach to Securing Local Government Efficiencies and Improvements through Collaboration*'

Official Report (Hansard)

Tuesday 11 May 2010
Volume 51, No 5

3.00 pm

Oral Answers to Questions

Mr Deputy Speaker: I advise the House that question 2 has been withdrawn.

Environment

Planning Service: Staffing

1. **Mr McKay** asked the Minister of the Environment how many jobs are likely to be lost as a result of the redeployment of Planning Service staff. (AQO 1203/10)

The Minister of the Environment (Mr Poots): The Department and its Planning Service are experiencing a difficult financial position in 2010-11, with a shortfall in the Planning Service budget of more than £8 million. A report has been prepared on how the Planning Service can live within its opening budget allocation. That report identifies 271 posts that are now considered surplus on account of affordability. I have considered the report and released it to the Committee for the Environment, TUS and all staff in the Department.

Today, senior staff from the Department are commencing a series of face-to-face briefings with staff in each Planning Service office. Before the formal process of redeploying staff in the Planning Service can commence, a number of stages must be completed, including consultation with the Committee for the Environment, DFP's corporate HR division, the TUS, affected staff, and other Departments that will be importing DOE staff. Now that I have considered the report prepared by the Department, the process will gain momentum.

The Northern Ireland Civil Service should be able to manage the workforce reductions in the Planning Service without the need for redundancies. Surplus staff will be redeployed to other suitable posts either in the Department, in so far as possible, or in another Department. The NICS has available a range of measures that are being used as required to help to minimise or avoid the need for redundancies.

Mr McKay: Go raibh maith agat, a LeasCheann Comhairle. Along with other members of the Committee for the Environment, I witnessed

a presentation on this matter from Planning Service officials today. The picture that they and the trade union painted was of the Planning Service in crisis. We should be mindful that a fit-for-purpose Planning Service is needed if we are ever to get out of the present economic quagmire. Redeployments will undoubtedly lead to redundancies. Does the Minister recognise that a grave mistake has been made and that, in light of the fact that the decision will result in a Planning Service that is not fit for purpose and will lead to further crises affecting the economic recovery, the decision should be reviewed?

The Minister of the Environment: There is a difference between redeployments and redundancies, and, on Thursday 29 April, when Planning Service staff were protesting about redeployment, it was notable that 200 people in Quinn Insurance had just been told that they were to be made redundant. There is a considerable difference between redeployment and redundancy. My prompt action will, as far as possible, protect staff against redundancy and ensure that people who work in the Northern Ireland Civil Service remain in it with the pay and conditions that they currently enjoy. In very difficult circumstances for all concerned, that is positive for individuals.

Mr Dallat: Of course we accept that there is a difference between redeployment and redundancy, and I wish good luck to the Quinn Insurance people who are losing their jobs. Nevertheless, many people in the Planning Service obtained academic qualifications and have a vocation to do what they do. Given that they are to be redeployed, is the Minister sure that adequate resources remain to ensure that another Audit Office report will not describe the Planning Service as not fit for purpose?

The Minister of the Environment: The Audit Office report was carried out with the staff in place. Consequently, we are seeking to challenge how the Planning Service has been doing things. We are introducing planning reform initiatives, and we want the Planning Service to work smarter than in the past. I have no apologies to make for wanting to drive through an agenda of change in planning, because such an agenda is absolutely necessary.

With respect to individuals with planning expertise who will be redeployed elsewhere, when the economy begins to recover and there is an upturn in planning applications, we intend

to be in a position to offer planning jobs to those who wish to come back.

Therefore, we want to retain them in the Civil Service and to have the opportunity to avail ourselves of their planning skills in the future.

Mr T Clarke: I thank the Minister for the fact that we are looking at redeployment as opposed to redundancies. Given that a large number of planning applications are being held up under PPS 21, would bringing forward its review secure at least some of those Planning Service jobs for longer? Will the Minister update Members on why it is taking so long to review PPS 21?

The Minister of the Environment: The Planning Service has a deferred income. The more cases that are cleared, the more income there is — it is a chicken and egg situation. About £4.5 million in deferred income is outstanding.

I put PPS 21 to go before the Executive Committee at the end of last year. It is out of my hands and in the hands of the First Minister and deputy First Minister. The First Minister has given it his clearance. The only thing holding back the putting in place of a better planning policy for rural dwellers is the deputy First Minister's office, and he can explain for himself why that is.

Planning Applications

3. **Mr McCartney** asked the Minister of the Environment what percentage of the target set for the processing of planning applications is currently being met by the Planning Service.
(AQO 1205/10)

The Minister of the Environment: The Planning Service made significant improvement towards achieving public service agreement (PSA) and business plan targets. Statistics that were published for the third quarter up to December 2009 showed that the agency met and exceeded PSA 2011 and 2009-2010 agency business plan targets for processing intermediate applications — 79%, up from 65% in 2008-09. Minor applications stood at 81%, up from 68% in 2008-09. The service achieved 46% towards the major target of 50% of applications determined within 23 weeks, compared to 40.5% at the end of 2008-09. Early indications are that there has been continued improvement in the major category, which should be highlighted in the end-of-year position to be published in July this year.

Mr McCartney: Gabhaim buíochas leis an Aire as a fhreagra.

I thank the Minister for his answer. In light of his earlier answer on the redeployment of staff, does he expect those percentages to increase or decrease as a result of redeployment?

The Minister of the Environment: I expect them to increase. I am demanding better service from the Planning Service because that is what the public demand. I know that staff will be under greater pressure, they will have to work harder and smarter, and all of that. That is what we expect of our public servants. This country is in a financial crisis. We have suffered the consequences of a global downturn. The public sector is not immune from that. Therefore, we must have higher expectations of everyone in the private and the public sector if we are all to see our way through and emerge from that crisis in better shape.

Mr B McCrea: Will the Minister advise Members whether all statutory agencies, such as the Environment Agency and Roads Service, are now delivering their responses to the Planning Service within the appropriate time frame?

The Minister of the Environment: Both agencies that were mentioned and others have considerably improved, but, in my opinion, they can improve further. So, yes, I will seek to put further pressure on those agencies to respond quicker. To turn the economy around and get the appropriate planning decisions out at an appropriate time, everyone will have to pull their weight including the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and Roads Service.

Review of Public Administration/Local Government

4. **Ms S Ramsey** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the review of public administration.
(AQO 1206/10)

5. **Mr McCarthy** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the local government aspects of the review of public administration.
(AQO 1207/10)

12. **Mr Savage** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the reorganisation of local government.
(AQO 1214/10)

The Minister of the Environment: With your permission, Mr Deputy Speaker, I propose to answer questions 4, 5 and 12 together.

I am continuing to take forward the Executive's decision to reshape local government in the most effective and efficient manner possible to create a strong sector that will deliver tangible benefits to ratepayers at no additional cost. At a recent meeting of the strategic leadership board, the local government sector provided me with a good foundation to take forward the creation of a service-delivery model that will provide efficiencies through regional collaboration.

It is through ongoing dialogue with the sector that, I believe, we are making positive inroads towards the reform of local government. I have been speaking to representatives of Executive parties, and, on Thursday, I will put firm proposals to the Executive with options on a way forward to deliver a local government reform programme.

Ms S Ramsey: Go raibh maith agat. I thank the Minister for his response. It is useful to get an update at regular intervals. I am aware that the Minister will put forward proposals at this week's Executive meeting and that he probably does not want to go into much detail on that — I am probably giving him a way out of answering my question — but will he confirm whether next year's local government elections will be contested on the current 26-county model, including the six? [Laughter] I thought that I would slip that one in. I meant to say 26-council model. Will the Minister confirm whether next year's local government elections will be contested on the basis of the current local government boundaries or the proposed 11-council model?

The Minister of the Environment: As is the case mathematically, six into 26 does not go, and I am not sure whether I can give away whether 26 into 11 will go on this occasion. A paper is going to the Executive. It is an absolute certainty that local government elections will be held next year. I am very keen to ensure that further powers are vested to local government, where local people can make those decisions, and that we deliver on the collaboration, which will ensure that there are real savings to the public.

Mr McCarthy: Go raibh maith agat, a LeasCheann Comhairle. It is widely expected that the 2011 elections will have to proceed under the old boundaries. As the Minister well knows, those date back to 1992 and are well out of date. How can the Minister justify that under the principle of equality of votes in many constituencies?

The Minister of the Environment: Those boundaries are a matter for the Northern Ireland Office, so the question should be referred to the Northern Ireland Office Minister. Now that the Alliance Party has a Member of Parliament, it has the facility to do that.

Mr McGlone: Go raibh maith agat, a LeasCheann Comhairle. Gabhaim mo bhuíochas leis an Aire as ucht an fhreagra sin. I thank the Minister for his response. I was interested to hear him say that the results of the review of public administration would be a tangible benefit to ratepayers with no additional cost. I sat in on today's meeting of the Environment Committee, and we heard about the Planning Service and the difficulties that it faces with regard to income, trying to balance the books and the redeployment of staff. Can the Minister assure the House that there will be no extra costs as a consequence of the transition from the Planning Service to the new councils as part of the review of public administration?

The Minister of the Environment: That is exactly the case. We have to live within our means, and if we are going to transfer powers to local government, those powers have to be transferred with an appropriate and applicable budget. If we are to transfer, as is my intention, the budget to support the numbers of staff whom we are transferring does not exist. Immediately, therefore, we would have been imposing an additional tax on the hard-pressed ratepayers across Northern Ireland and in every individual council. That is not something that I am prepared to do. If I am to transfer the Planning Service to local authorities, I will seek to meet the costs of that transfer, as they currently exist, and to do so within my budget.

Mr I McCrea: The Minister will recognise that the staff are an important part of any change in the review of public administration and that there has been uncertainty up to now as to whether there will be 11 or 26 councils. Will the Minister give an assurance that the staff will be informed as early as possible of whether there will be 11 or 26? Will he also detail what the work of transition committees will be if the 26-council model is maintained?

3.15 pm

The Minister of the Environment: As soon as the Executive agree the way forward, the councils and their staff will be informed. I recognise that the period of flux has been

somewhat unfair on council staff, many of whom are very good hard-working people. It is important that they are shown the proper degree of courtesy and respect and are made aware of the decisions on staffing as soon as possible.

Mr Cree: The Minister referred to the planners, and I am interested in how people with that specialised skill set could be transplanted into other clerical or administrative jobs. He may or may not wish to answer that.

Given that the Executive have been unable to agree the boundaries in time, how can the Minister justify the cost of the RPA to date? What is the Minister's best estimate of whether there will be 11 or 26 councils next year?

The Minister of the Environment: The Department is seeking to deliver savings, and if those savings cannot be delivered, the cost expended thus far cannot be justified. However, I am determined that the Department will deliver savings. I am pressing, pressing and pressing again on that, because if those savings are not delivered, the Department will have failed. The Department must deliver savings, and that is something that I intend to force. It is a simple equation: if the savings can be delivered, the costs will be justified.

Mr Deputy Speaker: Question 5 has already been answered.

DOE: Legislative Programme

6. **Rev Dr Robert Coulter** asked the Minister of the Environment to outline his Department's legislative programme for the remainder of this Assembly mandate. (AQO 1208/10)

The Minister of the Environment: My Department has four Bills going through the Assembly: the Wildlife and Natural Environment Bill; the Waste and Contaminated Land (Amendment) Bill; the Local Government (Finance) Bill; and the High Hedges Bill. I plan to bring three further Bills to the Assembly before the end of the current mandate: a planning reform Bill, a local government reorganisation Bill and the draft Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill. My Department also has an extensive programme of subordinate legislation that will be made during this mandate.

Rev Dr Robert Coulter: I thank the Minister for his reply. Will he update the House on the current position on the change to boundaries?

The Minister of the Environment: The Member's supplementary question is perhaps more relevant to the previous question. If we are to change the boundaries, a local government boundaries Order must be introduced to give effect to new government districts. Subsequent to Executive agreement on boundary changes, the Department can proceed to do whatever is necessary thereafter.

Mrs D Kelly: I welcome the Minister's intention to bring forward those Bills. Will he outline which, if any, of those Bills are held up in the Executive, at what stage they are being held up and why?

The Minister of the Environment: The Bill to reorganise local government is the only one that is being held up. Several issues raised by the deputy First Minister's office have not allowed it to proceed. If we were to proceed with the 11-council model, that is one of the Bills that would be absolutely necessary.

Planning Service: Staffing

7. **Mr D Bradley** asked the Minister of the Environment what consultation was undertaken by his Department on the potential redeployment of 269 Planning Service staff. (AQO 1209/10)

The Minister of the Environment: Several stages remain to be completed before the formal process of redeploying staff from the Planning Service can commence. One such stage will be the consultation with the Committee for the Environment, the corporate HR division of the Department of Finance and Personnel, the trade unions, the staff affected and the other Departments that will import Department of the Environment staff. Now that I have considered the report prepared by the Department, the process will gain momentum.

Mr D Bradley: Go raibh maith agat, a LeasCheann Comhairle. Will the Minister assure the House that those who are redeployed will be given work that matches their skill sets and that all aspects of equality law will be followed?

The Minister of the Environment: All aspects of equality law will be followed. It will be interesting, and surprising, for many to discover the skills that Planning Service staff possess in addition to their degrees in planning. Redeployment can be a good experience for many people, as it widens their skill set and

offers them a new and different perspective. When the Department is in a position to bring many of those people back to the Planning Service, they will return with an even better skill set. They will have had a completely new experience, which would not have happened had they remained in the Planning Service for their entire Civil Service careers.

Mr McNarry: The issue concerns my constituency of Strangford, so I would be grateful if the Minister could explain the thinking behind workforce planning in the Planning Service. It was recruiting staff until August 2009, but it now requires a reduction in staffing of one third. He will appreciate that that is causing great concerns.

The Minister of the Environment: When I became Minister in July 2009, I became aware of financial issues in the Department. One of the early decisions was to freeze Civil Service recruitment. Previously, positions that became vacant were filled. We have not been filling positions from August 2009, otherwise we would be in a more difficult situation than at present. Nonetheless, despite the effects of the downturn, finance had come into the Department from earlier applications, and there was a stream of work. At the peak two years ago, 36,000 planning applications were in the system, and that figure has now been reduced to 20,000, so a fair amount of backlog work has been cleared up. We now need to address the difficult issues and make difficult decisions. I have worked on that since I came into office.

Mr Bell: The public can understand that a reduction from 36,000 planning applications to 20,000 means that action is needed, but I appreciate that the situation is causing much personal pain to a number of planners and administrative staff. Let us hope that the economy picks up and the number of planning applications rises again, because the construction industry needs them. If and when that occurs, can the Minister assure the House that the people who have been redeployed can come back to the Planning Service as a priority, thereby not only retaining their employment but boosting the Northern Ireland economy?

The Minister of the Environment: I trust that, within the next year, responsibility for almost all planning decisions will rest with local authorities. I expect that, as the workload rises, Planning Service will take on further numbers of staff. We are in an economic decline, but

we could be on the cusp of turning the corner. One simply does not know. When that corner is turned and planning applications start to be made in greater numbers, I have no doubt that many of those people will be redeployed in planning. The councils will be keen to get people with a particular skill set and with particular experience to help to ensure the delivery of smooth planning in council areas.

Mr McHugh: Go raibh maith agat, a LeasCheann Comhairle. I thank the Minister for his answers so far. If the redeployment of staff in the Planning Service were to lead to the local office in my constituency being closed, it would cause great inconvenience. Will the Minister make every effort to retain staff in local offices such as the one in Enniskillen, rather than inconveniencing councillors by requiring them to go to Omagh, as has happened with many job redeployments in the past?

The Minister of the Environment: At this time, there are no plans to close local offices. We are carrying out a staff redeployment, and the offices will remain intact for the foreseeable future. If the requirement to make further savings were to arise, we would have to make further decisions on how to arrive at those savings. Closing offices is not currently one of those decisions.

Planning Service: Staffing

8. **Mr Beggs** asked the Minister of the Environment for an update on the staffing requirements within the Planning Service and when staff will have clarity as to their future prospects. (AQO 1210/10)

The Minister of the Environment: In 2010-11, the Department and its Planning Service experienced the difficult financial position of a shortfall in the Planning Service budget of over £8 million. A report is now being prepared on whether the Planning Service can live within its opening budget allocation. The report has identified 270 posts that are now considered surplus from the point of view of affordability. I have considered the report, and I hope to release it to all the staff in the Department in the near future. Thereafter, senior staff in the Department will embark on a series of brief meetings with staff in each Planning Service office.

Mr Beggs: There has been a reduction in planning applications since the end of the

property boom in 2007. The Minister has said already today that he has noticed the Planning Service workforce and finance crisis since coming into office. Does he accept that his predecessor, in failing to workforce-plan, created a crisis not only for existing staff but turmoil for staff who have been newly recruited and additional, unnecessary HR costs? Does he agree that it would have been much better to have managed staffing during that entire period rather than to have reached the crisis point of today, where one third of staff may be redeployed?

The Minister of the Environment: A considerable number of planning applications were in the system. Had we moved to redeploy staff earlier, we would not have been in the position in which, as I told Mr McCartney, we had a much better response time than was previously the case. The fact that more planning officers have been in post than there have been applications lodged has helped us to deal with the considerable backlog. That backlog has now been dealt with. The financial circumstances are such that we move on. The previous Minister received a ringing endorsement from the public last week, and I cannot take that away.

Road Safety: Drivers over 70

9. **Mr Bresland** asked the Minister of the Environment what action he is taking to improve road safety awareness among drivers aged 70 years and over. (AQO 1211/10)

The Minister of the Environment: I am consulting on the development of a new road safety strategy for Northern Ireland, and I recognise that we cannot afford to lose sight of older people, who are among our most vulnerable road users. Over the lifetime of the new road safety strategy, the population of Northern Ireland is projected to increase from around 1.8 million in 2010 to 1.9 million by 2020, and the age profile of the population will gradually become older. The safety of older people is likely to have increasing importance to the delivery of the new strategy's objectives. We propose, therefore, to consider how we can work with partners, including the wider voluntary and community sector, to understand better the cause of collisions involving older people and develop strategies to tackle them.

Furthermore, proposed measures in the strategy, such as improvements in road

markings, signage and infrastructure, and the wider use of 20 miles per hour zones, will positively improve road safety for all road users, including older people.

I urge all those with an interest in road safety, including those who represent the interests of older road users, to consider the consultation document carefully and, in responding to the Department, to give us their views and practical proposals as to how we can make a positive contribution to the way forward for road safety. We will continue our intelligence-led, high-profile approach to addressing and improving road users' behaviours, attitudes and awareness through road safety campaigns that focus on the main dangerous behaviours that lead to serious injuries and death. We will continue to ensure that all road users receive appropriate messages about such behaviours.

Mr Bresland: Will the Minister consider the merits of a refresher course on safe motoring just before a driver reaches 70 years of age?

The Minister of the Environment: We will certainly give the suggestion consideration. However, drivers in the 70-plus category are not responsible for a large number of the accidents or deaths on our roads. Therefore, I do not want to target people in a way that may be deemed as persecuting them or making them less equal than others. Many older people may drive a little slower, but normally they drive very carefully. However, I will look at the matter, particularly in the light of road accident statistics, to ensure that all target groups are met.

Road Safety Strategy

10. **Mr I McCrea** asked the Minister of the Environment for his assessment of the potential savings if his Department meets the targets set out in the draft road safety strategy. (AQO 1212/10)

The Minister of the Environment: The consultation on preparing a new road safety strategy for Northern Ireland was launched on 16 March 2010 and includes proposed targets for casualty reductions by 2020. Those targets will be measured against the average annual number of deaths and serious injuries between 2004 and 2008 of 126 and 1,111 respectively. If the first strategic target to reduce the number of people killed on our roads by at least 40% is adopted and achieved, it is estimated that

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Chief Executive's Department



Your reference

Our reference KH/RPA

Date 22 April 2010

Mr Edwin Poots MLA
Minister of the Environment
Department of the Environment
Private Office
Room 717, Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST BT2 8GB

Dear Minister

RPA LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

At a recent meeting of the Belfast voluntary Transition Committee (vTC) on 15 April 2010, it was agreed that there was an urgent need to write to you as Minister of the Environment seeking early clarification in respect of the future of RPA local government reorganisation.

Members of the Belfast vTC wish to express their concerns in regards to the current uncertainty around important implementation issues including agreeing the new local government boundaries; securing the necessary funding for reform and the release of the draft Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill.

The Belfast vTC would contend that such uncertainty is unsustainable, with any further delay or indecision putting the reform programme, in its current form, at considerable risk. Furthermore, it will inevitably have an adverse impact upon the continued commitment and morale of staff at the Transition Committee level.

Local government have already committed a lot of time, effort and resources into the RPA process over the last number of years. Elected Members and officers have actively worked together within their respective clusters to put in place the necessary foundations to enable local government reform to happen.

Belfast City Council has been fully committed and engaged within the RPA process at both a regional and local level albeit this has drawn significant resources and capacity from the delivery of other important priorities, eg improving service provision; maximising investment opportunities and implementing capital projects within the city.

contd

Belfast City Council, Chief Executive's Department,
City Hall, Belfast BT1 5GS
Tel: 028 9027 0202, Textphone: 028 9027 0405, Fax: 028 9027 0232
Email: mcnaney@belfastcity.gov.uk

Mr Edwin Poots MLA
Minister of the Environment
Department of the Environment

The Belfast vTC is aware that discussions are ongoing within the NI Executive in regards to the Review of Public Administration and would urge you and your colleagues within the Executive to urgently agree the way forward for the RPA and the associated implementation timetable.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Tom Hartley
Chairman of Belfast voluntary Transition Committee

CC:
Members of Belfast voluntary Transition Committee
Belfast City Council Transition Management Team

A Practical Approach to Securing Local Government Efficiencies and Improvements through Collaboration

1.0 Introduction

At the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) meeting of 25 February 2010, Local Government presented its proposals for the delivery of efficiencies and improvements through collaboration. It was agreed that further work would be undertaken by Local Government to establish how these principles of voluntary collaboration would work in practice so as to achieve the appropriate levels of savings, determine how efficiency targets could be achieved and how efficiency outcomes could be confirmed.

Local Government commends this paper to the Minister with the confidence that it can deliver on the commitments within, to secure significant efficiencies, realise citizen expectations of Local Government service improvements and contribute to the aim of creating “strong, dynamic Local Government” in Northern Ireland.

2.0 The Way Ahead – An Achievable Pathway

Local government defines collaboration as:-

The establishment of processes whereby councils and partners work across boundaries, in various ways, to enhance services, to gain efficiencies and share ideas for improvement which ultimately enhance the quality of life for citizens.

This paper sets out an agreed and achievable pathway towards delivering efficiencies and advancing transformation and reform through collaboration in a way which is independent of the timetable for the RPA process.

This collaboration proposal advocates a flexible, evolutionary and innovative approach with an emphasis on sub-regional/regional collaboration both within local Government and between sectors. It is based around the successful experience of partnership working in Great Britain which has enabled Local Authorities to accelerate efficiency gains and support improvements through innovative collaborative initiatives. It also draws on the experience of Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs) and recognises that in the longer term, collaboration around ‘place’ has the greatest potential to maximise the effective use of public resources and assets.

The proposed approach addresses the concerns expressed about the ability and desire of local government to identify and implement efficiencies in service delivery for the benefit of the ratepayer whilst retaining and improving local accountability. In addition, it also proposes an efficiency and improvement framework that overcomes some of the up-front costs of funding the reform programme.

3.0 Business Model and Associated Principles

The business model that the Local Government sector proposes to adopt is an ‘Invest to Save’ model, where efficiency programmes are funded on the basis of robust business cases, which demonstrate achievable efficiency gains and service improvements in terms of cost, quality and standards.

In adopting this business model, the Local Government sector has endorsed a number of principles which underpin this model and which will deliver on the original objectives of the RPA process.

These principles are:-

- **Citizen Focus** – meeting citizen expectations of improved service delivery and access, better value and accountability;
- **Recognises Local Circumstances** – collaboration should take account of local circumstances, strengths and needs;
- **Good Governance** – collaboration must be supported by governance structures which are democratic, transparent and accountable to partner Councils;
- **Equity** – a flexible approach should be adopted in order to ensure benefit to communities and people across the region/sub region;
- **Adding Value** – collaborative projects should be supported by a robust business case which combines improvements to service with efficiencies;
- **Best Practice** – should take account of, and be informed by, best practice in other regions;
- **Fostering Creativity and Innovation** – regional collaboration projects will seek innovative and creative ways to achieve improvements; and
- **Ensuring Quality and Performance Measurement** – a common system of performance management to ensure quality will be introduced for collaborative projects including annual reporting mechanisms.

4.0 Drivers for Change

Local Government recognises that at the heart of the pursuit of efficiencies are a number of key drivers, foremost of which is the citizen, ie, citizen expectations of improved service delivery and access, better value and accountability.

There are a number of other critical drivers to deliver efficiencies including:-

- The state of the economy and the need to keep the cost of rates down
- Central Government policy to ‘do more with less’ as highlighted through the Treasury’s Operational Efficiency Programme
- The Best Value duty placed on local government to make arrangements for continuous improvement and the associated commitment to economy, efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery, verifiable by Audit.

5.0 Present Position

The time available to create 11 new councils operating streamlined, integrated procedures with services transferred from central government, with all staff in post and with a new elected forum at council level in place by May 2011 is at a premium. This matter is further addressed in the accompanying workplan at Annex B.

At the same time, Councils need to prepare for local government led transformation on the basis of voluntary collaboration, underpinned by appropriate and robust governance structures and measures at local, sub-regional and regional levels.

It should be noted that the level of efficiencies outlined in the PwC report is predicated on the basis of an effective 11 Council model in 2011. If there is a change to this, eg, if legislative issues or Executive decisions result in a delay to implementation this is likely to have a significant impact on the feasibility of the efficiencies, especially those arising from planned convergence.

5.1 Proposals

(a) Phase 1 – Transition with Convergence within Service Delivery Functions

It is proposed that between now and the vesting date of May 2011, council clusters take action to complete a successful transition from 26 councils to 11 and that during this transition convergence will be developed for existing service areas and transferring functions in each of the 11 Council areas. Where there are identified opportunities for transformation these will be pursued.

The key areas for efficiencies in this process will be around reduced staff costs and asset rationalisation. The early phase of transition will also start to allow councils to build the foundations which will be required to deliver further efficiencies.

Opportunities for collaboration across Council boundaries could also be explored during this phase and this could be facilitated through regional/sub-regional arrangements, existing professional Officer Groups and Change Managers.

In the event that the delivery timetable for the RPA is revised it would be possible to move directly to **Phase 2, Transformation through Voluntary Collaboration.**

(b) Phase 2 – Transformation through Collaboration

It is the view of Local Government that collaboration can best be delivered by Councils working together in partnership to determine what they wish to collaborate on and how they wish to collaborate. The benefits of this collaborative approach include:

- Value for money outcomes
- Better designed solutions
- Integration of services for customers
- Access to new and scarce skills/specialisms
- Economies of scale and scope
- Efficiency savings and investment benefits
- Community benefits (including jobs and local economic effects)

Best practice from recent local government transformation projects indicates that these are more likely to succeed when led by Councils and focus on change and improvement. However, it is recognised that this can be driven by a range of incentives to promote improvement through collaborative working as set out in **Appendix 1**.

The NI experience of working in collaborative group arrangements such as those for Waste Disposal, EU co-operation programmes, Tourism, Rural Development and a range of other projects (**see Appendix 2**) reinforces the benefits that arise from local councils working together and transforming how they do business.

It is proposed that in this phase, Local Authorities will come together within geographical/service/thematic clusters to carry out a rigorous assessment of the scope for the delivery of efficiency savings and service improvements at local, sub regional/regional and cross-sectoral levels. In the short term this may involve drawing on the current RPA structures and other sub-regional/regional cluster arrangements including Rural Development, Peace III and others as considered appropriate by the participating Councils.

The focus of this phase will be to achieve efficiency savings and service improvements across the envelope of services below:-

- ICT
- Finance, including payroll
- Procurement
- Human Resources
- Customer facing services, eg, Environmental Health, Building Control, and Operational Services.
- Asset Management

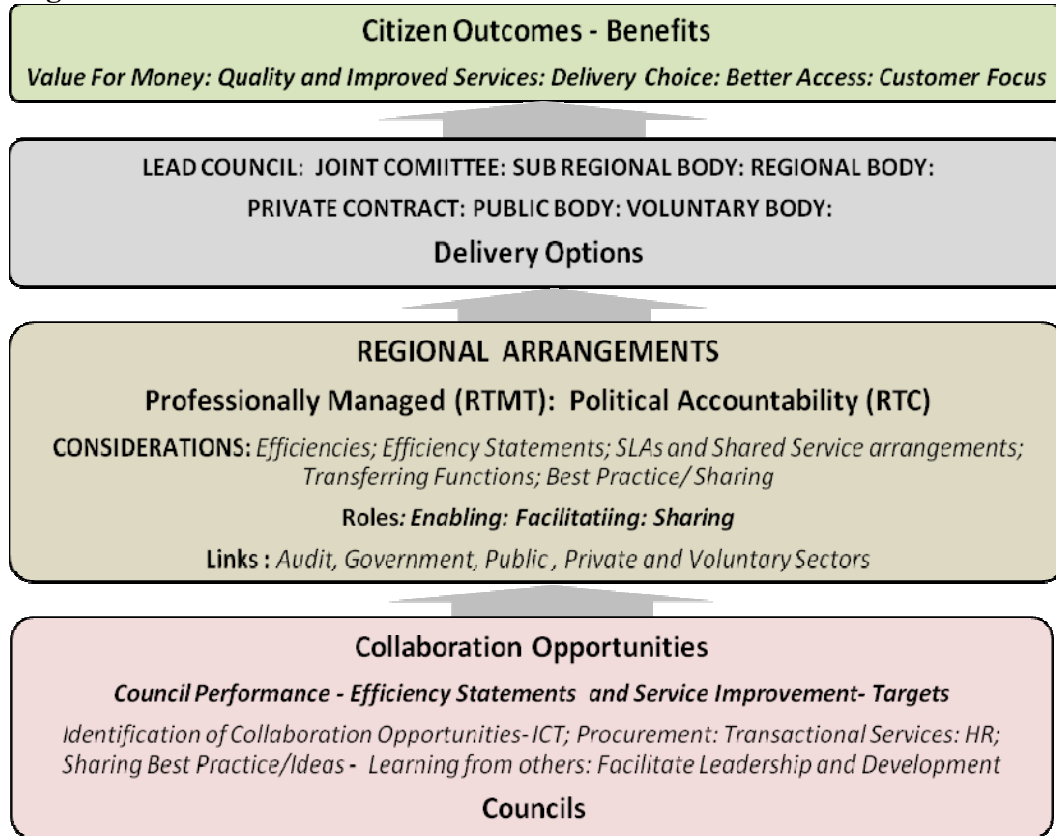
The output from this process will be a range of service delivery options including:-

- Standardisation of service delivery, including systems convergence and agreed delivery templates, within each local authority;
- Collaboration between authorities on strategic approaches;
- Local authority providing direct services to other authorities;
- Regional/sub-regional service delivery accessed by local authorities;
- Joint service delivery between different types of public body; and
- Commercial trading in partnership with a private sector/voluntary sector partner.

Through this high level design process, Councils will be able to identify the scope for efficiency savings and service improvements for inclusion in each Council's **Efficiency and Improvement Plan**. Councils can also begin to develop individual efficiency projects (and associated Business Cases) with project partners including appropriate Governance arrangements within existing statutory provisions. The range of delivery models available within current Statutory provisions are set out in **Appendix 3** while **Appendix 4** provides examples/case studies of successful collaboration initiatives from neighbouring jurisdictions.

This process will also enable Local Government to establish the extent of realisable efficiency savings and investment costs to support the Reform programme in local Government.

Diagram 1 below illustrates this collaboration model:-



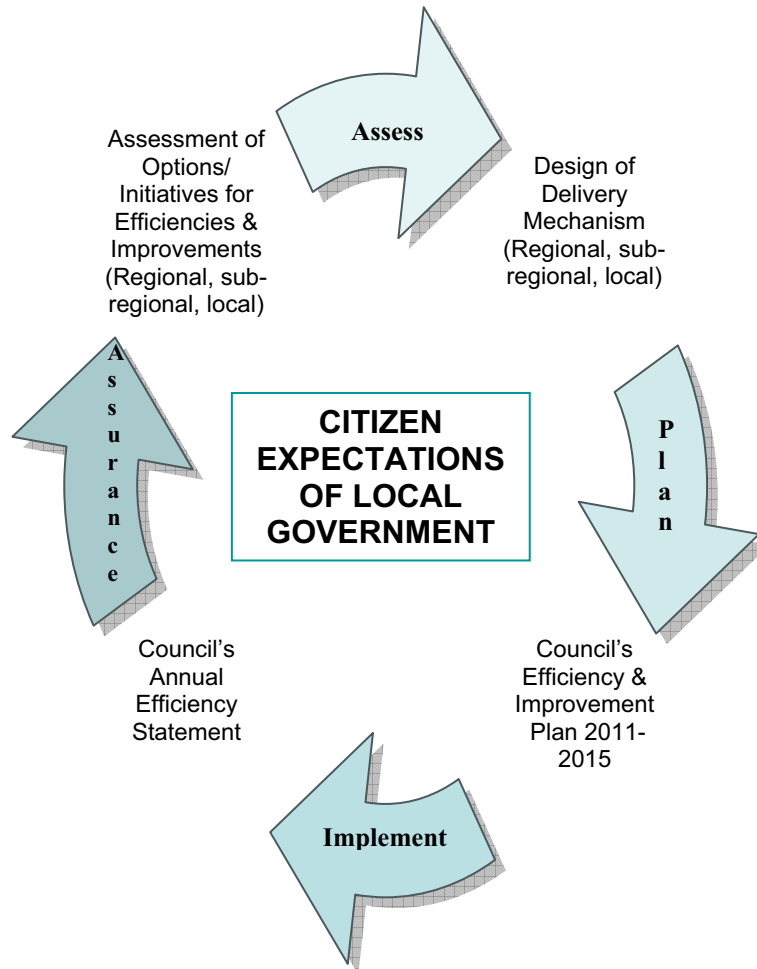
6.0 Efficiency and Improvement Plans

The critical element to delivering efficiencies will be the preparation of an **Efficiency and Improvement Plan** and **Efficiency Statement** for each Council. These will provide clear public accountability in the delivery of efficiency savings and service improvements in Local Government. The first Efficiency and Improvement Plan will cover the period 2011 to 2015 and will be completed by 31 January 2011 and submitted to the Department by 31 March 2011.

The Efficiency Statement will be prepared and published on an annual basis, setting out the Council’s efficiency and improvement plans and targets for the year ahead, detailing its efficiency programme across all aspects of its business and demonstrating its commitment to collaboration in pursuit of effectiveness. These statements would be audited as part of the annual accounts.

It should be noted that the Local Government sector is committed to this approach, even if the RPA process did not remain on the agreed timeline. If this was the case however, the extent and programming of efficiencies will need to be reassessed.

Diagram 2 illustrates the Efficiency and Improvement Cycle:



7.0 Transferring Functions

The sector, in pursuance of its goal of ‘strong dynamic Local Government’ restates its commitment to the transfer of a range of functions from regional to local government on the present timetable. Should there be a deferral of the local government reform programme, collaboration is regarded as a suitable mechanism for accommodating transfer of particular elements of these functions. In respect of the transferring functions, account will need to be taken of the efficiencies and improvements which can be taken on board by the Councils on transfer.

8.0 Voluntary Collaboration – Governance

As previously stated, this high level design process will require effective governance arrangements and, at the local level, the main driver for voluntary collaboration will be individual councils operating within the discipline of developing and delivering their **Efficiency and Improvement Plan** and **Efficiency Statements**.

The existing Statutory Governance arrangements and Legislative requirements, including the Best Value duty (**Appendix 5**), already provide the necessary statutory framework within which this process can operate. This legislation places a duty on Councils “to make arrangements for continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness” and, at the same time, allows the Department to impose conditions on the exercise of any power conferred by Order.

In addition, the existing RPA arrangements and a range of existing sub-regional partnerships, will provide the political and professional oversight to enable and facilitate taking forward scoping work on collaboration at the sub-regional level. The process will determine clear efficiency opportunities, followed by identifying the range and level of collaboration, identifying targets and the most effective delivery mechanisms.

At the regional level there will be a need for a regional arrangement which may, in the first instance, be the Regional Transition Committee (RTC) to provide the strategic oversight to the voluntary collaboration and reform programme including:-

- Providing an interface with Central Government and transferring functions;
- Promoting Performance Management and Review;
- Encouraging and promoting Regional Efficiency projects and initiatives;
- Examining scope for Shared Service agreements;
- Encouraging Sharing of Knowledge, Learning and Best Practice; and
- Communicating across the sector and with other statutory/voluntary bodies.

In this work, the RTC will be supported by the Regional Transition Management Team (RTMT).

9.0 Investment and Funding

It is necessary to recognise that although the investment cost associated with the achievement of efficiency savings through voluntary collaboration is much lower than other approaches, nevertheless, up front investment will be required and an “Invest to Save” approach is advocated. NILGA has established a set of principles to the guide ‘Local Government approach to funding the reform process’ and these are included in **Appendix 6**. The overarching aim is that :-

“The reform process should be cost neutral to the rate payer as promised at the outset of the reform process and any rate rises to the rate payer must be avoided”

In general, therefore, in the funding process, cognisance must be given to the following:

- Functions can only be transferred to local government on the basis of quantifiable costs, assets and staff;
- Efficiencies will contribute to aspects of funding.

There will be infrastructure and legislative costs associated with the reform process in the form of Network NI, Community Planning, severance payments to staff and councillors, the costs of the transferring functions, capacity building, winding-up costs, recruitment to new posts and contractual costs such as resettlement and travel costs. This will require pump-priming funding in order to reach a position where an ‘invest to save’ approach can be implemented.

These investment costs will deliver significant returns, including the following benefits:

- Meet citizen expectations of improved service delivery and access, better value and accountability;
- Rationalisation of the human resources required to deliver common services across the new Council area;
- Reduced net operating costs for current services;
- Financial savings that can contribute to rates convergence;
- Support for the development of collaborative solutions within and across the Council areas.

An example would be the investment needed to provide ICT infrastructure required for connectivity and voice and data transfer across and between the Councils.

There needs to be a solid foundation for collaboration at local, sub-regional and regional level. This will enable Councils to commence operating from an equitable base across the province and provide a launch pad for the transformation of how front line and back office services are delivered locally, sub-regionally and regionally. The creation of this solid foundation on which the programme of reform can be sustained needs pump priming funding.

Clear business cases for a collaborative improvement project supported by the commitments which are in line with a Council’s Efficiency Statement, should be the process whereby funding is determined and appropriate business cases will be developed where necessary.

Funding for the Reform of local Government can, therefore, be divided into 3 distinct streams:

- Central Government pump priming funding that creates the right conditions for local government reform generating efficiency savings that will contribute to maintaining the pledge given to the ratepayers that the reform would be cost neutral.
- Local Government self financing efficiency gains that will provide a world class continuously improving best value service to the people.
- If it is agreed that conditional loans could be provided by Central Government, any associated conditions should then be further discussed and agreed with the sector.

In essence, Local Government is proposing an ‘Invest to Save’ strategy.

9.1 Predicted Financial Gains

As indicated in the PwC report, Local Government believes that, across the sector, efficiencies of some £438m are considered achievable, subject to detailed design work being completed and RPA going ahead as originally planned. Convergence savings and systems streamlining are anticipated as early efficiency wins.

Furthermore this collaborative approach, led by Councils, does not require a centralised administrative organisation thereby avoiding costly start-up and ongoing running costs. However, the benefits should not simply be measured in financial terms. This approach provides opportunities for innovation in service delivery beyond those included in the PwC report and will allow the sector to move more rapidly and effectively towards a ‘total place’ approach including the significant benefits attainable from collaboration across the wider public sector.

The transferring functions bodies will need to quantify and earmark key areas for efficiencies that can be taken on board by the Councils on transfer of the functions. However, as stated in the report some pump priming funding may be necessary as part of this overall ‘invest to save’ strategy.

9.2 Waste Management

Local Government supports collaboration on Waste Management to gain efficiencies and service improvement and commits to working with the Department on the development of a business case to examine the scope for a Single Waste Authority.

10.0 Summary

This collaborative approach at the local, sub-regional/regional level driven by **Efficiency and Improvement Plans** and **Efficiency Statements** within the Councils will be more effective than the proposed Business Service Organisation. It will reinforce the mantra of ‘strong dynamic local government’ and places the accountability for driving efficiency and service improvement firmly in the hands of locally elected members. As indicated earlier, collaboration does not require a centralised administrative organisation thereby avoiding costly start-up and ongoing running costs and, in addition, collaborative working engenders a culture of partnership of Councils that supports, facilitates and encourages performance and service improvement. Through this evolutionary and flexible approach opportunities are provided for a varied range and level of delivery options beyond that included in the PwC report and which will allow the sector to swiftly and efficiently make the step change towards a ‘total place’ approach.

This proposal for a voluntary approach to collaboration provides a number of desirable outcomes for citizens, local government, central government and other key stakeholders, as follows:-

1. It embraces the principles envisaged for the RPA and provides a practical and deliverable approach to realising efficiency savings and service improvements in a way which is not dependant on the RPA timetable.
2. It allows for self determination by local councils whilst retaining the concept of regional oversight in support of a consistent approach across Local Government.
3. It provides for an independent assurance mechanism to the Minister and the Department through the Northern Ireland Audit Office that individual Councils have in place challenging targets based on the most effective, efficient and economical ways of delivering services.
4. As government funding is likely to be restricted it proposes a clear division whereby the initial set-up and legislative costs are funded centrally to enable Transition to proceed and the on-going funding options to enable Transformation to develop without the need for substantial forward commitment by central government.
5. As the transformation process develops from 2011 through to 2015, there will be opportunities to actively engage with the voluntary, community and business sector in seeking to develop more appropriate, cost effective and efficient delivery mechanisms tailored to meet the needs of the communities we serve.

Incentives and Controls to Promote Improvement through Collaborative Working

The following will incentivise local government to work together to deliver improvement:

- **Efficiency Gains** - A key driver to encourage councils to adopt collaborative or shared service delivery is the evidence presented through robust business case development. Through comprehensive reviews of service delivery areas and business case development, the sector will be able to identify the projects which will be most effective in terms of efficiency gains. Councils who indicate they do not wish to avail of collaborative arrangements must demonstrate not only that greater efficiencies can be obtained through their own independent arrangements, but also that their failure to support collaborative arrangements will not have an adverse impact on the rest of the sector (e.g. failure to achieve sufficient economies of scale);
- **Grant aid for improvement projects** - Grant aid from central government could be used, as in other regions, to incentivise improvement projects. This would be particularly pertinent in relation to driving forward the reform process, in particular, seed funding the Community Planning Foundation Programme, the Transferring functions costs and delivery of significant shared services projects;
- **Pump prime funds** - The Minister has already indicated to local government that they would consider the provision of loan funds to councils. If this was the case the loan funds could be agreed based on the need to access specified efficiencies and improvements;
- **Agreed efficiency targets with central government** - In other regions central government agrees Public Service Agreements (PSAs) or efficiency targets with local government. This would be a key mechanism that could be used in N. Ireland;
- **Recognition through local government awards and best practice schemes** - Councils already avail of existing award schemes, and from 2008, have established their own award scheme. Building upon this work, a fully developed good practice scheme could be established, such as the Beacon Scheme used in England to ensure good practice in the sector is showcased. To be effective, this work would need appropriately resourced;
- **Public awareness through published figures** - It is common practice in other regions to publish performance information. Under the new SDPI Framework being developed by PDP B, the duty to publish performance information could be included. If this performance information was published in a clear and fair format, it would allow the public to hold their local council to account, facilitating acknowledgement of high performing councils and public pressure on the lower performing councils to improve; and
- **Reduced audit requirements for high performing councils** - Another potential mechanism that could be considered is the introduction of a proportionate and risk based approach to audit. The size and focus of audit in each council would therefore vary to reflect a council's performance. This would reduce the audit burden on councils that actively pursue Best Value and work collaboratively. In Scotland, following the first phase of Best Value audits, the Accounts Commission is currently consulting on a similar approach for the second phase of Best Value and Community Planning audits (BV2).

Controls

The following controls could also be considered to seek to encourage more collaborative working:-

- **Duty to Secure Best Value** - Initial work by PDP B, endorsed by SLB, has laid the foundation for the necessary primary legislation that will underpin the development of the new SDPI Framework. A key foundation of this will be the restatement of the statutory duty on councils to secure Best Value, defined in terms of continuous improvement in performance of council functions;
- **Role of Audit** - Within the new SDPI Framework, the role of the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) will be enhanced to include a performance audit role in addition to its current financial audit responsibilities; this will include a Best Value audit. As in other regions, the Auditor will have a role in assessing council performance; this would include advising councils on key areas of improvement, as assessed against the SDPI Framework. Council Improvement Plans would therefore need to be agreed in this context; and
- **Power of Intervention (Direction or Last Resort)** - Within the primary legislation proposals for the new SDPI Framework, it was agreed that the new system should have in place a default power of last resort for the Minister for the Environment to intervene where the performance of a council so requires it. To provide additional assurances to the Minister that the sector is committed to working collaboratively to ensure efficiency gains, this default power of last resort could be extended to incorporate a power to intervene to direct collaborative working, should councils fail to engage in this approach.

Appendix 2

Examples of Collaborative Working by Northern Ireland Councils

The following list provides a number of current and past examples of collaborative working by Northern Ireland Councils. *It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list.*

1. Funding Delivery Partnerships:

- Peace Programme Partnerships – Delivery of Peace III
- Rural Development Programme Clusters – Delivery of Axis 3 of the Rural Development Programme
- Local Strategy Partnerships

2. Waste Management Partnerships:

- SWAMP (involving Armagh City and District Council, Banbridge District Council, Cookstown District Council, Craigavon Borough Council, Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council, Fermanagh District Council, Newry and Mourne District Council and Omagh District Council).
- ARC 21 (involving Lisburn City Council, Larne Borough Council, Down District Council, North Down District Council, Castlereagh Borough Council, Antrim Borough Council, Ards Borough Council, Ballymena Borough Council, Belfast City Council, Carrickfergus Borough Council, Newtownabbey Borough Council)
- North West Partnership (involving Coleraine Borough Council, Ballymoney Borough Council, Derry City Council, Limavady Borough Council, Magherafelt District Council, Moyle District Council, Strabane District Council).

3. Tourism Networks:

- Antrim Coast and Glens Tourism Initiative
- Destination North West (Derry CC, Fermanagh DC, Omagh DC, Strabane DC, Dungannon and South Tyrone BC, Cookstown DC, Donegal CC, Sligo CC, Leitrim CC, Failte Ireland)
- Western Regional Tourism Partnership (incl 3 brands)
 - Fermanagh
 - Derry
 - Sperrins
- North West Trail (Sustrans, Omagh, Fermanagh, Strabane, Sligo, NI Tourist Board, Failte Ireland)

4. Cross Border Partnerships:

- North West Cross Border Regeneration Group (NWCBRG)
- Irish Central Border Area Network (ICBAN)
- EBR
- COMET

5. Other Initiatives

5.1 Procurement:

- ARC 21 responsible for sector wide procurement of major waste infrastructure
- Joint Procurement Policy formulated between Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Councils
- Joint procurement arrangements between Omagh District Council and Fermanagh District Council for selected goods/services
- NI Local Government Procurement Group assessing further opportunities for joint tendering exercises including use of web portal for sharing information
- Eprocurement pilot in conjunction with 8 Councils via CPD portal

5.2 Human Resources:

- Belfast City Council's Business Improvement Services undertake job evaluation exercises for a number of Councils
- Employment of Anti-Smoking Officers for all Councils in NI led by Omagh District Council

5.3 Environmental Health:

- Group systems for employment of Environmental Health Officers – provision of specialist functions
- Investing for Health partnerships
- Biodiversity – joint employment of Officers across a number of Councils

5.4 Building Control:

- Group systems for employment of Building Control Officers – provision of specialist functions

5.5 Leisure:

- Active Communities Programme – joint working amongst groups of Councils which has secured funding for delivery of programmes by active communities multi-sport coaches and physical activity leaders

Armagh, Banbridge, and Craigavon Councils

- A joint Procurement Policy for the three Councils has been formulated and a schedule of joint procurement opportunities has been detailed for the next financial year with the aim of achieving savings and value for money.
- The three Councils' IT Networks have been linked through Network NI
- A joint GIS Project has been commissioned to map the 3 Councils' bin routes
- Biodiversity – appointment of a Biodiversity Officer across 2 Councils
- Tourism – tourism marketing through a Tourism Partnership
- Economic Development involving 6 Councils in the South East – whereby each Council takes a lead for all Councils on one specific economic element

Ballymena Borough Council

- Rural Development funding programme.
- Interreg Iva
- Museum Services

Derry and Strabane TC

Project Title	Partners	Aims and Objectives	Key Outcomes Achieved
Eglinton Village Trail	Eglinton & District Comm. Safety Forum	Assertion of Right of Way Development of Eglinton Town Trail	Meet with Group re funding Applications to RDP/NIEA/Lottery Scheme Design & Planning application Liaise with Brennan Consultants
Park Village Biodiversity Trail	Learmount Comm. Dev. Group	Dev. And extension of existing forest trail	Meet with Group re funding Applications to RDP/NIEA/Lottery Scheme Design & Planning application. Public Consultation
Canoe Trail	CAAN Strabane DC	Dev. of the Foyle Canoe Trail	Routes agreed Partnership funding agreed

Joint Provision (DCC and WELB)	Long Tower Youth Club Ballymagroarty Community Centre Newbuildings Community Centre Caw Centre Pilot's Row Centre	Joint provision of community facilities	Community development activities / programme
Community Relation's	Seeds The Junction	Promoting good relations	Community relations programme objectives
Women's Development	Foyle Women's Information Network Derry Women's Aid	Developing the capacity of women in the community	Community development programme activities
North West Region Cross Border Group	DCC, Strabane DC, Limavady BC, Magherafelt DC	The aim of the Group is: "To strengthen and develop the local economy so that general living conditions of the area improve".	
ERNACT	DCC, Donegal County Council, Galway, Wrral, (various pending on project)	Application of communications technology	Range of ICT, infrastructure, ED projects
Eat Well Keep Well	Community Dietetic Department (WHSCT) DCC Environmental Health Department WHSCT Health Promotion Department Local Development Workers	Eat Well Keep Well is a health awareness project focusing on a number of topics including Healthy Eating (Eat Well Plate), Food Labels and Storage, Healthy Snacks, Food Hygiene/Food Safety etc ultimately addressing the above issues.	An impact evaluation was carried in order to establish the project's success in meeting the aims and objectives and demonstrate behaviour change. The target group completed pre and post knowledge questionnaires. Continuous observational and verbal feedback was also collated. This information was very useful in developing the tool kit to deliver future programmes of this nature for other community settings/areas in the 50+ age group.

Collaboration Delivery Models

Collaboration would be facilitated by the availability of several delivery options. The options must be capable of accommodating the potential range and level of envisaged collaboration identified by the TCs/Joint Committees and Councils. Lessons learned would be shared across Local Government. The stages in collaborative process would determine the choice of the most suitable delivery option. Options may include the following models:

Local Council

Where appropriate, Councils will have the option to deliver services independently.

Lead ‘Host’ Council

A lead ‘host’ Council may be considered the most appropriate delivery mechanism where there is collaboration at a sub regional level – 2 or more participating bodies. A decision to follow this route would be made on the basis of a supportive business case (Stage 4). The lead Council would be one of the existing 26 Councils in the transition period or one of the new 11 Councils when they become operative.

Joint Collaborative Committee

A Joint Collaborative Committee would comprise two or more existing Councils or new Councils (when they become operative). Such a Joint Committee would be legally empowered to act as an accountable, effective and efficient collaborative delivery body in compliance with governance and legislative requirements. However, it would be possible for the Joint Collaborative Committee to commission a Lead Council or other body to act on its behalf.

Sub Regional Joint Committee

A Sub Regional Joint Committee would comprise several TCs/Joint Committees or new Councils (when they become operative) or two or more Joint Collaborative Committees. This Sub Regional Joint Committee would operate on the same basis of a Joint Collaborative Committee in 2 above.

Regional Collaborative Arrangements

A Regional Body would comprise all the TCs/Joint Committees or new Councils (when they become operative). The PwC report sets out the model of a BSO to fulfil this role. It is considered that a more appropriate model should be developed. To clearly distinguish the suggested new Regional Model from the BSO framework it may be entitled ‘Regional Joint Collaborative Committee’ or ‘Collaborative Services Enabling Body’ or ‘Common Services Organisation’.

Public Body; Private Body; Voluntary Body

At any stage and in the collaborative process consideration should be given by those bodies involved to the option of a commissioning a Public Body, Private Body,

Voluntary Body or any combination of these bodies, to deliver services. Local Government has significant experience in operating partnerships across public, private and voluntary sectors. Examples include: - Central Procurement Directorate (CPD - Public Body); Private Waste Disposal Sites (Private Body); Bryson Recycling (Voluntary Body)

Utilising existing collaborative vehicles within local government

There are a number of existing vehicles within the local government sector which could easily be utilised to spread the benefits to a wider number of users. These bodies already have established governance and administrative procedures. For example, the ICT Unit of Belfast City Council already supplies services to a considerable number of public sector bodies, including a number of local authorities in GB. Similarly, ARC21, Swamp 2008 and NW Region Cross Border Group can provide a common vehicle for the acquisition of bins and other waste equipment or contracts. These bodies are already acting on a sub-regional basis to create efficiencies for all involved.

Collaborative procurement

What is collaborative procurement?

Collaborative procurement is the term used to cover a range of arrangements whereby local authorities work together to jointly purchase goods and services. Joining forces enables local authorities to achieve economies of scale and get better deals from suppliers, as well as often offering suppliers a more attractive and more sustainable contract.

Why is it important?

Collaborative procurement enables authorities to achieve economies of scale and get a better deal than if they were acting alone as well as frequently appealing to suppliers who may be interested in a larger market share by contracting with more than one authority at a given time. The case studies below show how robust contract management and collaboration can also improve outcomes for residents.

What do I need to know?

- Local government revenue expenditure on procurement alone is over £50 billion³ and we could save millions through collaborative procurement models
- What areas are the members in your authority interested in collaborating on?
- What are neighbouring authorities doing? When are your authority's high spend contracts up for renewal? How does this compare with neighbouring authorities' renewal dates?
- Have members reviewed contractual arrangements on the high cost spend areas: construction, followed by adult social care, waste management, temporary and agency staff and consultancy services?
- Are you aware of the support for collaborative procurement, framework contracts and best deals your RIEP can provide access to?

Procurement hubs

The North West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership has funded five sub-regional collaborative procurement hubs. These hubs cover the entire North West region and are ensuring collaboration between local authorities. NW IEP reports supporting total savings of £68 million, over the four year period from 2004-5 to end 2008-9.⁴

Buying insurance collaboratively

The South West Improvement and Efficiency Partnership is supporting a project to deliver a cost saving insurance framework open to all district authorities in the region. The framework could save district councils a minimum of 20% on their annual insurance bills by co-ordinating their contract renewal process. The framework will be available from October 2010 and overall savings are expected to be in excess of £1 million over the next four years. This follows a model used successfully by the **West Midlands RIEP** and now being replicated by **Improvement East** where 12 authorities are likely to make savings in excess of £1 million per annum on premiums in the East of England.

Preventing the costs of flooding

The North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership's flood protection project has enabled collective capital investment by the region's fire and rescue services in shared resources for responding to flooding, including flood sacks. This project significantly improves the region's flood resilience offering much needed protection for residents who have been badly hit by flooding in recent years. In addition, savings are being made through the use of collaborative procurement and the prevention of flood incidents which can cost as much as £60 million per day.

Working collaboratively on waste

There are examples of collaborative working on waste procurement in a range of local authorities from Somerset to Cumbria, including joint procurement on waste, please visit the Waste Improvement Network (WIN), an online resource for officers and members run

by **Improvement and Efficiency South East** on behalf of all the RIEPs which

offers a range of good practice case studies, as well as access to standard procurement documents relating to waste management:

www.win.org.uk

Postal Services in the Capital

Supported by **Capital Ambition**, London authorities are developing a London wide agreement for postal services under the Office of Government Commerce Buying Solutions flexible framework contract. This will enable the authorities to achieve volume discounts not accessible for individual boroughs. 15 boroughs have been involved in the initial stage of the project working with Talis Management and all are expected to sign up. Agreement to transfer to the new contract by all 15 authorities would secure a saving of £900,000 per annum ongoing from January 2010.

Area based procurement

Improvement East is funding an innovative procurement project, being led by Essex County Council, to establish category management and collaborative procurement across the wider public sector in Essex in 3 pilot categories – ICT, Commercial Vehicles and Passenger Transport. The programme is supported by Fire and Rescue, Police, NHS, PCTs Probation Service and Higher Education and aims to deliver £20 million in cashable savings from these 3 pilot categories.

Support available from the RIEPs:

All RIEPs provide support to help local authorities formulate joint working arrangements and take forward collaborative procurement activity. They also provide access to a range of framework contracts and best deals (please see the following section).

Who Are We?

Forth Valley GIS Ltd is a pioneering Local Authority Company established to widen the opportunities, benefits & efficiencies from shared Geographic Information Services to public sector, partner organisations and businesses across Scotland and beyond.

FVGIS has established a strong reputation for providing innovative, high quality GIS services and solutions to the public sector, its partners and businesses.

Our team of geographic information experts use a variety of industry standard GIS, application and database technologies to develop and integrate solutions that map to customer needs and deliver real benefits.

FVGIS has an extensive knowledge of the public sector and is continually building strong and effective working relationships with a wide range of local and central government organisations and partner agencies – promoting the benefits of shared GIS service delivery to an increasing network of customers.

Why is GIS Important?

Geography is a unique thread that ties together information, processes and people... because everything happens somewhere.

Location, address and map data are commonly used in daily life yet the real power of this geographic information to provide strategic and wide-ranging business benefits is often unrecognised.

FVGIS take an inclusive view of how geographic information and GIS can improve service delivery – linking technology, processes, data and people to provide successful and sustainable GIS solutions that provide real benefits.



What we do

Our 20+ strong team provide consulting services that cover the whole GIS life cycle...

- ✓ Strategy Development
- ✓ Project Management
- ✓ Technical Consultancy
- ✓ Application Development
- ✓ Systems Integration
- ✓ Business Analysis
- ✓ Data Management
- ✓ Spatial Analysis
- ✓ Support
- ✓ Training

"Maximising the potential of geographic information"



How Can GIS Help You

Our services and solutions are helping to improve public services in a wide range of areas, for example:



Why us?

Forth Valley GIS Ltd has over 10 years experience implementing public sector GIS solutions. We have specialist skills in many areas including:

- Web solutions
- Spatial database administration
- Gazetteer management
- Systems integration
- Information management

We can offer:

- an extensive knowledge and understanding of public sector business
- a structured yet flexible and effective approach to project management
- a focus on business needs with a strong emphasis on partnership working.
- wide ranging specialist GIS, IT, data management and business skills
- best-practice information management
- business driven GIS solutions
- high quality customer care, training and ongoing support

Forth Valley GIS has an excellent reputation at local, regional and national level with a proven track record of success.

To find out how our services and solutions can help you, please get in touch:



Drummond House, Wellgreen Place, Stirling, FK8 2DY
Tel: 01786 443939 Fax: 01786 443987
www.forthvalleygis.co.uk



Local Government (Best Value) Act (Northern Ireland) 2002

2002 CHAPTER 4

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An Act to make provision placing on district councils a general duty to make arrangements for continuous improvement in the way in which their functions are exercised; and for connected purposes.

[26th March 2002]

BE IT ENACTED by being passed by the Northern Ireland Assembly and assented to by Her Majesty as follows:

Best value

1—(1) A council shall make arrangements for continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

(2) For the purpose of deciding how to carry out its duty under subsection (1), a council shall consult persons appearing to the council to be representative of—

- (a) persons liable to pay rates in respect of hereditaments in the district of the council;
- (b) persons who use or are likely to use services provided by the council; and
- (c) persons appearing to the council to have an interest in the district of the council.

Contracts: exclusion of non-commercial considerations

2—(1) The Department may by order provide, in relation to councils, for a specified matter to cease to be a non-commercial matter for the purposes of Article 19 of the [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1992 \(NI 6\)](#) (council contracts: exclusion of non-commercial considerations).

(2) An order under this section may—

- (a) provide for a matter to cease to be a non-commercial matter for specified purposes or to a specified extent;
- (b) apply in relation to specified councils, functions or contracts;
- (c) amend a statutory provision;
- (d) include supplementary, incidental, consequential and transitional provisions.

(3) In exercising a function regulated by Article 19 of the [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1992 \(NI 6\)](#) with reference to a matter which is the subject of an order under this section a council shall have regard to any guidance issued by the Department.

(4) No order shall be made under this section unless a draft of the order has been laid before, and approved by resolution of, the Assembly.

Power to modify statutory provisions and confer new powers

3—(1) If the Department thinks that a statutory provision prevents or obstructs compliance by councils with the duty under section 1(1), the Department may by order make provision modifying or excluding the application of the provision in relation to councils.

(2) The Department may by order make provision conferring on councils any power which the Department considers necessary or expedient to permit or facilitate compliance with the duty under section 1(1).

(3) In exercising a power conferred under subsection (2) a council shall have regard to any guidance issued by the Department.

(4) An order under this section may—

(a) impose conditions on the exercise of any power conferred by the order (including conditions about consultation or approval);

(b) amend a statutory provision;

(c) include supplementary, incidental, consequential and transitional provisions.

(5) No order shall be made under this section unless a draft has been laid before, and approved by resolution of, the Assembly.

(6) Before the Department makes an order under this section it shall consult—

(a) persons appearing to it to represent councils; and

(b) such other persons as appear to the Department to be representative of interests affected by the proposals.

(7) If, following consultation under subsection (6), the Department proposes to make an order under this section it shall lay before the Assembly a document explaining the proposals and, in particular—

(a) setting them out in the form of a draft order; and

(b) giving details of consultation under subsection (6).

(8) Where a document relating to proposals is laid before the Assembly under subsection (7), no draft of an order under this section to give effect to the proposals (with or without modification) shall be laid before the Assembly until after the expiry of the statutory period beginning with the day on which the document was laid.

(9) In preparing a draft order under this section the Department shall consider any representations made during the period mentioned in subsection (8).

(10) A draft order laid before the Assembly in accordance with subsection (5) must be accompanied by a statement of the Department giving details of—

(a) any representations considered in accordance with subsection (9); and

(b) any changes made to the proposals contained in the document laid before the Assembly under subsection (7).

Interpretation

4—(1) In this Act “the Department” means the Department of the Environment.

(2) Expressions used in this Act and in the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 (c. 9) have the same meaning in this Act as in that Act.

Repeals

5—(1) Part II of, and Schedule 1 to, the [Local Government \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1992 \(NI 6\)](#) (competition) are hereby repealed.

(2) In Schedule 5 to the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 (NI 19) paragraph 6 is hereby repealed.

Commencement

6. This Act shall come into operation on 1st April 2002.

Short title

7. This Act may be cited as the Local Government (Best Value) Act (Northern Ireland) 2002.

Funding the Reform Process: NILGA Key principles

NILGA Members at their full members meeting in January 2010 agreed if councils are required to contribute to reform costs, this should only be on the basis of the following principles:

1. The reform process should be cost neutral to the rate payer as promised at the outset of the reform process and any rate rises to the ratepayer must be avoided
2. Where there is no financial benefit to local government, costs should be met by Central Government.
3. Councils may make a contribution where benefits will be accrued. Contribution should be apportioned based on the level of benefit gained.
4. Central Government should fund activities where equity across the sector is required (e.g. Elected Member and Officer Severance Schemes).
5. The final programme costs and the apportionment must be negotiated based on a robust and mutually agreed business case.
6. The final programme costs must be affordable.
7. Repayment of any loans from central government to local government should only be considered when councils have made demonstrable savings.

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources (Transition) Committee
Subject:	Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework Seminar
Date:	21 st May 2010
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects
Contact Officer:	Kevin Heaney, RPA Project Coordinator (ext. 6202)

1.0	<u>Relevant Background Information</u>
1.1	The Department for Social Development (DSD) has recently commissioned a consortium of consultants to assist the department in preparing a strategy and policy framework for Urban Regeneration and Community Development in Northern Ireland. The consortium of consultants appointed has been brought together by Community Places and includes both academics and practitioners.
2.0	<u>Key Issues</u>
2.1	In order to enable key stakeholders to input into this process, the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) has arranged a seminar for Friday 28 th May 2010, 11am-1pm in the Strule Arts Centre, Omagh. A copy of the invitation received is attached at Appendix 1.
2.2	The purpose of the event is to examine the principles and objectives of the emerging policy framework being developed on behalf of DSD to support the effective delivery of the urban regeneration and community development operational functions when they transfer to councils.
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	As attendance numbers for the seminar is limited, the invite has been circulated to each Party Group Leader within the Council to consider the possible nomination of 1 attendee for the event.

3.0 Resource Implications

While there is no charge for attending the seminar, there will be associated travel expenses incurred.

4.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- i) note the contents of the foregoing report and appendix attached; and
- ii) approve the attendance of a cross-party delegation (maximum of 1 member per Party) to the NILGA seminar accompanied by relevant Council officers.

5.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: NILGA invite to seminar

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Appendix 1

Urban Regeneration & Community Development Policy Framework Seminar.

NILGA EVENT - Free to attend

INVITATION TO: Councillors, Chief Executives, Urban Regeneration Officers and Policy Officers.

DATE: Friday 28 May 2010 **TIME:** 11.00am to 1.00pm

LOCATION: Strule Arts Centre, Townhall Square, Omagh, County Tyrone, BT78 1BL.

NILGA President, Cllr John Mathews, invites you to a seminar commencing at 11.00 am on Friday 28 May 2010 in the Strule Arts Centre, Omagh.

"The purpose of the event is to examine principles and objectives of the Framework currently being developed by the Department for Social Development to support the effective delivery of the urban regeneration and community development operational functions when they transfer to councils.

I urge as many representatives as possible to attend, particularly as urban regeneration and community development are key elements in creating sustainable, vibrant and inclusive local communities". NILGA President, Cllr John Mathews.

Your input will be critical to the success of this event.

Councillors, Chief Executives, and council officers are invited to attend this briefing seminar. Due to the importance of this event, up to 3 representatives from each council area are invited to attend.

Please forward your nomination for this event by 17 May 2010.

NORTHERN IRELAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

RSVP: Antoinette McBride
Unit 5B Castlereagh Business Park
478 Castlereagh Road
Belfast, BT5 6BQ
Phone: (028) 9079 8972
Email: a.mcbride@nilga.org



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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Date:	Friday, 21st May, 2010
Subject:	Member Development Framework Update
Reporting Officer:	Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)
Contact Officer:	Mrs. Julie Lilley, Members' Liaison Officer (extension 6321)

Purpose of Report

To advise the Committee of progress made with regard to the Member Development Framework and, in particular, the induction programme for new Members.

Background

Members may recall that in May, 2007 a Member Development Working Group was established made up of officers from Committee and Members' Services, the Core Improvement Team and the Human Resources Section, together with a representative from each of the Party Groups. The Working Group, over a period of time, and taking account of the development needs of Members and best practice, designed a Member Development Framework, an integral element of which was an induction programme for new Members. In addition, a process was put in place whereby all Members were given the opportunity to have a Personal Development Plan drawn up which in turn allowed them to access an individual budget for training and developmental activity.

Current Position

Work has progressed significantly on all elements of the Member Development Framework. Specific detail is set out below:

Personal Development Plans for Members

To date twenty eight Members have taken the opportunity to participate in individual personal development planning (PDP) meetings with an external facilitator from the

IDeA and have individual personalised development plans (PDPs) drawn up. Of these Members, sixteen accessed their personal development budgets during 2009/2010 in order to participate in development activities. During that period in excess of twenty five separate development opportunities were offered to Members. The type of development activities undertaken by Members is varied and ranges from accredited training courses to attendance at conferences with themes in which Members have expressed a particular interest. The Members' Liaison Officer, on an ongoing basis, sources details of training and development activities which may be of interest to individual Members with PDPs.

A Party Group breakdown of Members with PDPs is set out below:

SF	8 Members
DUP	7 Members
UUP	2 Members
SDLP	8 Members
ALL	2 Members
PUP	1 Member

Members' development activities

A programme of Members' development activities made up of eighteen separate modules was delivered between October 2008 and September 2009. The modules were facilitated by a number of expert training providers and addressed generic development needs identified from Members' PDPs e.g. media skills, IT skills, chairing meetings, communication skills etc.

An evaluation exercise of the activities has been undertaken. It is intended that the 2010/2011 programme of activities will build on those areas of training which Members indicated that they would like to explore further.

The roles and skills required by elected members are complex, challenging and constantly evolving. Addressing the capacity building needs of members is therefore vital to ensure the effective delivery of the corporate plan and effective and efficient transition of the council as part of future local government reform. In terms of leadership capacity we need to continue providing development in the areas such as media, IT etc and those identified as part of the political skills framework i.e. community leadership; partnership working; communication skills; political understanding and questioning and challenge.

In addition the role of the Elected Member is becoming even more challenging with the current economic climate, the drive to deliver further efficiencies and at the same time meet the increasing demand for council services and address thematic issues across the city. It is therefore important Members and Officers are provided with the necessary knowledge and skills through council specific training in relation to the key council priorities of strategic planning; financial management, performance management and organisational development. There is also an opportunity to develop and deliver joint member officer development activities, where appropriate. This can assist in building member-officer relationships, maximising learning and assist in achieving economies of scale and value for money.

A structured capacity building programme is required to provide Members with the required knowledge and skills to fulfil their role effectively. A number of methods for delivering the development activities will be considered in the delivery of the programme i.e. awareness sessions; development programmes; sharing of best practice through peer networks; coaching and mentoring.

Induction Training for Members

Induction training for new Members is recognised as being crucially important in terms of ensuring that Members can quickly assimilate into the life of the Council as a public body while at the same time helping them to deliver for their constituents. An effective induction programme is not only useful for new Members but for the Council as a whole since properly advised and well informed Members are better able to take decisions which will benefit all of the ratepayers of the City.

Appendix A sets out the general content and framework for Members' induction and includes timeframes for the delivery of the Corporate elements of the programme. Included are sessions covering procedural matters and a number of key Corporate issues, as well as specific Committee awareness sessions.

Another important element of the framework is the development of a comprehensive Induction Pack including Service-specific information which will provide Councillors with an easily accessible and valuable resource to assist them in their roles both within the Council and as constituency representatives.

During the current Council term those Members who have been co-opted or nominated have been offered induction training consisting of the corporate modules set out in the induction programme, as well as media training and the opportunity to have PDPs drawn up. All of the Members who have been co-opted or appointed in this Council term have availed of this opportunity. Most new Members have additionally had the benefit of one-to-one induction briefing sessions with senior officers.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note:

- the progress made to date with regard to the implementation of the Member Development Framework
- the proposed content of future Member development activities
- the proposed induction training plan for new Members following the Local Government Elections in May, 2011, as outlined in Appendix A.

Decision Tracking

Member Development activities will continue to be provided and a planned induction programme will be implemented following the 2011 Local Government Elections and during the ensuing Council term.

Key to Abbreviations

N/A

Documents Attached

Appendix A

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Members' Induction Programme

Induction Programme

The Induction Programme can be broadly divided into three strands of training. These are:

- Corporate
- Core/Cross Cutting
- Developmental.

Corporate Training

The Corporate training modules will be required to be undertaken by all Members. The modules will be delivered in-house and will as a minimum be offered on three different dates and times in order to ensure that as much flexibility as possible is provided to Members to facilitate attendance. In order to avoid new Members having information overload and possibly not gaining as much benefit as they should from the induction training, the Corporate modules have been categorised according to the period within which it is recommended that they should be delivered:

- Immediate **(I)** - prior to the Council's AGM
- Short Term **(S)** - within 3 months of being elected
- Medium Term **(M)** - within 6 months of being elected
- Longer Term **(L)** - within 12 months of being elected

The Corporate modules would cover areas including:

- The role of local government and local government reform **(I)**
- Council AGM and Election of Lord Mayor **(I)**
- Standing Orders/Code of Conduct **(I)**
- Proportionality Arrangements **(I)**
- BCC Corporate Planning and VCM process **(I)**
- Members' personal development planning process **(I)**
- Performance Management **(S)**
- Local Government /BCC financial planning **(S)**
- Good Relations **(S)**
- Equality/ Section 75 **(S)**
- Specialist Committee Training (delivered by Chief Officers supported by Heads of Service) **(M)**
- Overview of the Women's joint member -officer steering group and elected member gender action plan. **(M)**
- Recruitment and Selection **(L)**

- Chief Officer performance review and personal development planning scheme **(L)**

Core/Cross Cutting Training

The Core/Cross Cutting training modules will be offered to all Members. Depending on experience and expertise not all Members will need to undergo the full range of training being offered. However, it would be expected that Members elected to the Council for the first time would undertake all of the modules. The training will be marketed as refresher training to more experienced Members. Delivery of the training will be by a combination of in house and external provision.

These modules have also been prioritised in the same way as the Corporate training modules above.

The Core/Cross Cutting Modules will cover areas including:

- The roles and responsibilities of the Elected Member **(S)**
- Dealing with the Media/Getting Your Message Across **(M)**
- Effective Chairing of Meetings **(M)**
- Time Management/Work-Life Balance **(M)**
- Member /Officer Relations **(M)**
- IT Systems Training/ modern.gov. **(M)**
- Leadership development activities relating to:
 - Community Leadership
 - Partnership Working
 - Communication Skills
 - Political Understanding
 - Questioning and Challenge.

Demand for the core/cross cutting modules will largely determine the number to be delivered. However, the nature of some of the core/cross cutting modules mean that only a small number of Members can be trained at any one time.

Developmental Training

The developmental training will arise from the Personal Developmental Plans which all Members will be encouraged to prepare as soon as possible after the Local Government Elections. PDP's for Members will be conducted by an independent facilitator who will prepare an individual plan for each Member.

An individual training budget will be available for each Member which can be expended on developmental activity identified within their PDP.

The developmental training will be tailored and bespoke to the individual.

It is not intended that developmental activity be confined to traditional type training courses. Rather, it should encompass, where appropriate, conferences, seminars, best practice visits, mentoring, coaching, etc.

Timeframe

It is recommended that the Corporate and Core/Cross Cutting modules of the Induction Programme are undertaken within the first twelve months following the Local Government Elections. The developmental activity will take place over the course of the Council Term at intervals and dates convenient to the individual Member and will be reviewed annually as part of the personal development planning process.

Induction Pack

An Induction Pack, with the exception of Members' contact details, will be distributed to all Members immediately after the Local Government Elections or a Members co- option to the Council. It is suggested that the pack should contain:

- Corporate Plan/ Value Creation Map
- Standing Orders
- BCC – Guide for Councillors
- Code of Local Government Conduct
- Carparking pass
- Map of City Hall/Adelaide Exchange and information relating to the facilities in each of the buildings
- All Members contact details*
- Payroll Forms
- Induction Programme Details
- Members' Development Framework
- Service Information Packs

**Not immediately available*

With regard to Service Information Packs, those Services with responsibility for direct delivery to the ratepayer will be required to prepare their pack using a template both for consistency purposes and also to ensure that Councillors find the packs easy to use and a valuable source of information.

The packs will detail:

- The service provided to the ratepayer including relevant documents /publications
- Location of service
- Key officers and how they can be contacted
- Individual officers areas of responsibility
- Operational Managers with their contact details
- Useful telephone numbers
- Frequently asked questions.

All written material which is provided to Members as part of their induction will be made available electronically on the modern.gov system. This will ensure that Members have a library of information which can be updated as appropriate.

Evaluation

Following the next Local Government Elections and the roll out of the Induction Programme a full evaluation of the programme will be undertaken. The evaluation will be phased in line with the programme itself and will take the form of a questionnaire which all Members will be asked to complete. In addition one to one interviews will be conducted with a representative sample of Members. An analysis of the questionnaires and interviews will be undertaken to inform improvements which may need to be made to the programme.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Transitional Governance Arrangements for the Education Sector
Date:	Friday, 21st May, 2010
Reporting Officer:	Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)
Contact Officer:	Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)

Purpose of Report

To advise the Committee of the receipt of correspondence from the Minister for Education regarding the nomination of Members to the interim Belfast Education and Library Board.

Background

It is intended that the five Education and Library Boards should be replaced with an Education and Skills Authority. However this requires legislative agreement between the parties and in the period prior to the establishment of the new body streamlined Education and Library Boards are being put in place.

At its meeting on 11th December, 2009 the Committee had considered a request from the Minister for Education to put forward, in line with the guidelines published by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, at least eight Councillors who would be willing to sit on the transitional Board. The Committee had agreed to nominate only four Members with the representatives being selected using a one-off d'Hondt process. This resulted in the nominations falling to the SF, DUP, UUP and SDLP groupings, with Councillors Convery, Hartley, Rodgers and Rodway being put forward for selection.

However, further correspondence was received from the Minister on 17th February reiterating the need for the Council to nominate at least two persons for each vacancy and requesting that an additional four names be forwarded to her.

This was drawn to the Committee's attention at its meeting on 19th February, when it was decided to affirm the decision of 11th December to nominate only four Members to the four places to which the Council was entitled under the legislation.

Key Issues

The Minister for Education has now written again asking the Council to review its position with a view to providing a total of eight nominees in order to comply with the guidelines of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. In her letter, the Minister explains that she is required to follow the procedures laid down by the Commissioner for Public Appointments and that 24 out of the 26 other Councils in Northern Ireland have complied with the request to provide multiple nominees.

While this request is essentially no different from that which the Minister made in February, there is little doubt that the impasse which has arisen is doing nothing to progress and enhance the administration, oversight and management of education in Belfast. Accordingly, the Committee may take the view that, in the interests of ensuring that the Council has the opportunity to play a positive and constructive role in overseeing and contributing to educational decisions and policy in the City, it would be better to find a way to accommodate the Minister's wishes while at the same time preserving and protecting the basis upon which the Committee makes appointments to outside bodies, that is, through the use of the d'Hondt process.

The Committee could do so by simply giving each of the Party Groupings two nominees under each choice rather than the normal one. This would preserve the principle of proportionality yet satisfy the Minister's wish to be able to make choices from a pool of eight nominees. The one rider which would have to be added would be that, in the interests of fairness, equality and justice, the final selections made by the Minister would have to entail one selection from each of the four largest Party Groupings on the Council, that is, SF, the DUP, the UUP and the SDLP.

Recommendation

To agree to an additional four nominees, to be provided by the SF, DUP, UUP and SDLP Party Groupings, being forwarded to the Minister for Education for consideration for appointment to the interim Belfast Education and Library Board.

Decision Tracking

The Committee's decision will be forwarded to the Minister after ratification by the Council on 1st June.

Key to Abbreviations

N/A

Documents Attached

N/A

**Belfast City Council**

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	The provision of hospitality to external organisations using the City Hall
Date:	Friday, 21 st May, 2010
Reporting Officer:	Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (ext. 6325)
Contact Officer:	Mr. Gareth Quinn, Development Officer (ext. 6316)

Relevant Background Information

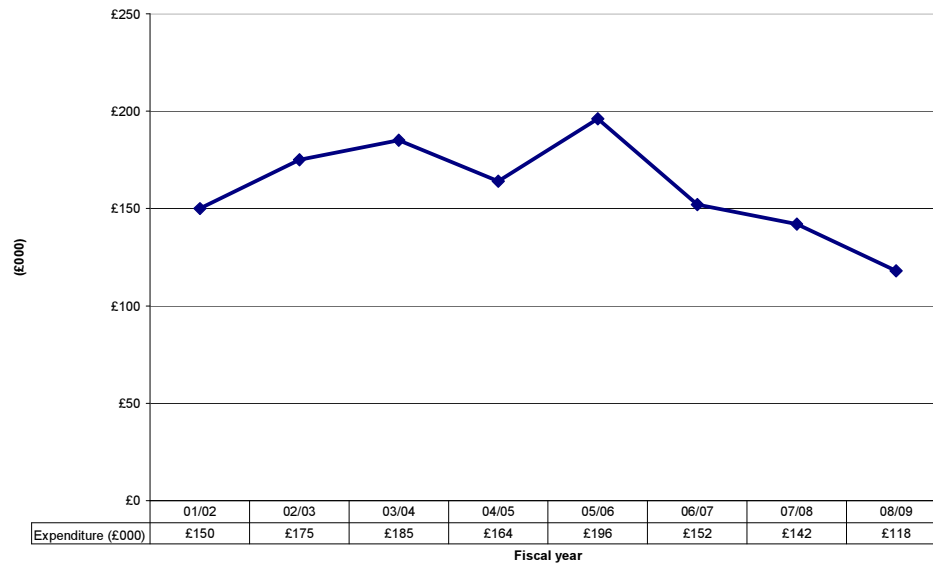
As part of the rate setting process for 2010/2011 the Committee has stressed the need for all Departments to consider potential efficiency savings. The drive to effect efficiencies and to reduce costs across the organisation is ongoing and reports will be submitted periodically. One area where costs could be reduced is in the provision of hospitality to external organisations using the City Hall.

Key Issues

The Council provides hospitality in relation to events organised by external organisations as well as several civic events, such as the Lord Mayor's installation dinner, the Somme Commemoration and the Rose Trials Dinner, which are organised directly by the Council.

Hospitality is provided to most external organisations which have been granted authority for their event to take place within the City Hall. However, it is apparent that the provision of hospitality is of secondary importance to organisations, with securing the use of the building for their event being their primary concern.

The total expenditure on hospitality for each of the past eight years is illustrated below.



Members will recall that when the City Hall was closed from September 2007 to October 2009, the Council continued to cover the cost of hospitality for events which were held in alternative venues so long as the request satisfied the criteria.

Members will observe from the data that, despite the cost of food and drink increasing over this period, hospitality expenditure has generally decreased. This is due largely to the decision taken when the policy for the use of the City Hall was reviewed in 2003 to move away from the provision of civic dinners to a 'use of the building only' concession. There was a recognition at that time that circumstances had changed to the extent that Belfast did not have to provide lavish dinners in order to attract conferences, and certainly this does appear to have been the case. This is illustrated by the fact that the number of business visitors coming to the City doubled from 329,000 in 2003 to 659,000 in 2008. While there are obviously a range of factors involved in contributing to this increase, it is certainly true that reducing the level of hospitality has not had a negative impact. The current economic circumstances facing the Council make it necessary to further review the existing policy and to consider whether effecting enhanced savings would be appropriate.

The following options have been identified as a means of achieving this:

1. cease to provide any hospitality whatsoever for events organised within the City Hall by external organisations, which would still be granted the use of the building. This option could save the Council approximately £105,000 per annum.
2. cap the amount to be spent on drinks receptions to £500 per event. This option could save the Council approximately £23,000 per annum.

Although the options outline the financial benefits to the Council they do not take into account any detrimental effects associated with reducing the amount or level of hospitality provided to external organisations. The following points highlight some of the arguments for retaining the provision of hospitality:

1. It is accepted that there is an expectation amongst conference organisers and delegates that hospitality will be provided within the Civic Headquarters of the host city. This hospitality is normally expected to be in the form of a drinks reception and is the norm within other conference cities.

2. Many organisations, especially community groups, avail of the free use of the building to organise a low budget yet still important event. Hospitality allows these organisations to add to the success of the event by providing refreshments, such as sandwiches or a finger buffet, for their guests and permits the Council to acknowledge the important contribution made by such organisations to the life and well-being of the city.
3. Many events in the City Hall include high profile and influential guests who have the ability to encourage investment and development within the City. The level of hospitality provided may influence the perception which these guests have of the city.
4. Although feedback suggests that the reduction in hospitality already implemented has not had a negative effect upon the numbers of visitors to the city, any further reduction could have a detrimental impact.

In addition, the scale of charges applicable to organisations using the City Hall should be reviewed and introduced at an early date and criteria established in order to determine when such charges will apply.

Resource Implications

Savings of either approximately £105,000 or £23,000 per annum.

Recommendations

1. To agree to cap the contribution to hospitality in the form of drinks receptions to £500 per event. This will enable external organisations to secure the use of the City Hall whilst allowing the Council to welcome guests to the building by making a contribution towards the event.
2. To review the scale of charges for the use of the City Hall and to apply these on a consistent basis.

Decision Tracking

If the Committee adopts the recommendation, Gareth Quinn, Development Officer, will ensure that the relevant revisions are implemented and that the application form and accompanying guidance notes will be amended accordingly.

Furthermore, Julie Thompson, Director of Finance and Resources, will arrange for a review of the scale of charges to be undertaken and will ensure that these are applied on a consistent basis.

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality
Date:	Friday, 21 st May, 2010
Reporting Officer:	Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (ext. 6325)
Contact Officer:	Mr. Gareth Quinn, Development Officer (ext. 6316)

Relevant Background Information

Members will recall that the Committee, at its meeting on 26th September, 2003, agreed to the criteria which would be used to assess requests from external organisations for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality. Subsequently the Committee at its meeting on 7th August, 2009, further amended the criteria so as to incorporate the new Key Themes as identified in the Council's Corporate Plan.

Key Issues

The revised criteria has been applied to each of requests contained within the appendix and recommendations have been made to the Committee on this basis.

Resource Implications

Provision has been made in the Revenue Estimates for hospitality.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to approve the recommendations as set out in the Appendix.

Key to Abbreviations

Not applicable

Decision Tracking

If the Committee approves the recommendations, the organisations will be notified and the necessary arrangements put in place following ratification by the Council.

Officer responsible – Gareth Quinn.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Schedule of Applications

**SCHEDULE OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE USE OF THE CITY HALL AND
THE PROVISION OF HOSPITALITY**

Organisation / Body	Event / Date – Number of Delegates / Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Queens University Belfast	Astrophysics Science Consortium Conference 2010 30 th August, 2010 Approximately 120 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 £480
Chartered Institute for Securities and Investment	Chartered Institute for Securities and Investment Conference 2010 28 th October, 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 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 £400
Belfast Cathedral Past Choristers Association	Conference Dinner 8 th June, 2013 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
The Federation of Retail Licensed Trade	The Federation of Retail Licensed Trade - Pub of the Year Awards 2010 11 th November, 2010 Approximately 400 attending	The use of the City Hall.	This Awards ceremony seeks to recognise the best licensed trade establishments across Northern Ireland. Categories include 'Best Neighbourhood Pub' and 'Best Tourism/Visitor Pub'. The events aims to improve the industry by recognising best practice through the development and introduction of a robust set of retailing standards. Furthermore the Federation of Retail Licensed Trade has a close working relationship with Belfast City Council as was demonstrated by their involvement in and support for both the 'Get Home Safe'	The use of the City Hall.

			<p>campaign and 'Counter Measures' training programme.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of ' City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	
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**Belfast City Council**

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Submission of Late Reports
Date:	Friday, 21st May, 2010
Reporting Officer:	Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)
Contact Officer:	Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)

Purpose of Report

To clarify the position regarding the submission of late reports to Committees.

Background

At the Committee's meeting on 23rd April, authority was sought to submit for consideration two late requests which had been received for the use of the City Hall grounds. While permission was granted to report on the requests and decisions taken, a request was made at the Council meeting on 4th May when the minutes were being adopted for a report to be submitted explaining why advance notice had not been given and written reports were not available.

Key Issues

The established protocol governing the transaction of business at Council Committees is that agendas are drawn up by the appropriate Chief Officer and issued normally seven days in advance of the meeting. All necessary supporting documentation – written reports, associated correspondence, previous relevant decisions, pictorial graphics, maps, etc – and clear and unambiguous recommendations are distributed in booklet-form for ease of reference. In this way all Members are provided with sufficient background information to enable informed decisions to be arrived at. Oral reports are normally made to further explain and clarify issues and to provide, if necessary, information which may not have been available when the papers were being circulated.

There is little doubt that this system is adhered to by the Chief Officers, who appreciate the benefits that clarity of reporting brings to the decision-making process of the Council. Every effort is then made to complete the cycle by compiling clear, concise and unambiguous minutes recording the decisions reached. Generally, this system works well: it is understood by both officers and Members and the benefits – and constraints – are acknowledged and accepted.

However, as with any system, there will always be occasions when difficulties are created because items which are either urgent or potentially controversial arrive at a very late stage. In such cases the Chief Officer is faced with the dilemma of either not reporting the matter because it arrived late – which may be due to the scheduling of Committee dates and not necessarily the fault of those making the request – or raising it at the Committee meeting in order to be fair to and to facilitate the makers of the request. The Chief Officer will normally consult the Chairman and take advice but he or she will normally make every effort to accommodate the public rather than to rely on bureaucracy to avoid having the issue considered.

In the two issues which arose in April, both were brought to the attention of the Director of Property and Projects only on the morning of the Committee. He recognised the importance of making the Committee aware of the issues and took immediate steps to appraise the Chairman, Councillor Hartley, and sought the Committee's advice as to whether it wished him to report on the matters.

While it is accepted that the late submission of reports is less than ideal – for both officers and Members – and every effort is made to avoid such an occurrence, nevertheless it has to be accepted that occasionally such circumstances can arise. However, all Chief Officers are aware that all possible steps must be taken to avoid this.

Recommendation

To note the information provided.

Key to Abbreviations

N/A

Documents Attached

N/A



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Notice of Motion re: St. Gall's Gaelic Athletic Club
Date:	21st May, 2010
Reporting Officer:	Mr. L. Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services
Contact Officer:	Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Committee Administrator (extension 6313)

Relevant Background Information

The Committee is requested to consider further the undernoted Notice of Motion which was proposed by Councillor Brownlee and seconded by Councillor Michael Browne at the Council meeting on 1st April:

“The Council commends the achievement of St. Gall's Gaelic Athletic Club, in this its centenary year, in becoming the first team from Belfast to win an All-Ireland Senior Gaelic Football Club Championship and requests that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee give consideration to the appropriate way in which this achievement might best be recognised.”

In accordance with Standing Order 11e, the motion stood referred without discussion to the Committee, but was subsequently deferred at its meeting on 23rd April.

Key Issues

The scale of the achievement of St. Gall's in winning the All-Ireland Senior Club Football Championship was recognised as soon as it had happened. The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Lavery, had raised the matter and arrangements were put in train to receive the club players and officials in order to pay tribute to their success.

A Mayoral reception was held on 15th April, the earliest suitable date, when the Deputy Lord Mayor acknowledged the Club's success and congratulated the players on their achievements.

Decision Required

To consider the Notice of Motion and to determine whether any further action requires to be taken.

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**Belfast City Council**

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Notice of Motion re: Mr. Noel Bailie
Date:	21st May, 2010
Reporting Officer:	Mr. L. Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6313)
Contact Officer:	Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Committee Administrator (extension 6313)

Relevant Background Information

At the Council meeting on 4th May the undernoted Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Stoker and seconded by Councillor Rodgers:

“This Council recognises the achievement of Noel Bailie in reaching the incredible milestone of having made 1,000 appearances for Linfield Football Club and calls upon the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to give consideration to the appropriate way in which this achievement might best be recognised.”

In accordance with Standing Order 11e, the motion stood referred without discussion to the Committee.

Recommendations

To consider the Notice of Motion and to take such action thereon as may be determined.

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Allowances for the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and High Sheriff
Date:	Friday, 21st May, 2010
Reporting Officer:	Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services
Contact Officer	Mr Liam Steele, (extension 6325)

Relevant Background Information

It has been practice for the Entertainment and Personal Allowances paid to the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff to be reviewed annually.

The Lord Mayor's Personal and Entertainment Allowances for the year 2009/2010 were £33,800 and £25,150 respectively. The Deputy Lord Mayor's and the High Sheriff's Entertainment Allowances had each been £715 and the Personal Allowance of both Office-bearers was £5,100.

Key Issues

The Personal and Entertainment Allowances should take into account increases in the cost of living, which is running currently at approximately 3%.

Resource Implications

Provision for these increases has been made in the Revenue Estimates of the Council for the current financial year.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee approves the increasing of the Lord Mayor's Personal and Entertainment Allowances to £34,800 and £25,900 respectively and the Deputy Lord Mayor's and the High Sheriff's Personal and Entertainment Allowances to £5,250 and £735 respectively.

Key to Abbreviations

Not applicable



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Budget and Transformation Panel Minutes (incorporating indicative rate target and efficiency target for 2011/12)
Date:	21 May 2010
Reporting Officer:	Julie Thompson, Director of Finance and Resources
Contact Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Head of Finance and Performance

Relevant Background Information

These are the minutes of Meeting No.11 of the Budget and Transformation Panel, held on Friday 14 May 2010.

Present:

Cllr T Hartley	SF (Chair)
Cllr M Browne	SF
Cllr P Convery	SDLP
Cllr M Jones	ALL
Cllr R Newton	DUP
P McNaney	Chief Executive
J Thompson	Director of Finance and Resources
G Millar	Director of Property and Projects
R Cregan	Head of Finance and Performance

Key Issues

1. Indicative Rate Target for 2011/12

The Chief Executive discussed with Members the challenging financial environment anticipated for the public sector over the next few years, for both capital and revenue expenditure.

As agreed at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in March 2010, work has been ongoing to develop an indicative rate target for 2011/12 and an efficiency target which would be discussed at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in May 2010. This is an additional step put into the rates setting process which will give a

context and framework for officers as they approach the more detailed rates setting work in the late summer/autumn.

The Director of Finance and Resources presented a paper to Members of the Budget and Transformation Panel on the indicative rates target for 2011/12 (see Appendix 1). Having considered the financial implications for the Council at a very high level, it was recommended that an indicative rate target for 2011/12 be established at 2.5%.

Members recognised that this was an initial target that was subject to review as more detailed work progressed. Further choices and recommendations would be presented to Members but they advised that this should be viewed as an upper target at this stage and officers should seek to identify a lower rates uplift, if at all possible. The need for prudence was emphasised with control and challenge of costs, along with the identification of options for investment in the city. The role of Land and Property Services in maximising rates income was also discussed. It was agreed that the Budget and Transformation Panel would recommend an indicative rates target of 2.5% for 2011/12 to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

2. Use of VAT Reclaim Monies (2009/10)

On the back of a court case which challenged the VAT charged for sporting, leisure and cultural services, the council has been able to secure a VAT refund. Given the difficulties of predicting the success of our claim, we have recently received some £1.3m of extra income which has not yet been accounted for, on top of the £1.56m income already included in the Council's forecast projections for 2009/10. This £1.3m is one off income that needs to be accounted for in 2009/10, with the draft accounts planned to be presented to the Audit Panel on 7 June.

The reserves position is in line with the current reserves strategy and therefore it is proposed that the £1.3m is not put into reserves. The City Investment Strategy (CIS) is the other non-recurrent balance in the council's books. The Chief Local Government Auditor raised concerns in the 2008/09 Management Letter regarding the financing of this fund. There is sufficient financing to cover the current commitments in the CIS but it is likely that new schemes will be added and the current economic recession is also likely to impact on the planned disposal receipts of the Council which help to fund the CIS. It is therefore recommended that the additional £1.3m is used to bolster the City Investment Strategy and that further information on proposals for the use of the City Investment Strategy will be presented to Members in June (see 4 below).

3. Indicative Efficiency Target for 2011/12

As agreed at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in March 2010, further details of the proposed council efficiency programme would be provided in May. The Director of Finance and Resources presented a paper to Members of the Budget and Transformation Panel on the indicative efficiency target for 2011/12 (see Appendix 2).

This identified an indicative target of some £1.7m and some proposals as to how this target would be achieved within the already agreed efficiency workstreams. The report also discussed the development of a programme which will enable the delivery of further efficiencies post 2011/12.

Members discussed the report and recognised that this was an improved and earlier planning process compared to previous years. They agreed that more work needed to be carried out over the summer on the individual workstreams and that the final target and efficiency proposals would be agreed as part of the rates setting process in the

autumn. It was agreed that the Budget and Transformation Panel would recommend an indicative efficiency target of £1.7m for 2011/12 to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and a range of other more detailed actions as set out in the recommendations below.

4. Capital Programme

The Director of Property and Projects discussed with Members the need to identify and agree a prioritised capital programme for 2010/11 – 2014/15. This programme would need to be aligned with future financing requirements, given that the majority of capital projects were now funded by loan. There was also a need to improve the management and maintenance of assets and ensure that resources were aligned to overall agreed council priorities. It was agreed that, given the importance of this issue, that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee should be set aside on 4 June to discuss the asset management plan, the capital programme and the City Investment Strategy.

5. Financial Performance Reporting

It was agreed at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in April that work would be ongoing with Members on the development of new financial performance reports, in order to propose recommendations for the way ahead to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in June. The Budget and Transformation Panel discussed some initial proposals for financial performance reports and agreed that Party Group briefings should be arranged for late May/early June to discuss the proposed reports and their content and frequency.

6. Timetable for developing the new Corporate Plan

Members discussed an outline timetable for the development of the new Corporate Plan which would involve a range of engagements with party groups, the SP&R committee and Members workshops. This process needs to be substantively concluded by late summer so that the financial and business planning cycles can be aligned for the rates setting process during the autumn.

Resource Implications

Indicative rate target of 2.5% and indicative efficiency target of £1.7m for 2011/12.

Recommendations

The Budget and Transformation Panel recommends to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that:

- (a) an indicative rates target of 2.5% be set for 2011/12 with officers to complete more detailed work and come back to Members with further choices and recommendations;
- (b) £1.3m of additional funding from a VAT refund to be put into the City Investment Strategy for 2009/10;
- (c) an indicative efficiency target of £1.7m be set for 2011/12 with more detailed

- work completed over the summer and the final target agreed in the autumn;
- (d) the Director of Property and Projects brings back a report on a review of the Facilities Management Service and the Procurement Unit and that the current system of internal charges for support services for facilities management and ISB be removed so that improved standards and better VFM can be attained;
 - (e) a suite of VFM indicators are developed for all services to help benchmarking of costs;
 - (f) the Head of Human Resources/Head of Finance and Performance bring back a report on the people aspects of the efficiency programme;
 - (g) the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 4 June is set aside to discuss various aspects of the capital programme; and
 - (h) that Party Group briefings will be arranged for late May/early June on a proposed set of financial reports for the Council to be used from 2010/11

Key to Abbreviations

CIS – City Investment Strategy

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Paper for Budget and Transformation Panel on Indicative Rates Target 2011/12 Appendix 2 – Paper for Budget and Transformation Panel on Efficiency Target for 2011/12
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BRIEFING ON INDICATIVE RATE TARGET 2011/12

BUDGET AND TRANSFORMATION PANEL

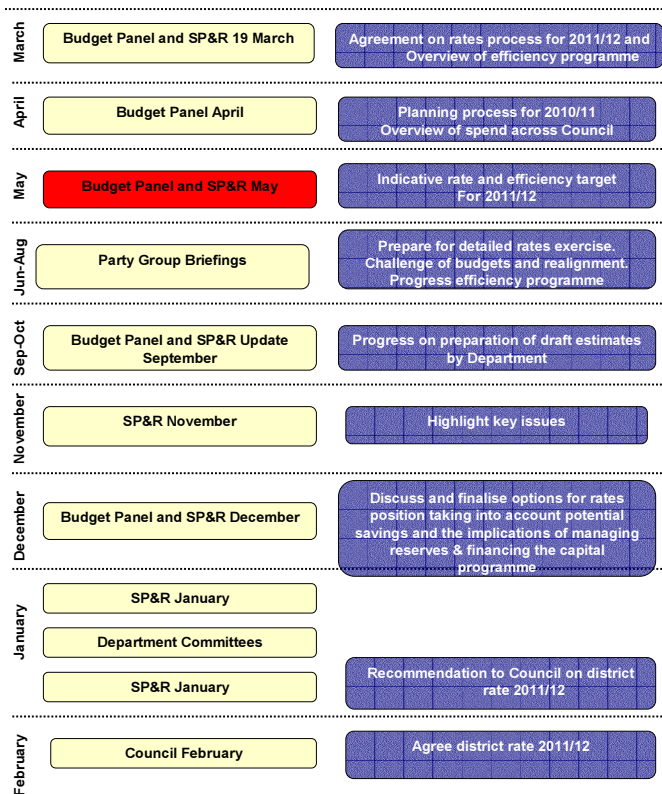
14 MAY 2010

Context

Members will recall that at the Budget and Transformation Panel and Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meetings in March 2010, it was agreed that the setting of an indicative rate target for 2011/12 would be discussed with the Budget Panel and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in May.

The diagram below shows where this step fits in with the overall process for setting the rate for 2011/12.

Proposed preparation process for 2011/12



Indicative Rate Target 2011/12

The purpose of setting an indicative rate target at this stage in the planning process is to provide a context within which officers can work up more detailed estimates which then allows them to identify in good time, for Members, the key issues which will need to be considered when setting the rate.

At this stage officers have considered the financial implications for the Council in 2011/12 at a very high level and **it is recommended that an indicative rate target for 2011/12 is established at 2.5%.**

This needs to take into account:

- Revenue expenditure: HM Treasury inflationary projections and potential pay awards
- Capital expenditure: Public Work Loans Board interest rate trends
- Income: Rate base trends and APP / EPP projections.
- Efficiency savings: these are estimated to be in the region of £1.7m for 2011/12.

The next stage in the process is therefore that officers will continue to work over the summer on building the draft estimates within this indicative target of 2.5% with particular attention being paid to:

- **Department estimates** - the impact of pay awards and changes to superannuation and NIC contributions.
- **Efficiency Savings** - delivery of an agreed efficiency programme for 2011/12 (see the next report).
- **Capital Programme**- the development of the future capital programme and how it will be financed.
- **Reserves Position** - to determine the potential impact of the reserves position on the rate.
- **Corporate Plan** - to assess the financial implications of the emerging corporate plan for 2011/12+
- **Financial Performance** - to assess the potential impact of financial performance in 2010/11 on 2011/12 estimates.

An update on progress will be brought to the Budget Panel and Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in September and Members will have the opportunity to further refine the indicative rate target, if required.

**BRIEFING ON EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME
BUDGET AND TRANSFORMATION PANEL
14 MAY 2010**

Context

Members will recall that at the Budget Panel and Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meetings in March 2010, it was agreed that further details on the council's efficiency programme would be provided in May.

The purpose of this report is to recommend an indicative efficiency target for 2011/12 and outline, for Members consideration, proposals as to how the target would be achieved within the already agreed efficiency work streams.

The report will also discuss the development of a programme which will enable further efficiencies to be delivered post 2011/12.

Proposed Efficiency Programme 2011/12

The table below summarises the proposed efficiency programme for 2011/12. As can be seen the recommended efficiency target is £1.7m. Each of the work streams is discussed in more detail below.

Efficiency Work Stream	Estimated Savings
Land and Assets	£200,000
Budgetary Challenge	£388,000
ICT	£195,000
Income Generation	£122,000
Procurement	£357,000
Service Review	£440,000
Total	£1,702,000

Land and Assets

The estimated level of savings is proposed to be delivered through an assessment of the current car parking arrangements in the context of the revised accommodation arrangements with the re-opening of the City Hall and the reduction of maintenance costs for the council's land bank.

Budgetary Challenge

One of the key strands of the efficiency programme is the challenge to the level of existing budgets where the expenditure is of a discretionary nature. A review of a number of budget headings of this type would indicate that £388,000 savings could be achieved. This will cover areas such as:

- The development of a centralised budget for advertising
- Office equipment and mobile phones
- Consultants
- Civic hospitality

ICT

There are two key strands in this efficiency work stream. These are:

- Making better use of our current ICT systems such as the finance system which is known as SAP.
- Finding more efficient ways to provide and maintain the infrastructure which is required to support ICT, for example, making better use of new technology to store data.

Income Generation

Three key areas of work are recommended for consideration within this work stream. These are:

- Review the potential for recovering a proportion of the costs of providing the bulky waste service through the introduction of a charge for the service;
- Review the current level of cemetery and crematorium charges;
- Review the charges for the use of council land to run events.

Procurement

It is anticipated that £357,000 of procurement savings can be achieved for 2011/12. This target is proposed to be met through the use of the following:

- Buying goods and services with other public bodies so that bigger discounts can be obtained
- Putting in place more central contracts
- Monitoring spend to ensure that departments are using the agreed suppliers to buy from
- E-auctions to let contracts

Specific procurement areas will include:

- Utilities
- Computers
- Catering
- Photography
- Advertising

Service Review

A major challenge for the organisation is to find ways to deliver better value for money services. Members have already made it clear that priority should be given to streamlining back office functions such as finance, HR, payroll, business support etc. It is recommended that work also includes how efficiency savings can be achieved in:

- (a) a review of working patterns in recycling centres;
- (b) a review of cost controls at the Zoo;
- (c) the removal of internal charges for support services such as facilities management and ISB so that budgets can be aligned better towards corporate priorities and improved service standards and VFM can be attained.

Efficiency Enablers

Members also will wish to consider work which is currently underway or is required to start soon which will help to ensure that the council will continue to deliver efficiency savings post 2011/12.

The Director of Property and Projects is currently developing an asset strategy which will include proposals as to how the council can procure assets more efficiently and make best use of its existing assets. An update report on asset realisation will be brought to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee this month and a full report on an overall Asset Management Plan, to include maintenance (both Planned and Response) and replacement funding, will be brought to Budget Panel and Committee later in the year.

As part of an overall maintenance plan the Property and Projects Department will also propose a review of Facilities Management to the Budget Panel when the details have been agreed.

One of the key strands of the efficiency programme is procurement. Currently, the council has a Procurement Unit which is advisory in nature. If the council is to deliver a programme of sustained procurement savings then the role of the Procurement Unit will need to be adapted to meet this challenge. It is recommended that the Director of Property and Projects brings back a proposal for a review of the Procurement Unit to the Budget Panel.

One of the key ways which best practice councils support Members to make evidence based decisions in relation to efficiency matters is through the comparison of the VFM provided by council services with the performance of other councils. It is therefore recommended that one of the key tasks of the new Efficiency Unit will be to work with services to develop a suite of VFM indicators, where they currently do not exist, and to identify benchmark partners so that performance comparisons can be provided.

The Head of Human Resources together with the Head of Finance and Performance are currently developing a programme of work relating to the people aspects of the efficiency programme. This will include reviewing areas such as more flexible working arrangements and employee costs (including vacancy control, overtime, and agency employees).

A more detailed report on this work will be brought to the Budget Panel and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Budget Panel propose to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee:

- an indicative efficiency target of £1.7m for 2011/12 and that more work is carried out during the summer to clarify the achievability of the target and the individual work streams which will make up the final target agreed as part of the rate setting process in the autumn. This will include further consideration and progress in the areas indicated above over the summer.
- the Director of Property and Projects brings a report to the Budget Panel on a proposal for a review of the Facilities Management Service which has responsibility for the maintenance of council assets.
- the Director of Property and Projects brings a report to the Budget Panel on a proposal for a review of the Procurement Unit.
- the Efficiency Unit works with services to develop a suite of VFM indicators, where they currently do not exist, and to identify benchmark partners so that performance comparisons can be provided.
- the Head of Human Resources / Head of Finance and Performance brings a report to the Budget Panel on the people aspects of the efficiency programme.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Big Lottery – Outcome of application for funding to deliver Community Planning projects in Northern Ireland
Date:	21 st May 2010
Reporting Officer:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Sharon McNicholl, Planning and Policy Manager, ext 6207 Barbary Cook, Policy and Business Development Manager, ext 3620

Relevant Background Information

On 22nd January, the Committee was advised that the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) had begun a tendering process for the delivery of three pilot projects on community planning in Northern Ireland, commencing with a pre-qualification stage to determine who should be invited to tender for the contract. The Committee agreed that the Council should submit an expression of interest and complete the pre-qualification application. As BIG's preferred method of delivery appeared to be a partnership approach with the voluntary and community sector (VCS), the Committee also agreed that this should be done in collaboration with the five Area Partnership Boards (APBs) and the not for profit organisation, Community Places. For the purposes of the funding application, this partnership was named the 'Belfast Community Planning Consortium' with Belfast City Council assigned as the lead partner.

On 19th March the Committee was informed that the Council's consortium application had been short-listed and that we had been invited to submit a tender for the pilot community planning project. At that meeting, an outline project proposal that would form the basis of the submission was approved by the Committee. Officers from the Council, in collaboration with our consortium partners, subsequently developed the funding application and also attended an interview with BIG as part of the evaluation process.

We have now received notification from BIG that the bid has been successful and that they intend to award one of the three pilots to Belfast.

Key Issues

The Pilot Project

As agreed by Committee on 19th March, the pilot project will focus on the single theme of "health" as this provides a manageable way to test processes and relationships whilst also securing deliverables for partners and ultimately the local community. The pilot project will build upon the Council's commitment to creating a healthier Belfast and will augment the work done to date within Council and with our partners to improve health and wellbeing. It will work closely with the new Belfast Health Development Unit (set up jointly between the Council, the Public Health Agency and the Health Trust) and comes at an opportune time to influence the further development of the new Unit's business plan and the development of a health and wellbeing plan for the City. At the same time it provides an opportunity to test in

practical ways the capacity and ability of the VCS to participate most effectively in community planning.

Key elements of the project plan include:

- An engagement programme
- A capacity building programme
- A planning integration exercise (and in collaboration with our health partners lead to the creation of a health and wellbeing plan for the city)
- Development of a model of community planning for replication.

The intended outcomes of the pilot are to:

- Develop a shared understanding of community planning, through testing and modelling community planning processes around the theme of health;
- Build capacity in local communities and among citizens to influence decision-making on service provision in the Council and other statutory agencies;
- Build upon and improve networks and strategic alliances;
- Deliver tangible results in the form of a plan to address health inequalities and specific changes to the service plans of key statutory agencies to improve delivery of services on the ground;
- Ensure learning is transferred to the wider development of a community planning framework for the city and regionally.

The pilot therefore offers an opportunity to test our emerging community planning processes. Building on existing and planned work in terms of community engagement and integrated planning, the pilot will provide a specific focus at a time of uncertainty regarding the future statutory model for community planning. The emphasis on the VCS will provide a valuable learning tool in terms of how we engage, support and involve these important sectors. Whilst the pilot will be working in collaboration with the Belfast Area Partnerships, the Council is mindful of the need to engage fully with the VCS and communities themselves. It is therefore intended that the pilot or other linked Council processes will provide opportunities for the VCS to be fully engaged. As mentioned above, ongoing evaluation and learning forms an integral element of the project with BIG also providing a separate support contract to capture learning and good practice.

Contract

BIG had indicated that the total contract value for all three community planning projects was £380,000 to £420,000. This equates to approximately £127,000 - £140,000 per area, with the final breakdown open to negotiation. At the time of writing, BIG has not yet confirmed the final contract value awarded to Belfast. However, the schedule of costs as outlined in our application was to the value of £139,000 plus VAT.

The contract will be for a maximum of 18 months, commencing ideally in May 2010 and ending in November 2011. A high level project plan is attached at appendix 1. Work has commenced in collaboration with our consortium partners to develop a detailed action plan to ensure delivery against the project.

Additional BIG contract information

The lead partners and council areas which were awarded the contracts for the two other community planning pilots are as follows:

- Derry City Council – Derry and Strabane District
- Rural Development Council – Fermanagh and Omagh District

At its meeting on 22nd January, the Committee was also informed that a separate but linked support contract to capture the learning and good practice from the pilots was also being

commissioned by BIG. Through these linked contracts, BIG aim to provide a model and a toolkit of good practice in community planning that will help ensure the genuine engagement of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in the new / emerging formal processes.

Central role of Elected Members

Members will play a central role in the success of any community planning pilot, with the SP&R Committee in particular having a pivotal role to play in the development of the community planning process. It is intended that engagement with Members will be a key part of the community planning pilot and the wider development of a community planning framework for the city. Key ways that this will be taken forward include:

Cross-Party Community Planning Reference Group

At its meeting on the 19th March, the SP&R Committee agreed to establish a cross-party 'Community Planning Reference Group' comprising of up to two elected Members from each Party. Whilst Committee agreed that the group should be established for the purposes of taking forward the pilot project, it also agreed that this group should act as a reference panel in the wider development of the Council's community planning framework and the associated work streams which need to be undertaken. At the first meeting of the group, an outline programme of work and terms of reference will be presented for consideration.

Transition Committee (Strategic Policy and Resources)

The BIG Lottery was keen for the pilot projects to enable meaningful collaboration between the proposed Statutory Transition Committees and various partners in the community, particularly the VCS. Our project proposal therefore included specific engagement with the Council's Transition Committee (i.e. Strategic Policy and Resources) in the form of at least two seminars over the period of the contract. The exact outworkings of these seminars will be developed over the course of the project and in addition, regular update reports on the BIG community planning pilot will also be brought to the Committee for information. At this stage the Committee is asked to agree to its involvement in a minimum of two seminars.

Elected Members and Party Briefings

Recognising the leading role of Elected Members, both as civic leaders and as local advocates, in our submission to BIG we recommended that Party briefings be organised to support the engagement, capacity building and collaborative working objectives of the pilot project. This builds on previous recommendations to Committee where it was agreed that Member workshops and /or party briefings be developed to support Members and the development of the community planning process. Within the pilot project it is proposed that the Party Briefings be held early in the project timetable, with perhaps review briefings held at appropriate intervals.

Regional Developments

The legislation which will underpin community planning is the Local Government Reorganisation Bill, which has yet to be released for consultation and no further official guidance has been received from the DoE since November on the issue of community planning. Nevertheless, the Council has made a commitment through the corporate plan to the creation of an effective community planning framework for Belfast in light of the benefits this is likely to bring in terms of more effective community engagement, more integrated planning and service delivery and improved collaboration between agencies to find the most effective and efficient solutions to issues across the city.

Resource Implications

Financial

None at present. The Council has already committed resources to the development of the Joint Belfast Health Development Unit. This Unit, together with other existing officers

responsible for supporting community planning within Council, and a cross-departmental officer working group which was already established to support the development of community planning, will contribute to the pilot project.. Given the uncertainties surrounding RPA and community planning, the BIG pilot will provide a fresh impetus and focus for community planning activity. Additional support costs for managing and coordinating the project will be met from within the BIG funding.

Human Resources

As previously agreed with Committee, the bid included the salary cost for a project co-ordinator. This fully funded post with no additional cost to the Council will be recruited on a fixed-term basis for the duration of the contract only.

Decisions required

The Committee is asked to:

- i. Note the above report and the project plan and proposal summary attached at appendix 1;
- ii. Agree to the Council entering into a contract with the BIG Lottery to deliver this pilot in conjunction with the consortium partners;
- iii. Approve the proposed Committee and Elected Member involvement as set out above and in particular to agree to engagement with the Committee and Party Groups as part of the pilot and development of the wider community planning framework;
- iv. Endorse the Council's continued commitment to the development of a community planning framework for the city.

Decision Tracking

The Director of Health and Environmental Services will bring progress reports back to the Committee as the project progresses.

Key to Abbreviations

APBs – Area Partnership Boards
BIG – Big Lottery Fund
VCS - Voluntary and Community Sector

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – BIG project proposal and project outline
Appendix 2 - **Background Information –Belfast Health Development Unit (BHDU)**

Belfast Community Planning Consortium

Big Lottery Fund Contract to deliver a community planning project in N.Ireland

Summary of Project Proposals and Project Plan

Project Proposal and Objectives

The Belfast Community Planning Consortium (BCPC) aims to carry out a community planning pilot which will:

- Develop a shared understanding of community planning, through testing and modelling community planning processes around the theme of health;
- Deliver tangible outputs and outcomes in the form of a plan to address health inequalities and specific changes to the service plans of key statutory agencies to improve delivery of services on the ground;
- Build the capacity of the voluntary and community sectors to exercise leadership in the community planning process
- Build capacity in local communities and empower communities to engage with and influence the development of community planning;
- Build upon and improve networks and strategic alliances;
- Create a productive relationship between the VCS and the Council's Statutory Transition Committee which builds trust, increases understanding of the role of the VCS in community planning and empowers the VCS to better engage in the process;
- Examine how the city's voluntary and community sectors can be effectively included as partners in the community planning process and examine how the community planning model can support more interagency planning and budget setting by statutory partners and the council at strategic, thematic and local area levels;
- Ensure learning is transferred to the wider development of a community planning framework for the city and regionally.

The objectives of the pilot reflect the requirements of the contract to empower communities to engage with and influence the development of community planning. The learning that we will develop through this pilot will help us evolve an effective model of community planning for Belfast, one that meets the needs of all the key partners with the aim of improving quality of life across the city.

Outline project plan

The BCPC has developed an outline project plan designed to deliver the pilot objectives. A summary of the key steps within the project plan is outlined below:

1. Establish Belfast CP Pilot steering group

2. Recruit Project Liaison officer

3. Establish evaluation and monitoring requirements

4. Carry out research

- Capacity scoping exercise describing how ready partners are to engage in community planning
- Technical guidance on best practice in community planning provided to consortium members and other key partners including councillors, provided by Community Places.
- A summary of existing citywide needs analyses (particularly in the field of health).

5. Training and capacity building

- Capacity-building and training on community planning, effective engagement and planning processes for consortium members and other key partners.

6. Develop & hold citywide engagement strategic, thematic and local levels

- Health and well-being is test theme for engagement.
- Confirm agreed principles for engagement
- Confirm arrangements needed by key partners at each level.
- Identify key stakeholders who will take part in engagement at each of the three levels.
- Identify engagement processes and outputs required.
- Identify engagement outputs required in order to contribute to planning cycles at strategic, thematic and service levels.
- Identify how data and priorities from each level will be drawn together and the decision-making process for prioritisation.

7. Develop supporting intelligence for CP

- Council to map existing health and well-being priorities at citywide, thematic and area levels.
- Map existing health and well-being service delivery (both of council and partners).
- Intelligence to contribute to engagement process and to planning decisions at strategic, thematic and local levels.
- Establish links/relationship with the Belfast Health Development Unit.

8. Develop statutory relationships

- Draw on intelligence assessment and agreed thematic strand to develop key relevant statutory partner map (with appropriate people at strategic, thematic and local levels).
- Establish links between the steering group and key statutory partners
- Hold briefings/relationship building.
- Seek their contribution to and commitment to engagement activities (with appropriate people at strategic, thematic and local levels).
- Seek commitment to integrate results in planning cycles.
- Agree monitoring and evaluation approaches.

9. Management and integration of engagement information

- Steering group and key partners to confirm appropriate engagement methodologies for each of the three strands of CP (strategic, thematic & local).
- Key strategic, thematic & local partners confirm engagement timetable/co-ordination.
- Agreement on engagement data collection and management.

10. Planning integration

- Develop linkages to political decision-making within Council
- Confirm how pilot will influence service business planning cycle.
- Confirm how pilot will influence statutory partners' planning cycle.
- Confirm how pilot will influence thematic planning cycle.
- Agree target outcomes and reporting/monitoring processes.

11. Communications plan

- Agree key messages, audiences, channels, etc.
- Methods for on-going contact with partners, feedback, etc.

12. Conference

- Steering group to confirm event management, format, content, etc.
- Steering group to confirm key speakers, workshops etc.
- Conference to provide space for dissemination of learning.

Background Information –Belfast Health Development Unit (BHDU)

Purpose

This paper provides an update on the establishment of a joint Belfast Health Development Unit supported by the Public Health Agency (PHA), the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) and Belfast City Council (BCC).

Background

In December 2008 the Minister for Health invited expressions of interest from district councils on the possibility of hosting joint working arrangements with the Public Health Agency in an effort to support council's in their future implementation of the power of well-being and community planning as well as developing strong inter-sectoral partnerships. As a result, the Belfast Health Development Unit (BHDU), launched on 23rd March 2010 is a visible and practical manifestation of joint working bringing together three sponsoring organisations (Belfast City Council, Belfast Health & Social Care Trust and the Public Health Agency) at strategic and operational levels. The strategic imperatives for the Unit will be the development of a single health partnership and an integrated health and wellbeing plan for the city. Partners from health, education, housing, regeneration and the community and voluntary sector (VCS) are all key stakeholders in the developing unit and in ensuring that outcome focused, integrated planning and delivery becomes a reality for Belfast.

The BHDU aims to improve the health and well-being and quality of life of citizens in Belfast and specifically reduce inequalities between those that live in deprived areas of the city and those that live in the most affluent neighbourhoods.

The joint working arrangements will inform the emerging community planning process, enabling the co-location of staff from these organisations and other key players to drive forward an agreed agenda to tackle inequalities in health and well-being in Belfast.

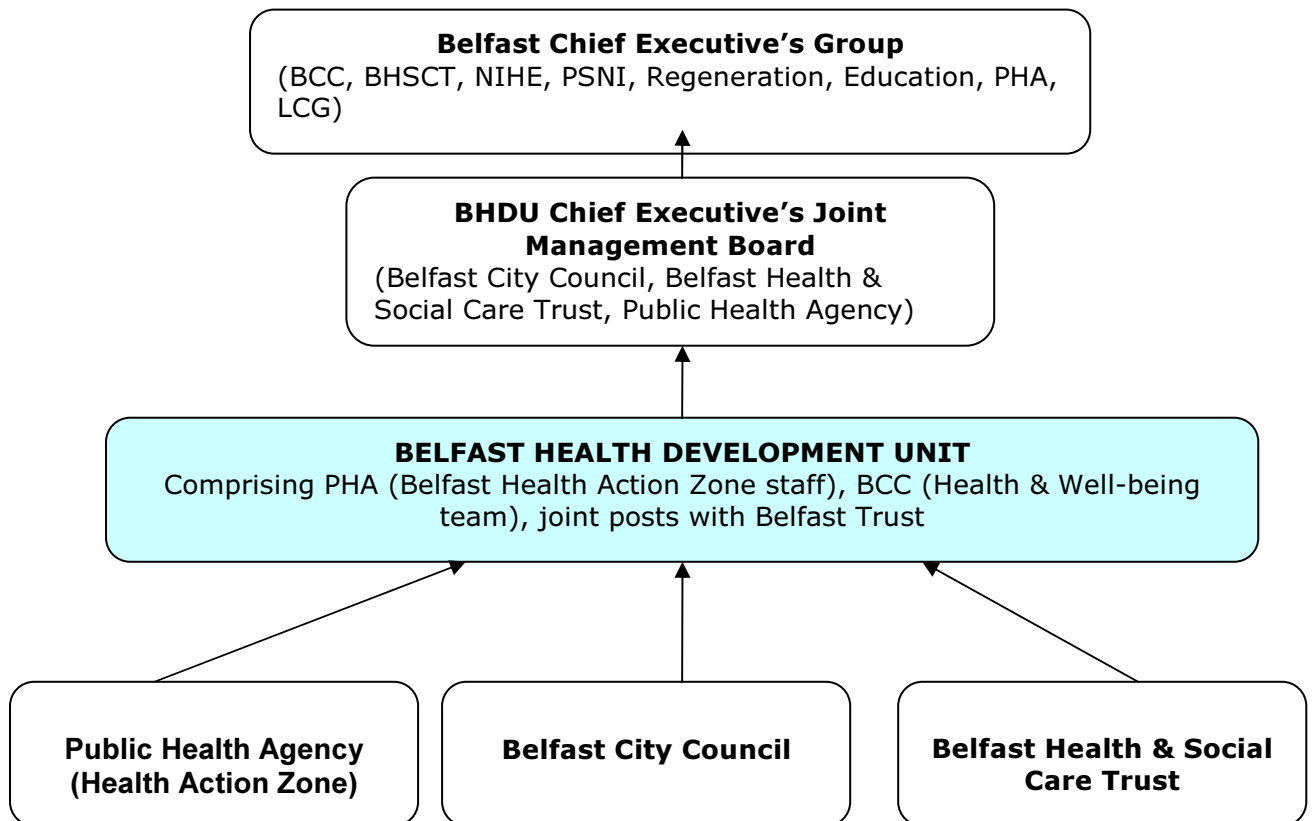
Establishment of the BHDU

The Unit aims to ensure that the strengths and achievements of existing partnerships and teams are consolidated and built upon and that resources are targeted towards agreed priorities for the city. The unit will be staffed initially by a number of posts, based in the Lanyon Building (BCC). Belfast Health Action Zone staff and commitments in terms of programmes of work have been fully incorporated within the BHDU (through the Public Health Agency) as well as staff from the Council's Health & Well-being Team and those supporting the Belfast Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership and 3 new jointly funded posts by the Public Health Agency (PHA), Belfast City Council (BCC) and Health & Social Care Trust (BHSCT). It is also intended that Belfast Healthy Cities will align with the Unit at some point in the near future.

Another important step will be to develop a single health partnership for the City as soon as possible. This will be vital to the success of the Unit, particularly in delivering a 'health in all policies' approach and to bring in other agencies such as NIHE, Education etc. and effective representation from the community and voluntary sector. It is also essential to align programmes of work with the Local Commissioning Plan. This BIG Lottery proposal provides the opportunity to use a

community planning approach and to ensure effective community engagement in the development of a single health partnership and the creation of an integrated health and wellbeing plan for the city. This is an ambitious task and the proposal creates the impetus and commitment from the Consortium to take this forward. It has been noted that involvement of the VCS within this new approach has been limited to date and the connection with the VCS, in addition to the statutory sector is critical for the future development of a successful city-wide single health partnership and integrated planning process.

Structure & Governance of the BHDU



Key Issues for the Belfast Health Development Unit 2010/11

The BHDU is at an early stage of development. In addition to developing an effective team, the following key issues are central to establishing and guiding the work of the Unit:

- Developing effective mechanisms to engage and maintain relationships with key stakeholders, including Belfast Healthy Cities, the education sector, other government departments and the community & voluntary sector. This has been identified as a critical success factor for the future of the BHDU. The BHDU has recognised the opportunity provided by this BIG Lottery proposal to focus effort, plans and potential resource to take forward additional actions at this early stage of its own development which will develop and embed effective engagement mechanisms with the community and voluntary sector. This will result in a more meaningful health and well-being plan for the city and enable the BHDU to build more effective working relationships with all key stakeholders.
- Rationalising, co-ordinating and integrating planning and resources to improve health and well-being in Belfast around priority themes. The BHDU recognises that this depends on building effective engagement and working relationships with all sectors including the community and voluntary sector.

- Identifying opportunities to secure resources to deliver new programmes of work
- Building an evidence base and reputation to influence the wider health agenda
- Demonstrating success / defining key outcomes

Initial Priorities for the Unit 2010/11

Pending the development of a single health & wellbeing partnership for the city, initial discussions between the PHA, BCC and BHSCT have concluded that the following themes would serve as a starting point for the *Health Development Unit's* draft business plan 2010/11.

1. **Children and Young Peoples' Outcomes:** including Early Years Intervention Programmes, Obesity, Alcohol Misuse and HAZ's Integrated Services for Children and Young People in local areas. This would in turn relate to BCC's strategy on Children and Young People and to other key goals of the PHA and BHSCT, such as, reducing teenage pregnancy and improving sexual health.
2. **Improving Outcomes to Disadvantaged Neighbourhoods** (including links between regeneration and health). This will relate to joint interventions at a local level, linking to the work of Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships, the Strategic Regeneration Frameworks (and the indicators that are currently being developed on local regeneration and health). There is considerable potential to bring the added strengths of City Council across parks and leisure, good relations, community development and local area working, as well as capital and investment strategies of all partners.
3. **Older People** and alignment with the Belfast Healthy Ageing Partnership on older people. This is already a priority of both BCC and the PHA and this work would seek to build synergy and maximise benefits for older people.
4. **Physical Activity** particularly related to children and young people, policy development, older people and regeneration. It also relates to the corporate agendas of BCC and the PHA. The Council's strategies for parks & leisure, capital works and community support offer potential for bringing considerable added value.
5. **Black and Minority Ethnic Groups:** City Council has a multi-agency partnership aimed at developing good relations and service provision to this grouping and is also undertaking some specific work at a European level on health needs within this group. This aligns with the PHA commitment to address inequalities amongst Black and Minority Ethnic Groups. This issue is also on the agenda of most of the key statutory organisations.
6. **Policy Development** – 'health and health in all policies'. The Unit needs to have a strategic focus, influencing how agencies operate and plan in order to create strategic alignment of agendas. This is a key goal of WHO Phase V programme for Healthy Cities who will have a leading role in this area and could make a contribution to this goal. Healthy Cities has also carried out research into capacity building for agencies and elected representatives and have developed a programme to take this work forward. There is potential for this agenda to be aligned with / included in the new Unit.

These six themes are proposed as a starting point for development. Engagement with the VCS and other key stakeholders is essential to shape the development of the initial work priorities; to inform the development of a City-wide health plan and to create more effective engagement mechanisms and working relationships to establish an effective single health partnership for city which will make a real difference in improving quality of life in the city.

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Land Contamination, Gasworks Estate
Date:	21 May 2010
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects, Ext. 6217
Contact Officer:	

Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that following closure of gas production in the City a major land remediation project of the Gasworks site was undertaken by Council in mid-1990's following initial decommissioning and removal of the gas production infrastructure by Department of Economic Development. Council's remediation involved the removal of a surface layer of contaminated material to be replaced with "clean" material. Council appointed Parkman as consultants to oversee this land remediation project to meet the required standard prescribed by Department of Environment (Guidance on the Assessment and Redevelopment of Contaminated Land) that would permit future commercial development on the former Gasworks site.

Following remediation and provision of road and service infrastructure by Council various plots were leased to the private sector for development. Appropriate development was subsequently undertaken in accordance with legal agreements which required the developer to secure appropriate planning and all other relevant statutory consents and approvals.

To date in excess of £150 million of private sector investment has been secured in development of the former Gasworks site. The last development to be completed (Ormeau Gasworks Ltd – Plot 6) received its planning consent in April 2006.

A number of subsequent planning applications in respect of the former Gasworks site made by Helm Housing (formerly BIH Housing Association Ltd) in September 2007 to extend an existing social housing scheme and Cusp Ltd for a new 169-bed hotel made in March 2008 have been severely delayed in the planning system as a result of intervention by Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) who are seeking clarification and assurances on environmental issues.

In particular NIEA are concerned with potential negative environmental effects of development upon a naturally occurring aquifer in bedrock located beneath the Gasworks site. It is understood that NIEA require detailed reports on identification, monitoring and management of potential pollution risks to this aquifer associated with construction/use of the respective developments.

The backdrop to NIEA's particular concerns are rooted in a recent European Directive on Environmental Liability and impending implementation of Part III of the Waste & Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 which focus on prevention and remediation of environmental damage arising from the development of brownfield sites.

Members are reminded of the ongoing work to bring forward development of the Gasworks Northern Fringe and in this regard are presently seeking to secure outline planning permission. Planning Service require a detailed report on land contamination to be submitted as part of this outline application which has been undertaken.

Given the historical use of the Gasworks site the Council agreed to renewal of the environmental insurance policy (including the majority of the Northern Fringe lands) at its meeting of 17th January 2007 which is aimed at protecting Council should any subsequent claims arise from the previous contaminated condition of the remediated land.

However, given the NIEA recent interventions and the possibility they could include the Gasworks as a special site over which they take control if legislation is in place the Council's Environmental Protection Unit (EPU) have recommended that professional environmental advice is sought by Council in respect of ownership of the Gasworks as a brownfield development site. This work will identify a strategy for Council's current environmental management and future development of the site.

Key Issues

- Part III of the Waste & Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 has yet to come into force in the Province but will be retrospective in its application. This is already impacting on current planning applications awaiting a decision and could have consequences for development already completed in the Gasworks Estate.
- The European Directive on Environmental Liability came into force in Northern Ireland in July 2009 which basically implements the "polluter pays principle" Subsequent legal case law in England tends to supports this assertion which could leave the Council liable to legal challenge in relation to statutory obligations arising from ownership and development of the Gasworks site.
- An underground body of water (aquifer) is contained in the Sherwood sandstone beneath the Gasworks site. This forms part of a much larger aquifer known as the Lagan Valley aquifer stretching from Lisburn to Belfast Lough. This aquifer is utilised as a naturally occurring sustainable supply of drinking water in, for example, Clare House. Potential contamination of this aquifer from the Gasworks site is of primary concern to NIEA when considering the current planning applications from Helm Housing and Cusp Ltd.
- The Council in 2006 endorsed Cusp's proposal to develop a second hotel within the Gasworks Estate. Council officers have met with NIEA, on behalf of Cusp Ltd, on a number of occasions in an attempt to progress this planning application towards a successful outcome.
- Helm's predicament of having already proceeded to construct a second phase of public sector sheltered dwelling scheme consisting of 14 new apartments have failed to secure the necessary planning permission which has resulted in this completed development remaining unoccupied. Part of the development is constructed on the former Gasworks land and acquired from Council in 2002.
- NIEA advise the Planning Service in relation to environmental issues arising from proposed development and whilst they have not yet made formal

recommendations on the Cusp and Helm Housing applications they have indicated that based on information, or perceived lack of information, provided thus far that they would recommend refusal of both schemes.

- Council's EPU have responsibility for human health issues and are statutory consultees in the planning process. In this regard EPU would recommend approval of both the Cusp Ltd and Helm Housing applications.
- RPA Consultants have undertaken a recent borehole survey on the Gasworks Northern Fringe and have provided Council with a land contamination report to be submitted as part of Council's outline planning application.
- In order that Council continue to manage and secure appropriate development of the Gasworks site a three stage approach is initially proposed by EPU as follows:
 1. To produce a Preliminary Risk Assessment inline with UK policy for the management of brownfield sites.
 2. To produce a legal review and opinion on the liabilities associated with the Gasworks site.
 3. To produce a strategy for the management and future development of the Gasworks site.
- In line with Council's Procurement Policy, tenders will be invited from suitably qualified professionally consultants with relative experience in the management and development of brownfield sites.

Resource Implications

Financial

It is estimated that the cost for the initial three phases of the work identified by EPU will be between £20-£30k and provision will be made from the Capital Programme approval for the Northern Fringe.

Council needs to be aware of liabilities in addressing obligations arising under the legislation governing ownership and development of brownfield sites, such as the Gasworks site.

Securing the financial potential of the Gasworks Northern Fringe is dependant on Planning Service granting the necessary planning permissions.

Human Resources

There are no additional human resource implications for Council over those already committed to working on this issue.

Asset and Other Implications

Correct identification and management of the risks associated with the statutory requirements arising from brownfield ownership and development is essential to maintain the development potential of the Gasworks Estate.

Realisation of the latent development potential of the Gasworks Northern Fringe will depend upon securing appropriate planning permissions.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee agree to approve the commencement of a procurement exercise and that delegated authority is given to the Director of Property and Projects to award the contract in line with the evaluation criteria.

Decision Tracking

N/A

Key to Abbreviations

NIEA – Northern Ireland Environment Agency EPU – Environmental Protection Unit

Documents Attached

None

**Belfast City Council**

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Update on Asset Realisation
Date:	21 May 2010
Reporting Officer:	Mr Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects (ext. 6217)
Contact Officer:	Mrs Cathy Reynolds, Estates Manager (ext. 3493)

Relevant Background Information

Asset realisation is a key plank of both the City Leadership Place Shaping agenda and also the Council's Efficiency Agenda.

Members will recall that a paper was taken to Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 20 November 2009 on the City Investment Framework which incorporated asset disposals (copy enclosed at Appendix 1).

At that meeting it was highlighted that the current economic climate is not favourable to asset disposals given the lack of market demand, availability of finance & the resultant marked decline in market values. However, it was agreed that a cross departmental Assets Realisation Project Group be established to undertake appraisal and assessment of certain land and property assets, with a view to having them 'market ready' and to bring forward for disposal and/or development when the market improves or if any advantageous proposals are presented to the Council in the interim.

It was recognised that there are a number of issues that slow down any disposal or development options including planning, legal & title restrictions, environmental and contamination issues, and co dependencies with other agencies and external stakeholders. By way of examples, obtaining planning approval is the major hurdle in completing the Loughside disposal; it was also the major issue in the previously proposed redevelopment and disposal of the former Ravenhill Road PC's and rest garden site; and planning approval was required for both the demolition and redevelopment of the former Templemore Avenue PC's (located in an Area of Townscape Character) which delayed the site coming to the market. Resolving title issues (albeit in relation to the adjoining land primarily) at Primrose Street former civic amenity site has also delayed completion, whilst overcoming contamination & environmental constraints is a major issue of many sites, including the Gasworks Northern Fringe.

The above are only some examples but every site has its own particular issues and problems.

Key Issues

- A cross departmental Asset Realisation Project Group has been established comprising officers from Property & Projects, Legal Services, Health & Environmental Services, Development & the Parks & Leisure departments.
- The group are of the view that in terms of moving forward & progressing planning, legal, environmental and other issues, or progressing with disposal, that prioritisation should be given to those assets that are already currently surplus to Council requirements or, in certain instances, where interest has been expressed by third parties in acquiring or developing. These are listed in Table 1 below. In the case of the other assets previously identified (listed in Table 2 below), these are still being progressed but as there are various operational & other issues to be addressed in the first instance, it is considered prudent to take a phased approach. Thirdly, Table 3 provides a short list of under-utilised assets which could potentially be developed to the benefit of the wider community and the city.
- Planning assessments are to be undertaken in respect of many of these sites to ascertain future use options, optimal development & likelihood of obtaining approval in the context of planning policy, highway & other constraints. A procurement process has commenced to obtain planning consultants to advise on this. Planning advice has already been obtained in respect of certain assets.
- A process has been put in place to check & resolve as far as possible, title issues, restrictions, grant aid clawback etc.
- A process has also been put in place to ascertain contamination & environmental issues associated with each of these sites. Current environmental legislation could be a very significant constraint in future development/disposal options. A separate report is being brought to this Committee in relation to the Gasworks site and seeking approval to a tendering exercise for professional environmental advice in terms of a risk assessment, legal review and opinion on liabilities and a strategy for the management and future development of this site.
- A longer term accommodation strategy is being considered simultaneously and this may influence future development options in respect of certain assets. A separate report will be brought back to Committee on this.
- Whilst capital receipts through asset disposals has been identified as a key source of funding for the capital programme, city investment framework and other Council priorities, it must be highlighted that in the current economic climate caution should be taken in deciding to dispose of the Council's assets, and the timing of any such disposals. In terms of borrowing, there is limited finance available for purchasers which is reflected in the low levels of demand and significantly reduced open market values. The capital return from any disposal is obviously a key consideration although associated running costs and any contribution to wider corporate and service objectives also needs to be considered.

TABLE 1: Phase 1 Assets for Realisation

Asset	Current Position
Beechmount	Price agreed with Department of Education, final negotiations taking place as part of conveyancing process in relation to the issue of continued public access to facilities on the site.

<p>Loughside</p>	<p>Disposal subject to planning approval; planning application submitted. Consultations ongoing.</p>
<p>Glen Road (Adj St Teresa's GAC)</p>	<p>Disposal completed. Capital receipt of £750,000 received.</p>
<p>Glen Road (Large site)</p>	<p>Forms part of a larger site (in 3 separate ownerships inc BCC land) designated in dBMAP as requiring a Concept Statement to facilitate the comprehensive development of total combined lands with a minimum of 240 social housings units and transport assessment to be agreed with Roads Service. Fold & Oaklee Housing Associations were nominated by NIHE as social housing providers. However, the disposal of this site was delayed primarily to issues surrounding proposed delivery vehicle and DSD guidance on EU Procurement Regulations which precluded the Design & Build route that NIHE and the Housing Associations had proposed. There were also issues with access and roads infrastructure. LPS had previously valued the Council's land but have to re-value following details of the revised scheme which is currently being progressed by architects on behalf of the Housing Associations/NIHE. A further report will be taken back to Committee in the near future with detailed terms of disposal.</p>
<p>Colin Glen</p>	<p>Previous Committee approval in principle to dispose to Clanmil Housing Association (nominated by NIHE to develop for social housing purposes) but progress by Clanmil has been very slow to date, which was, in part, due to changes in EU procurement process. Clanmil have however indicated that they are to submit a planning application in July, which should enable valuation to be agreed upon. Discussions remain ongoing with Clanmil with a view to progressing this sale.</p>
<p>Primrose Street former Civic Amenity Site</p>	<p>Following extensive marketing this property was agreed for sale on basis of Council's site and the adjoining area of land, owned by the Pigeon Club, being disposed of simultaneously. However, there were legal issues (including restrictions on title) with the Pigeon Club land which are being resolved by the Pigeon Club solicitors but this has delayed completion.</p>

<p>Seapark former Civic Amenity Site</p>	<p>Following extensive marketing this site was agreed for sale in June 2009. However, the purchaser has now made the completion of the sale conditional upon the sale of another property and progress has therefore been slow. Every effort is being made to complete the sale and it remains on the market. In addition mapping and title issues have had to be resolved.</p>
<p>Templemore Avenue former PC's site</p>	<p>Planning approval was obtained for 6 no houses at this site and it is currently on the open market for sale. However, any interest in this site has, to date, been at significantly less than the asking price. Habitat for Humanity has expressed an interest in the site and are to make a formal offer which will be reported to Committee in due course.</p>
<p>Land at North Foreshore</p>	<p>Potential disposal of land to Arc 21 for an MBT facility is dependent upon outcome of Arc 21 procurement process and site selection by the preferred bidder.</p>
<p>Gasworks Northern Fringe</p>	<p>Masterplanning process underway with a view to submitting an outline planning application. However land contamination issues and clarification on liabilities have to be resolved in the first instance; and there is a separate paper being presented to this Committee on this matter.</p>
<p>Maysfield</p>	<p>Planned demolition of this building was put on hold due to planning advice which highlighted that retention of the existing structure may protect future development potential, as existing use and vehicular access are factors that Planning Service <i>may</i> consider. Further engagement with Planning Service and Roads Service is however to be undertaken to secure their support in principle for redevelopment that would permit demolition but not impact on development potential. A planning assessment is being obtained to assess the optimal development potential; and roads/infrastructure, title & health & environmental issues (including impact of the COMAH regulations) are currently being considered. A more comprehensive report will be brought back to Committee in the near future with detail on these issues and options for disposal /redevelopment of this site, either on its own or in conjunction with adjoining landowners.</p>

<p>Grove Former Leisure Centre</p>	<p>Demolition and associated costs are being assessed. A planning assessment is being obtained to assess development potential; and roads/infrastructure, title & health & environmental issues are currently being considered. A more comprehensive report will be brought back to Committee in the near future with detail on these issues and options.</p>
<p>Ravenhill Road (former PC's & rest garden</p>	<p>This site was previously marketed by way of a Development Brief and a developer appointed. However due to difficulties in obtaining planning and problems with obtaining funding this did not proceed. Discussions are currently underway with Planning Service in terms of these planning issues; and a planning assessment is being obtained to assess development potential; and roads/infrastructure, title & health & environmental issues are also currently being considered.</p>
<p>Duncrue former car compound site & adj. option site.</p>	<p>Planning issues, legal, title and health & environmental issues are all currently being considered, as well as an assessment of means of disposal (capital premium v rental income as per remainder of Duncrue Industrial Estate).</p>
<p>Shore Road (adj Whitewell Tabernacle Church)</p>	<p>A planning assessment is being obtained to assess development potential; and roads/infrastructure, title & environmental issues are also currently being considered.</p>
<p>Clara Street former Civic Amenity Site</p>	<p>Recently vacated by Health & Environmental Services department. Planning issues, legal, title and health & environmental issues are all currently being considered,</p>
<p>Boucher Road former Civic Amenity Site</p>	<p>Planning application previously submitted with a view to marketing by way of a long lease with reviewable ground rent (in line with the remainder of Balmoral Industrial Estate). Difficulties however with planning still to be resolved as well as legal, title and health & environmental issues all currently being considered,</p>
<p>Cathedral Gardens</p>	<p>Operational asset held by Parks & Leisure department as a city centre park area. Previously unable to agree terms with UUU re appropriate redevelopment of this site. Parks & Leisure and the Property & Projects departments are undertaking an assessment</p>

<p>Old Zoo Antrim Road</p>	<p>of options regarding the future use and/or redevelopment of this site taking into account its current use. A report will be taken to the Parks & Leisure Committee in the first instance with options as to future use/retention or redevelopment.</p> <p>Parks & Leisure and the Property & Projects departments have commenced an assessment of options regarding the future use and/or redevelopment of this site, also taking into account the ongoing feasibility study of Floral Hall. Planning issues, legal, title, roads and health & environmental issues are all being considered.</p>
<p>Upper Whiterock Road/Ballygomartin Road</p>	<p>Issues regarding title and grant aid clawback have delayed the planning assessment which had been commissioned for this site. It is hoped that these legal issues will be resolved in the near future to allow the planning assessment to proceed.</p>

TABLE 2: Phase 2 Assets for Realisation

Asset	Current Position
<p>Stranmillis Car Park</p>	<p>The outcome of the dBMAP enquiry is awaited (the Council objected to its designation as public open space as part of the Lagan Valley Regional Park). Pending this, investigations are underway to ascertain use as a short stay car park with limited waiting time, for e.g. as a pay and display operated by a commercial car park operator or with limited waiting. This will be reported to Parks & Leisure Committee in first instance. Longer term options will be assessed in light of the outcome of the dBMAP enquiry.</p>
<p>Ormeau Avenue Car Park</p>	<p>Impact of proposed road scheme awaited. Legal, title and health & environmental issues will be ascertained in interim.</p>
<p>Dunbar Link Depot</p>	<p>Operational asset. Alternative re-provision to be considered, but also awaiting outcome of negotiations between potential developer and NIE (adjoining landowner) to ascertain if NIE proposing to relocate; and further awaiting details of transfer of functions from Roads Service in terms of the car park located to front of the site.</p>
<p>Seymour House & ISB building Gloucester Street</p>	<p>Staff in Seymour House have largely been relocated, and both buildings are being considered as part of a longer term accommodation strategy which is underway.</p>

McClure Street Open Space	<p>A report will be brought back to Committee in due course.</p> <p>Longer term options will be assessed in light of the outcome of the dBMAP enquiry. Legal, title and health & environmental issues will be ascertained in interim.</p>

TABLE 3: Underutilised Assets with potential for wider benefits:

Asset	Current Position
Land at Whiterock Leisure Centre	This has been identified as having potential for a range of Parks and Leisure uses as well as potentially some commercial development. A range of issues are being addressed including the existing lease arrangements on part of the site and the extent of land contamination. A planning assessment will be required following resolution of these potentially limiting factors.
Wilmont House	A 'Listed Building' for which a draft Development Brief has been prepared and investigations are underway regarding relaxation of title constraints. The existing title limits use of the building to uses which bring benefit to the citizens of Belfast. Title also places a bar on the sale of alcohol.
Floral Hall	Feasibility Study underway to ascertain physical potential of the building and consider appropriate and sustainable end use.

Resource Implications

Financial: Capital receipts through asset disposals has been identified as a key source of funding for the capital programme, city investment framework and other Council priorities. However, in the current economic climate caution must be taken in deciding to dispose of the Council's assets, and the timing of any such disposals. In terms of borrowing, there is limited finance available for purchasers which is reflected in the low levels of demand and significantly reduced open market values. The capital return from any disposal is obviously a key consideration although associated running costs and any contribution to wider corporate and service objectives also need to be considered.

Human Resources: Cross departmental staff resource, primarily from Property & Projects department to progress the disposal or redevelopment options.

Asset & Other Implications: Consideration of the most appropriate disposal and/or redevelopment options for surplus Council assets accords with effective asset management.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of this report and further note that more detailed reports will be brought back on an individual basis following the completion of the various planning and options appraisals in respect of the assets as listed.

Decision Tracking

Director of Property & Resources to ensure that the issues highlighted above are progressed in a timely manner with regular updates reported to Committee.
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Key to Abbreviations

None



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Update on City Investment Framework (incorporating the Capital Programme, City Investment Strategy and update on assets)
Date:	20 November 2009
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement, Ext: 6217
Contact Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement, Ext: 6217

Purpose

Members will recall that a paper was taken to the September meeting of the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on the proposed development of an overall City Investment Framework within the context of what investment the Council could currently support given the existing budget, people and political constraints.

At this meeting it was agreed that the Director of Improvement would bring an update report back to Committee in November. The purpose of this report is to present –

1. a first cut of a prioritised Capital Programme for political discussion and direction which will need, in due course, to be subject to affordability considerations
2. seek approval to explore options for how the ongoing maintenance backlog is dealt with in the council
3. an update on the current position with regard to the City Investment Strategy
4. an update on sources of funding for investment (loans, grants and alternative sources of financing) which will be further explored in a Capital Financing Strategy being prepared for December.

Members will acknowledge that these are serious and complicated issues for the Council and will involve some difficult decisions over the coming months.

Background

Why Belfast needs a City Investment Framework

Belfast City Council has repeatedly stated its ambitions to take a leadership role in the city to help improve the quality of life of its citizens through place shaping and a number of other measures which are set out in our Corporate Plan 2008/11. The physical aspects of place shaping are contained in some of the projects within the council's Capital Programme; the commitments by the council to a City Investment Strategy; the emerging priorities from the North, South, East, West debates and the various discussions ongoing with other agencies both within, and outside of, the ongoing RPA discussions relating to assets and projects.

As Members are aware however, resources, particularly money, are in short supply and this situation is unlikely to ease over the next few years. This situation is also likely to be further compounded over the coming years as public sector spending is further squeezed at a time when the Council will be assuming wider roles and responsibilities under the RPA.

This financial situation is no different to many Cities in Great Britain where as a result government is encouraging Council's to take a more proactive approach to working with the private sector and taking on more risk.

In addition as a result of the departmental shake-up resulting from the RPA there have been calls for various delivery vehicles to be set up outside the role of the Council with responsibility for development and regeneration. In this situation it is important that Members reflecting on their political mandate set out a clear agenda for the investment in the City that others can buy into so that Belfast optimises all potential resources and sets clear focus and goals against which delivery can be targeted.

Key Issues

1. Update on Capital Programme and first draft of prioritised Capital Programme matrix

Under the Standing Orders, the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee has full responsibility for the Capital Programme and has a key role to play in challenging, improving and prioritising capital projects. The council's Capital Programme is basically made up of three types of projects –

1. basic facility replacement to enable service delivery e.g. depots or health & safety
2. people based facilities e.g. centres, pitches and alleygates
3. investment schemes e.g. Gasworks, North Foreshore, demolition of Grove, Maysfield

In addition planned maintenance within the Council is difficult to deliver because of the way maintenance budgets are structured which leads to the capital programme requiring a significant number of schemes which are enhancement works to existing facilities.

As it currently stands the Capital Programme has 150 projects, all of which require financing which will include rate financed loans. 57 of these projects are already committed which will require financing of up to £56million. In addition to this there are additional 36 uncommitted projects which, if they all went ahead, could potentially require a further £70m-£100m of expenditure. Some of these uncommitted projects can make strong business cases e.g. a heat recovery proposal on the North Foreshore with a short payback period; Woodvale and Dunville Parks which have a large percentage of grant funding or alley gates which are socially and politically viewed as value for money.

However as Members are aware our affordability limit in terms of borrowing as deemed by Financial Services is £45m. Therefore there is already an £11m shortfall on committed projects under the capital programme and this is before any of the uncommitted projects are taken into consideration. The financing of the Capital Programme therefore needs to be fully explored and it is planned to provide a paper on a Capital Strategy for the meeting in December.

At the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 18th September it was agreed that officers would make a first cut at prioritising the uncommitted projects in the Capital Programme for 2010-2011. Members are asked to note that the prioritisation exercise looked at all the uncommitted projects collectively. A prioritisation matrix and assessment criteria was developed (attached at Appendix 1) which prioritised and weighted projects in terms of –

- political/social need
- strategic fit with council objectives
- legislative compliance
- wholelife costs
- funding sources
- investment return
- reputational risk

This prioritisation exercise has now been carried on all the uncommitted projects in the capital programme. Using this methodology the top 14 'priority' schemes have emerged. These are listed below for the attention of Members. This table also shows the approx. cumulative costs of these schemes (in total over £35,000,000m). Members are asked to note that in accordance with the Gates process (which looks at the feasibility of an individual project) all these projects, if they do proceed, will still be subject to an

economic appraisal and further consideration to the projects would have to be given at that stage.

Table 1 – First cut of prioritised capital programme

Weighting	25	20	10	10	20	10	5				
Project Name	Strategic Fit	Legislative Compliance	Whole Life Cost	External Funding	Political / Social Need	Investment	Reputational Risk of not proceeding	Weighted Score	Gross Cost	Net Cost	Cumulative Cost
Alleygates Phase 2	4	1	3	2	4	1	2	270	500,000	500000	£500,000
Dunville Park Refurbishment	3	1	2	2	4	1	3	240	2,000,000	1000000	£1,500,000
Woodvale Park Refurb	3	1	2	2	4	1	3	240	2,000,000	1000000	£2,500,000
Woodlands Park Pitch	2	1	3	4	3	3	2	240	1,500,000	0	£2,500,000
Development of New Recycling Centre (Springfield Rd)	3	3	2	1	2	1	2	225	2,900,000	2900000	£5,400,000
Waterworks/Westland - Playing Field and MUGA	2	1	4	1	3	3	2	220	375,000	375000	£5,775,000
Northlink Playing Fields	3	1	2	3	2	1	1	200	2,375,000	400000	£6,175,000
Cavehill Path Restoration - Phase 2	1	3	4	2	2	1	2	205	400,000	200000	£6,375,000
Gasworks Northern Fringe - Site Development	3	1	2	1	2	4	1	210	1,675,000	1675000	£8,050,000
Northforeshore Business Park Infrastructure	4	1	1	1	1	4	1	205	28,860,000	24497500	£32,547,500
10 New 3G Pitches	2	1	3	3	2	3	1	205	8,700,000	3180000	£35,727,500
Clement Wilson Bridge - Replacement	1	3	4	1	2	1	2	195	200,000	180000	£35,907,500

As can be seen from the table above the first cut at prioritising the Capital Programme has identified projects which are closely in keeping with the Members priorities for the city – creating a cleaner, greener and safer city.

Further detail on the remaining uncommitted projects and how they scored in the prioritisation exercise is attached at Appendix 2.

In order to prioritise the use of officer time, Members are requested to confirm at this stage whether these are the schemes on which more detailed economic appraisals should be developed. Members are also asked to consider if they are satisfied with the ranking of these schemes as actual delivery will be subject to the affordability limits Members set through the rates and as previously stated, such proposals will also need to be considered in light of an affordable and sustainable Capital Financing Strategy which

is currently being developed.

2. Maintenance Issues

One of the key issues that kept arising during this prioritisation exercise and the discussions regarding this is the cost of maintaining existing council assets. Many of the council's assets are ageing and so are incurring major ongoing maintenance costs. This has the potential to be a massive capital liability for the Council e.g. the leisure centres and the parks estate. This has also highlighted the need to ensure that 'whole life' costs are considered from the outset for any capital projects moving forwards.

Currently departments are responsible for holding their own maintenance budgets and allocating this towards projects. As a result the Council's maintenance programme has tended to be carried out on an ad-hoc, reactive basis and not considered strategically. The need to move away from this towards a more planned maintenance framework has been recognised in order to ensure that the Council's buildings are fit for purpose and that maintenance is carried out in a value for money, efficient and effective way.

Members are aware that an Asset Management Strategy is currently being developed and one of the options that is being considered in this is how the Council might move towards a planned maintenance programme. In the interim it is important that officers explore further the options for how maintenance budgets are held in the Council, investigate how to maximise the use of these budgets (eg could these budgets be alternatively used to raise more finance for the Council) and start to look at how the ongoing maintenance costs for all the council's assets could be quantified.

3. Update on City Investment Strategy and N/S/E/W Emerging Priorities

The City Investment Strategy was developed by the Council to help deliver on the aspirations expressed above, to support major iconic projects in the city and to act as a mechanism for the Council to help lever additional money into the city. The fund is financed through an annual % rate contribution and capital receipts obtained through the realisation of assets.

To date, the Council have committed funding to four key iconic projects across the city under the Fund –

- (i) Titanic Signature Project - £10million committed
- (ii) The Mac - £550,000 committed
- (iii) The Lyric - £1.25million committed
- (iv) The Connswater Community Greenway - £4.2million committed.

Together these 4 projects have levered in over £153million of investment in the city. The committed cost for the Council (up to 2013) for these four projects is £16m of which nearly £4.5m has so far been raised as of 01/04/09. This currently leaves a funding gap of £11.8m to be found by 2013.

The current position in relation the City Investment Fund is highlighted in Table 2 below.

CIF Funding Profile						
	Spend to Date	2009/10	2010/11	2011/2012	2012/2013	Total Project
CIF Spend						
Connswater	(93,683)	(106,317)	(700,000)	(1,650,000)	(1,650,000)	(4,200,000)
MAC		(180,000)	(180,000)	(190,000)		(550,000)
Lyric		(416,667)	(416,667)	(416,667)		(1,250,000)
Titanic TSP	(25,092)			(10,000,000)		(10,025,092)
	(118,775)	(702,984)	(1,296,667)	(12,256,667)	(1,650,000)	(16,025,092)
CIF Opening Balance	3,503,885	4,385,110	5,682,126	7,385,460	18,129,000	
CIF Income						
From Rate	1,000,000	2,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	
Asset Realisation Projection				20,000,000		
CIF Total at Year End	4,385,110	5,682,126	7,385,460	18,129,000	21,129,000	

Members will be aware that a series of briefings has taken place over the last few months to identify other area based projects and priorities. Arising out of these debates, other project ideas that have been suggested for funding under the City Investment Fund include the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau; the Lagan Canal; Belfast Hills projects, Belfast Stadia and the Convention Centre.

Members will be aware that the Council agreed that the City Investment Fund should benefit all areas of the city building to a total of £29m by 2012, funded by a 1% increase in the rate for 3 years from 08/09 to `11/12 and asset realisations. Details of sums to be derived from asset realisations are set out at Appendix 3 and are projected to raise £20m by year end 2012. The fund is therefore broadly on target, subject to the risk that the volatile economic conditions may affect the overall value of the assets which will be realised. In these circumstances it is recommended that officers be authorised to continue to explore options for alternative forms of financing such as Accelerated Development Zones (ADZ's), Local Asset Backed Vehicles (LABV's) and Private Sector Development Contributions.

4. Update on sources of funding for investment

In the paper that was presented to Committee in September it was highlighted that there are four key sources of funding for investment available to the council – loans,

capital receipts, grants and public private partnership (alternative sources of financing). This section updates the Committee on the current position in relation to these areas.

(1) **Loans** – As highlighted above there is provision made in the Council budget for an affordability limit of £45m of capital. Current committee schemes amount to £56m with an aspiration to spend up to £35m more if the schemes set out in Table 1 are prioritised. Options for financing this level of expenditure are presently being reviewed in the Capital Finance Strategy which will be reported to committee at its December meeting and decisions will then have to be made on overall affordability in the context of other priorities and the rate setting process for this and coming years.

(2) **Capital Receipts through Asset Realisation** - One of the key sources of funding that is available to the Council is raising capital receipts through asset disposals. There are currently a number of disposals of council assets which are being progressed or where Committee approval has already been obtained for disposal. (See Appendix 3 for details). Reports have been taken to Committee on an individual basis on these disposals.

There are also a number of additional assets that have been previously identified as being potentially suitable for disposal or have development potential, subject to appropriate appraisals and approvals. Members are asked to note that some of these assets may not currently be surplus to either the operational requirements of the current holding Committee and /or to Council requirements. Details of these assets are outlined in the table below along with some of the main issues which will require further investigation before any decision is taken on disposal.

Table 3 – Schedule of Assets and Options/Recommendations

Corporate Landbank or Non Operational Asset	Recommended Course of Action
Maysfield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Undertake planning assessment and site appraisal inc COMAH issues (ii) Ascertain potential Council requirements inc. accommodation; conference centre etc (iii) Progress discussions with external stakeholders (inc Translink & adjoining landowners) (iv) Legal /Title issues (v) Demolition issues
Grove former Leisure Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Undertake planning assessment & site appraisal (ii) DSD wider area master planning

	(iii) Demolition issues
Duncrue Car Compound & Adjoining 'Option Site'	(i) Undertake Planning Assessment & Site Appraisal inc access issues (ii) Decision on long term lease versus outright disposal (iii) Progress discussions with previous interested party
Ravenhill Road former PC's & Rest Garden	(i) Undertake planning assessment and site appraisal inc access issues
Gasworks Northern Fringe	(i) Continue with master planning process
Shore Road (adj Whitewell Tabernacle Church	(i) Undertake planning assessment & site appraisal

<i>Operational Assets/Assets currently held by Service Depts which may have development potential</i>	<i>Recommended Course of Action</i>
Stranmillis Car Park	(i) Undertake planning assessment, inc dBMAP enquiry implications (designated as public open space as part of Lagan Valley Regional Park) (ii) Site appraisal /constraints
Ormeau Avenue Car Park	(i) Undertake planning assessment (ii) Ascertain status and impact re proposed road scheme
Cathedral Gardens	(i) Operational Asset held as Open Space - departmental /service requirements to be ascertained (ii) Planning Assessment & Site Appraisal to be undertaken (iii) Ascertain proposals of adjoining landowners inc UUJ.
Skegoneill Avenue former Health Centre (adj. Grove	(i) Departmental /service requirements to be ascertained

Well Being Centre)	<p>(ii) Obtain costs for redevelopment</p> <p>(iii) Undertake planning assessment & site appraisal</p>	
Dunbar Link Depot	<p>(i) Operational asset - departmental /service requirements to be considered.</p> <p>(ii) Cost benefit analysis to determine if economic case for relocation;</p> <p>(iii) Relocation options to be considered in context of overall cleansing depot requirements</p> <p>(vi) Planning Assessment to ensure any premium reflects optimal development potential</p> <p>(v) Progress discussions with adjoining landowners</p>	
Seymour House & ISB building Gloucester Street	<p>(i) Consider as part of the Council's overall corporate accommodation requirements</p> <p>(ii) Undertake cost benefits analysis of disposal versus costs of relocation</p> <p>(iii) Undertake site appraisal and planning assessment to determine optimal site development</p>	
Old Zoo, Antrim Road	<p>(i) Ascertain departmental / operational requirements</p> <p>(ii) Undertake Planning Assessment & Site Appraisal</p> <p>(iii) Ascertain impact of Tree Preservation Orders</p>	
Land at Ballymacarrett Walkway	<p>(i) Undertake planning assessment and site appraisal</p> <p>(ii) Ascertain status of road scheme</p> <p>(iii) Ascertain wider development</p>	

	proposals for area
Ballygomartin Road South /Upper Whiterock Road	(i) Undertake planning assessment and site appraisal (ii) Ascertain if any departmental /service proposals (iii) Legal /Title Issues
McClure Street Open Space	(i) Undertake planning assessment including dBMAP enquiry implications (ii) Undertake site appraisal

In terms of market demand, funding availability and resultant capital return, the current economic climate is not favourable to asset disposals. However, this does provide us with an opportunity to plan and resolve many of the issues that invariably slow down any disposal including planning issues/constraints; financial considerations; legal and title restrictions; environmental/contamination issues; site constraints; co-dependencies with other agencies and external stakeholders etc, as well as ascertaining council, department and service requirements including longer term accommodation requirements.

It is therefore proposed that a cross departmental Assets Realisation Project Team is set up and a structured asset realisation plan is prepared to address the issues identified above for each asset with a view to having the assets highlighted above being '*market ready*' when the economy picks up or if any proposals are presented to the Council in the interim. There may also be other assets which may subsequently be declared surplus to departmental requirements or where development potential is identified and in these instances the Asset Realisation Team will undertake the necessary assessment and report back to Committee accordingly.

All options for disposal will be reported to SP&R for consideration and decision.

(3) **Grants** - One of the other sources of funding available to the Council is through grants. Grant aid may be a key factor in moving some projects ahead of others, especially given the Council's limited loan options. Not all projects will be eligible for grant funding and often a condition of grant funding is that it is matched and front loaded and so the Council must fund the expenditure upfront. However it is important for the council to maximise grant funding to help achieve its objectives and therefore allowance will need to be found in the council's capital financing strategy to provide necessary match funding for agreed projects.

As Members are aware the Council has submitted a number of applications for 100% grant funding under '*Priority 2.1 – Contributing to Shared Space*' of the Peace III initiative. Details of these are outlined below –

1. Development of a 'Community Hub' facility on the Girdwood site
2. Cultural Corridor project
3. Gasworks Bridge
4. Crusaders/Newington bid at the North Foreshore

These application forms were submitted on the 13th November and it is likely to be early in the New Year before the Council is informed of the outcome. The Committee will be kept informed of the outcome of these bids.

The Council will continue to seek out grant opportunities, including looking at new and innovative sources where possible, to maximise their benefit.

(4) **Alternative sources of financing** – The tightening of the public purse, the increased pressure on the public sector to provide value for money service and the challenges presented by the current economic climate means that local authorities elsewhere are increasingly looking at alternative and innovative sources of financing to take forward capital investment. This includes the use of mechanisms such as Local Asset Backed Vehicles (LABVs), Accelerated Development Zones (ADZs) and JESSICAs. However these are all longer term options which will take time to establish and implement.

As Members may be aware some of these options have been explored further in the economic appraisal consultation report which was recently published by the PwC on behalf of the Department of the Environment – "*Economic Appraisal of options for local government service delivery in its entirety*". In addition PwC and King Sturges have talked with a number of English local authorities and Core Cities in advancing these options.

The All Party Urban Development Group at Westminster has produced a paper "Regeneration and the Recession – Unlocking the Money" which further recommends government action on ADZ's and for City authorities to take a proactive approach to working with the private sector.

More details on the operation, advantages and disadvantages of these models will be made available in the Capital Financing Strategy paper in December.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of this report and

1. *Capital Programme* – Consider the first cut of the prioritised capital programme so that officers can start to develop more detailed economic appraisals for these schemes. Any further commitments in the Capital Programme are subject to the development of an affordable and sustainable capital financing strategy. This

strategy is planned to be presented at the December meeting so that it can be considered in the context of the revenue estimates and district rates report which will be presented at the same meeting.

2. *Maintenance Programme* – note that officers will explore further the options for how maintenance budgets are held in the Council, investigate how to maximise the use of these budgets and start to look at how the ongoing maintenance costs for all the council’s assets could be quantified

3. *City Investment Strategy* – to note the current funding profile, its dependency on asset realisations and the risk associated with these realisations due to the volatile economic conditions and the need to consider this strategy in the context of other competing priorities.

4. *Assets* – agree that a cross departmental Assets Realisation Project Team is established and an Asset Realisation Strategy is developed to undertake further appraisal and assessment of the assets listed above or any other assets that are subsequently declared surplus to requirements or identified as having development potential, with a view to bringing forward for disposal, when the market improves, those assets which have development potential and which are surplus to Council requirements

5. *Alternative sources of financing* – agree that officers continue to explore the alternative sources of financing that may be available to the Council and note that this will be further explored in the proposed Capital Financing Strategy. As normal, Officers will be available to brief Members in detail as required and a detailed report will be brought back to committee in due course.

Decision Tracking

Documents Attached
Appendix 1: Capital Project Prioritisation Matrix and Assessment Criteria
Appendix 2: First cut of a prioritised Capital Programme
Appendix 3: Schedule of assets for disposal or where disposal negotiation are underway



Belfast City Council

Report to: Strategic Policy and Resources

Subject: City Hall- Major Works Programme

Date: 21 May 2010

Reporting Officer: Mr Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, Ext 6217

Contact Officers: Mr George Wright, Head of Facilities Management, Ext 6232
Mr Sam Graham, Project Management Unit, Ext 3469

Relevant Background Information

The Major Works in City Hall commenced on the 19th November 2007 after a full decant of personnel to Adelaide Exchange and Clarendon Dock. The work was divided into two phases with the Council stipulating that Phase 1, which included the main Civic Rooms, was to be completed within a twelve month period. Phase 2, which included all the remaining areas, was to be completed by the 10th August 2009. These dates were successfully achieved.

In addition a major re-opening programme "City Hall for All" was held during October.

Scope of Work

In order to obtain the best possible deal for Council, the Project Management Unit tendered the work in two packages. The object was to ensure all the important items were covered in Tender A with those items forming a 'desirable list' included in such a manner in Tender B as to allow Council to add items if funding was available. When tenders were returned it proved possible for all items listed in Tender B to be included in the Scope of Work which included:

Tender A

- Re-roofing the slated areas of the North and East roofs
- Rewire of the building (excluding recently rewired areas such as the Control Room, Births Deaths and Marriages area, Lord Mayors Parlour and what is now the café area)
- New gas fired boilers with a new Low Temperature Hot Water Heating System
- Air Conditioning to all Party Rooms
- Re-decoration of general areas
- Asbestos removal
- Provision of air conditioned archive storage in four basement rooms
- Fire compartmentation in the roof void

- General repairs to marble and mosaic flooring
- Digging up the courtyard and provision of new drainage system, paved area and fountain feature.

Tender B

- Re-roofing the slated areas of the South and West roofs
- Decoration extended to include all internal areas
- Rewiring of the main kitchen
- Provision of a new chandelier in the Rotunda
- Ornate 3 lamp lighting fittings in Civic Corridors
- Courtyard lighting

The following additional items were added and paid for out of the project contingencies:

- Re-leathering the seats in the Council Chamber
- Renewal of the bird netting on the turrets
- Upgrading of the lightening protection
- Conversion of part of the East wing to a new café/exhibition area
- Replacement marble flooring in reception area and ground floor corridors
- Upgrading Members Common room

Additional funding was also secured for the following:

- A new Emergency Control Room

Building Contract

A contract was let to John Graham (Dromore) Ltd following a competitive procurement exercise.

The work was completed on time, even with all the extras, and the cost will be under the Capital Programme allocation for the project ie within budget.

A Gate 4 review has been undertaken for the project and a green rating was achieved – indicating successful delivery of the project to time, cost and quality. However, there were a number of things which could have been done better and a 'lesson learned' post project review report will be produced with Members for future reference.

Key Issues

Emergency Room

Sometime into the building programme it was decided to move the existing emergency room from the basement to the second floor. This involved the provision of air conditioning, relocation of data supplies and the fitting out of the area to modern emergency room standards. A grant of £100,000 was received from the PSNI, with Health and Environmental Services Department providing the balance of the funding. While the work was ordered late in the contract, contract conditions allowed us to request that it be completed at the same time as the original contract completion date.

CCTV Provisions

The main contract only allowed for the provision of Cat6 cabling to new camera positions identified by a consultant appointed by Facilities Management. However, when old power cables were removed it was discovered that cameras were also deactivated. In order to rectify the situation it has been necessary to reorganize the position of cameras and ensure they are connected to recording and monitoring equipment. When the refurbishment work in the Control Room is complete we will have approximately 60 functioning cameras in City Hall.

Scope of Work

Scope of work was limited by budget constraints. As already mentioned the package was tendered in such a way as to permit items to be added and because of favourable tendering conditions we were able to include all desirable items. It was however necessary to limit desirables to retain financial control and a number of items were, of necessity, omitted. Such items included overhaul of all doors and windows, secondary double glazing, cleaning of all stonework and external decoration.

Additional Work

Some members have voiced concern as to why certain elements of work have not been done. These include the following:

- Additional repairs to stonework
- Repairs to steps
- Additional repairs to marble flooring
- Additional CCTV coverage

When the final account has been settled it will be possible to ascertain if any funds remain in the current Capital Programme for the Major Repair work. If funds are available it may be possible to undertake some of the additional work listed above or indeed any other work members deem appropriate. To this end if a list of priorities could be provided then the Project Management Unit can progress the work.

Resource Implications

Funding

The project is currently within the amount approved in the Capital Programme and to date we have received grant aid as follows:

FUNDER	AMOUNT RECEIVED TO DATE	AMOUNT OUTSTANDING	TOTAL EXPECTED
NIEA	£484,000	£85,285	£569,285

In effect with the settlement of the final account there will be some monies available for additional work if approved.

Awards

To date the building project has been nominated for the following awards:

1. RSUA – Conservation Award for 2010
2. RICS – Building Conservation award for 2010

Environmental Implications

None.

Recommendations

That Members note the report and consider what if any additional work is recommended.

Key to Abbreviations

NIEA – Northern Ireland Environmental Agency

Documents Attached

None



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Connswater Community Greenway Update
Date:	21 May 2010
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects.
Contact Officer:	Celine Dunlop, Estates Surveyor, Property and Projects.

Relevant Background Information

Belfast City Council, as part of the City Investment Strategy, has agreed to coordinate the acquisition of lands to enable the Connswater Community Greenway Programme to proceed. The Council will secure rights over the land needed for the Greenway and shall be responsible for the management and maintenance of this land and any assets on the land. The Greenway must be accessible for 40 years to comply with the Big Lottery Fund letter of offer, although the intention is to secure rights for longer if possible.

Key Issues

1. The area of land at Park Avenue outlined red on the attached plan at Appendix '1' consisting of 0.020 acres has been identified as being required for the Connswater Community Greenway. Council officials have agreed, subject to Committee approval, to purchase this area of land from the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (NITHCO).

Resource Implications

Financial

These proposals require expenditure of £400 plus legal fees to purchase the land required. The purchase costs for all of the land required for the Connswater Community Greenway are included in the Connswater Community Greenway budget of the City Investment Fund and there will be no additional cost to Council.

Human Resources

No additional human resources required.

Asset and Other Implications

The additional land will form part of the Connswater Community Greenway which when complete will be managed and maintained by the Council.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee grant approval to the purchase of the lands outlined red on the plans attached at Appendix '1'.

Key to Abbreviations

N/A.

Decision Tracking

Action by Celine Dunlop to be completed by September 2010.

Documents Attached

Plans at Appendix '1'.



Boat House

Cycle Track

BM 3.41

Playground

Lavatory

D Fn

Subway

Victoria Park Halt

MP 1/4

LISAVON DRIVE

KYLE STREET

HILL'S AVENUE

PARK AVENUE

Scale 1:1000

Connswater Community Greenway - Plot 7a

Area 0.020 acres

SS

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**MEMORABILIA WORKING GROUP
SOMME RESOLUTION**

MONDAY 10 MAY 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Councillor Hendron	Chairman
	Councillor McCausland	
	Councillor Jones	
	Councillor McCarthy	
	Councillor C. Maskey	
	Councillor Rodgers	
	Hazel Francey	Good Relations Manager
	Anne Deighan	Good Relations Officer
	Marie Craig	Good Relations Assistant (minutes)
APOLOGIES:	Councillor Kyle	PUP

1.0	BACKGROUND
1.1	Hazel reminded Members that at its meeting on 23 April 2010, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had deferred consideration of a report on the proposed revised text of the Somme resolution to enable the Party leaders (or their nominees) and the Chairman of the Good Relations Partnership to consider the matter further.
1.2	<p>She distributed a copy of the report considered at that Strategic Policy & Resources Committee meeting and also a proposed text tabled by Councillor Crozier. The current resolution is:</p> <p>That we, the Lord Mayor and Citizens of the City of Belfast, on the >th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, desire again to record our feelings of gratitude to the brave men of the 36th (Ulster) Division who, by their glorious conduct in that battle, made an imperishable name for themselves and their Province, and whose heroism will never be forgotten so long as the British Commonwealth lasts.</p> <p>Councillor Crozier's proposed text was based on the principles that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We do not seek to remove, we seek to add to. 2. We give equal recognition to both the 36th (Ulster) and the 16th (Irish) Division. <p>That we, the Lord Mayor and Citizens of the City of Belfast, on the Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, desire again to record our feelings of gratitude to the brave men of the 36th (Ulster) Division who, by their glorious conduct in that battle, made an imperishable name for themselves and their Province; the brave men of the 16th (Irish) Division, who fought with valour and selfless courage, and Ulstermen who served gallantly in other forces. Their heroism will never be forgotten so long as the British Commonwealth lasts.</p>
1.3	<p>A further new version was tabled, based on previous discussions:</p> <p>That we, the Lord Mayor and Citizens of the City of Belfast, on the >th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, desire again to record our feelings of gratitude to the brave men of the 36th (Ulster) Division, the 16th Irish Division and other forces who, by their glorious conduct in that battle, made an imperishable name for themselves and their people, and whose heroism will never be forgotten.</p>

1.4	The Members were reminded that the representatives of the Somme Heritage Association had specifically requested that this Resolution should not become an issue of division within the Council, out of respect to those who had given their lives in the battle. All Members agreed with this and appreciated that efforts were being made to resolve this issue at Committee level without rancour. Members also agreed that there had been a significant change in attitude on all sides to the Great War in the last few years, which had led to greater understanding and recognition of the contribution of all citizens of Belfast.
1.5	Some Members were of the opinion that the proposed new wording (1.3 above) gave more equal recognition to all those who had sacrificed their lives during the Battle of the Somme. However, a Member was of the view that the impact on the city of the sacrifice of the 36 th (Ulster) Division on 1 July had been so great that the current reference to that Division should be retained and not diluted. He felt that, in accordance with the principles as set down by Cllr. Crozier's proposal, the additional reference to the 16 th (Irish) Division would give equal recognition to their sacrifice.
1.6	After discussion, Members agreed that other forces should be included in the resolution, but that further discussion would be required as to the exact wording. Members agreed to consult others within their own party groups before making a decision at the next Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, to be ratified at the Council meeting in June. They also agreed that one representative only from each party should speak on the issue.
2.0	NEXT MEETING OF MEMORABILIA WORKING GROUP
2.1	It has been agreed to re-schedule the next meeting of the Memorabilia Working Group to immediately after the Good Relations Partnership meeting i.e. around 2.00 pm on Friday 14 May 2010.

GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP**MEMORABILIA WORKING GROUP****FRIDAY 14 MAY 2010**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Councillor Hendron	Chairman
	Councillor Kyle	
	Councillor McCarthy	
	Councillor C. Maskey	
	Councillor Stoker	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Hazel Francey	Good Relations Manager
	Anne Deighan	Good Relations Officer
	Marie Craig	Good Relations Assistant (minutes)
APOLOGIES:	Councillor McCausland	

1.0	ROUTINE MATTERS – MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 16 APRIL
1.1	The minutes of the meeting of 16 April were taken as read and signed as correct. The Good Relations Manager reminded the Working Group that the issue of the Somme Resolution was included in the minutes of the meeting of Party Group leaders that had been held on 10 May, due to go to this month's Strategic Policy & Resources Committee for a decision.
2.0	UP-DATE ON CURRENT POSITION
2.1	The Good Relations Manager gave an oral up-date on several current issues. She advised that 4 party briefings were still to be given on Maureen Mackin's report, with dates for 2 (Ulster Unionist and Sinn Fein) to be arranged. She stressed the importance of these briefings as they need to be completed before the application can be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund, to draw down additional funding.
2.2	As part of Maureen Mackin's report into memorabilia/heritage issues in the City Hall, the Council had agreed in principle to display a portrait of the current Lord Mayor at Reception. The Working Group agreed that this should be enacted on the appointment of the new Lord Mayor next month.
2.3	The Working Group agreed that an article on the potential exhibition space in the East Entrance should be placed in the next <i>City Matters</i> , in order to encourage a wide variety of exhibitions and ensure that the process was as open and accessible as possible.
2.4	A member of the public had recently donated to the Council a copy of his book about his working life in Mackies and the possibility of it being displayed in the Bobbin had been raised. The Group was conscious of the need to avoid setting a precedent in future displays and agreed that the book should not be displayed there and that a policy on the acceptance of gifts should be devised.
3.0	REQUEST TO ERECT A PLAQUE IN CITY HALL TO HELEN LEWIS
3.1	The Good Relations Manager advised that a request had recently been received to erect a plaque in the City Hall in recognition of the contribution to modern dance made by Helen Lewis, who had died in late 2009. She reminded the Working Group of the recent discussions on plaques already in the City Hall and advised Members that they could receive many more such requests if this was granted. She reported that the Council had held a special event for Ms. Lewis during her lifetime to honour her and acknowledge her achievements. The Good Relations Manager advised the Working Group that unfortunately, the current Blue Plaque scheme could not be used on this occasion since it requires the person to have been dead for 25 years before being considered. The Working Group agreed that the Lyric Theatre would be a more appropriate venue for such a

	plaque. It was also agreed that, as a Holocaust survivor, Helen Lewis could be added to the present <i>Celebrated Citizens</i> exhibition, with details outlining her life and work.
4.0	PROPOSAL FOR A VISIT TO DUBLIN CASTLE RE MEMORABILIA
4.1	The Good Relations Manager reported that she had received a proposal that a visit should be made to Dublin Castle because of their experience and success in dealing with sensitive issues of memorabilia. The Working Group agreed that the Good Relations Manager should make arrangements for the visit to take place in July.
5.0	PROPOSED VISIT TO CITY HALL BY OMAGH DISTRICT COUNCIL
5.1	The Good Relations Manager reminded members that a delegation from Armagh City Council had recently made a visit to the City Hall and met with the Working Group to discuss issues around memorabilia. A similar request has subsequently been received from Omagh District Council for a meeting. The Working Group agreed to meet with the Omagh delegation immediately prior to the next scheduled meeting.
6.0	CALENDAR OF CULTURAL EVENTS
6.1	Anne reminded the group that the Irish cultural heritage artwork is to be unveiled on the evening of Thursday 24 June and the Working Group agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee that an appropriate celebratory programme and small scale hospitality should be provided.
6.2	Anne reported that Councillor Hartley has suggested that the Working Group should pay a visit to the artist's local studio to see the Irish artwork in progress. Members are to forward suitable dates to Anne who will make arrangements for the visit.
6.3	The Good Relations Manager proposed that a broader cultural calendar, embracing events such as an Ulster Scots night, a poetry night and an exhibition of banners (political, Trade Union, Loyal Orders etc.) should be drawn up. The Working Group agreed and Anne will draw up a list of proposed events/activities for the next meeting.
6.4	Hazel outlined the list of exhibitions which have requested space in the east entrance of the City Hall over the next few months. Currently, Paul Hutchinson's <i>Walking a Line</i> exhibition is showing in the east entrance. Further exhibitions will include <i>Sister City Nashville</i> , artwork by young people, the <i>Belfast Boxing Ring</i> , <i>Explorers of the Universe</i> & Urban Design from the Art College. The Working Group noted the information.

GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP**FRIDAY, 14th MAY, 2010****MEETING OF THE GOOD RELATIONS PARTNERSHIP**

Members present: Councillor Hendron (Chairman); and
Councillors Humphrey (in place of
Councillor McCausland), Kyle, C. Maskey,
McCarthy and Stoker.

External Members: Ms. M. Marken, Catholic Church;
Mr. P. Scott, Catholic Church;
Mr. R. Galway, Bombardier Aerospace/
Confederation of British Industry;
Rev. J. Rea, Methodist Church;
Ms. A. Chada, Minority Ethnic Groups; and
Ms. J. Hawthorne, Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

In attendance: Mrs. H. Francey, Good Relations Manager;
Mr. I. May, Peace III Programme Manager;
Mr. D. Robinson, Good Relations Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Committee Administrator.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillor McCausland and from Ms. S. Bhat, Mr. S. Brennan, Mr. P. Mackel, Mr. M. O'Donnell and Ms. M. deSilva.

Mr. Michael Wardlow

The Good Relations Manager reported that she had been informed by Mr. M. Wardlow that, due to work commitments which had prevented him from attending a number of recent meetings and would limit his participation in future, he would be resigning as a representative of the voluntary and community sector from the Partnership. She explained that the Partnership would, in the near future, be reconstituted in preparation for the next phase of the Peace Plan and that this would lead to a review of the representation thereon.

Accordingly, it was agreed that a letter be forwarded to Mr. Wardlow thanking him for his contribution to the work of the Partnership and wishing him well in the future.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 16th April were taken as read and signed as correct.

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Good Relations Partnership,
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Matters Arising

Peace III – Proposal for Youth Intervention Programme

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 16th April, it had approved a proposal to develop a Youth Intervention Programme for South Belfast. The Partnership had agreed that information regarding the appointment of a Manager to deliver the Programme be submitted to its next meeting.

The Good Relations Manager explained that the full-time Manager had been seconded from within Alternatives and that that post was being funded by the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Assets Recovery Agency. However, two part-time workers, whose posts would be funded by the Council under the Peace III Programme, would be recruited from within the local area using an open recruitment process in order to assist with the project.

During discussion, a Member pointed out that the local community in South Belfast had been unaware of the full-time appointment having been made and highlighted the need to ensure that all future recruitment exercises were undertaken in a transparent manner.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided.

Creative Legacies Programme

Suicide Awareness

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Partnership that, at its meeting on 16th April, it had agreed to allocate funding under the Shared Public Arts Projects to six organisations within the City. The Partnership had agreed further that a report, providing further information in relation to an unsuccessful application for funding which had been submitted by Suicide Awareness, be submitted to its next meeting.

The Good Relations Manager reported that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, in considering at its meeting on 23rd April the minutes of the Good Relations Partnership, had requested the Chief Executive to submit to a future meeting a report outlining all activities being undertaken within the Council in relation to the issue of suicide.

Noted.

**Funding Applications from Community Centres/
Management Committees**

The Partnership was advised that the Council, at its meeting on 4th May, had, at the request of a Member, agreed that a report be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee detailing the process employed to differentiate between applications to the Creative Legacies Programme from Community Centres and their Management Committees. Accordingly, she submitted for the Partnership's information the following details:

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“Belfast City Council Community Centres

Good Relations Funding Applications

This report sets out the grants made to Council Community Centres over the past 5 years. In each case, the application met the criteria and grant was awarded because of the quality of the project proposal. Details of the applicants are listed below. The Legal Services Department has confirmed that this approach is entirely appropriate.

Group	Reference No & Project Summary	Year	Award	Submitted by
Concorde Community Centre	BCC06/07/217 Promoting good relations and cultural pride via facts and fashion. Children learn new skills by redesigning old clothes. A fashion evening will be held at which the youth group will model their re-cycled fashions incorporating traditional Chinese and Indian costumes.	2006	£3110	Community Development Worker
Finaghy Community Centre	BCC05/06/178 Finaghy and Horn Drive Corrymeela./Kansas City visit – 12 young people from both sides of the community will visit Kansas City in July 2006. This will include a residential in Corrymeela prior to the visit. (US visit hosted by Ancient Order of Hibernians Children for Peace in Ireland Committee).	2006	£1820	Community Development Worker
Finaghy Community Centre/ Highfield Community Centre	572/910 Community Relations Project involving Tullymore/Highfield/Ballysillan, Taughmonah/Horn Drive Community Centres. 12 young people from both sides of the community will visit Kansas City in July 2007. This will include a residential in Corrymeela prior to the visit. (US visit hosted by Ancient Order of Hibernians Children for Peace in Ireland Committee).	2007	£5056	Community Development Worker
Finaghy/ Horn Drive Community Centre Committee	670/1122 Finaghy and Horn Drive Good Relations Project - 16 young people from both sides of the community(South & West Belfast) will visit Kansas City in July 2008. This will include a residential in Corrymeela prior to the visit. (US visit hosted by Ancient Order of Hibernians Children for Peace in Ireland Committee).	2008	£6045	Vice Chairperson of the Committee

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Group	Reference No. & Project Summary	Year	Award	Submitted by
Finaghy Community Centre Committee	480/1437 Finaghy and Horn Drive Community Centre Committees Good Relations Project - 16 young people from both sides of the community from South & West Belfast will visit Kansas City in July 2009. They will participate in an 8 month Belfast based programme prior to travel. (US visit hosted by Ancient Order of Hibernians Children for Peace in Ireland Committee).	2009	£1600	Community Development Worker
Woodvale/ Cambrai Youth Community Group (based in Woodvale CC)	386/1647 A 6 week programme educating the group on racism and sectarianism in the community. The group will work with an organisation in Dublin on issues around identity and racism and shared history in Ireland – this will include an overnight visit to Dublin.	2009	£1000	Treasurer of the Group
Inverary Community Centre Committee	640/1474 Promoting a Shared Society – a series of education workshops on the 1st and 2nd World Wars over the months of May and June 2009 and then an exhibition of war memorabilia during the Titanic Festival in July on 2nd, 3rd & 4th July.	2009	£2500	Treasurer of the Community Centre Committee
Inverary Community Centre Committee	640/1755 St. Agnes and Inverary Youth Project – 4 groups of young people from St. Agnes, Short Strand, Inverary & Ashmount will be brought together 1 night per week with a view to integrating the 4 areas in future.	2010	£1000	Community Centre Chairperson
Donegall Pass and Markets Community Centres	883/1752 A youth based community relations programme drawing on the participants' experience of living on a community interface as the basis of a peace building workshop.	2010	£1000	Community Development Worker
PEACE III CREATIVE LEGACIES PROGRAMME – PUBLIC ART WORK PROPOSALS				
North Queen Street Community Centre	The project intends to involve a wide range of people of all ages from the community, focusing mainly on the groups using the Community Centre Building – about 15 groups and volunteers are involved in working for the local community.	2010	£5000	Community Development Worker
Dee Street Community Centre	The Project involves participants from Dee Street Community Centre, Carew Family Centre, Connswater Community group, Connswater Greenway Project.	2010	£5000	Community Development Worker

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The Partnership noted the information which had been provided.

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Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 16th April, it had agreed to defer an application for funding from Charter NI to enable further information to be obtained. The Good Relations Manager explained that the request for funding related to the appointment of a research consultant in order to determine the needs and issues affecting local communities within East Belfast and that the information derived would be used to inform current plans and proposals for the City.

The Partnership agreed that funding of up to £5,000 be awarded from the Good Relations Grant-Aid Fund to Charter NI.

Peace III Youth Intervention Programme

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 16th April, it had granted approval to initiate under the Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan a Youth Intervention Programme which was aimed specifically at encouraging long-term engagement for young people in interface areas. The Partnership was advised that the Scoutlink Trust was delivering currently a City-wide programme under the Plan and that representatives of that organisation were in attendance in order to outline the extent of this work. Accordingly, Mr. K. Gillespie and Ms. J. Reid, on behalf of the Trust, were welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman.

Ms. Reid informed the Partnership that the Scoutlink Trust was a cross-community organisation involved currently in facilitating an i-citizen project for groups of young people, based around citizenship and leadership. She explained that the themes of the project were centred around relationship building, good relations and civic engagement and that it sought to develop cross-community partnerships between young people of similar interests and needs. She outlined the nature of the activities provided over the course of the programme and pointed out that these were tailored to suit the needs of each group. Activities such as climbing, abseiling and team challenges provided participants with an opportunity to develop a range of values, including good relations and civic engagement. She reported each group was required to undertake an environmental project and that a conference was being planned for later in the year which would discuss important issues such as community participation, anti-social behaviour and the misuse of alcohol and drugs.

The Partnership commended the valuable work being under by the Scoutlink Trust through the i-citizen project and, having been thanked by the Chairman, Mr. Gillespie and Ms. Reid retired from the meeting.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided.

Peace III - Implementation Update

The Peace III Programme Manager submitted a report which provided an update in respect of the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan. The report provided an overview of the various programmes and projects, together with a summary of expenditure under each of the four themes of the Plan and of actual and planned activity from April till May. He explained that the Programmes Body had established a

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target of £2.5 million to be spent before the end of September and pointed out that all projects had been advised of the implications associated with any failure to meet that target and had been requested to submit realistic spend forecasts for the remainder of the programming period. In addition, he drew the Partnership's attention to the conference being hosted by the Special European Programmes Body in the Belfast Waterfront Hall on 20th May to mark the mid-point of the Peace III Programme.

The Partnership noted the information which had been provided.

Peace III Proposal for Roots of Empathy Project

(Mr. T. Crossan, Principal Environmental Health Officer, attended in connection with this item.)

The Peace III Programme Manager reminded the Partnership that it had identified previously a need to consider how programmes and projects which had been funded under the Peace Plan could be aligned with the health and wellbeing agenda. He reported that, in order to achieve this objective, the Council was proposing to develop a Roots of Empathy Project, similar to that which had been developed in Canada and which had been shown to increase social and emotional competence in children. This, in turn, meant that they remained longer in school, had lower levels of aggression and higher levels of mental health, were less likely to have addiction problems and gain a better overall education. He explained that the core themes of the project were as follows:

- to engender a positive understanding of diversity;
- to teach children to respect one another and to build a culture of caring;
- to develop empathy and to enable children to value inclusion;
- to value participatory democracy; and
- to encourage non-violence and anti-bullying.

He reported further that the project, which would be managed by the Council's Health Development Unit, would be rolled out to Primary 5 pupils in ten schools across the Council area. He pointed out that Primary 5 had been selected, since research which had been carried out by Queen's University Belfast had determined that this represented the peak age for victimisation in the school environment and marked the commencement of Key Stage 2 within the Northern Ireland Curriculum. The programme would run from September, 2010 throughout the academic year and would include organisations such as the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, the Public Health Agency, the Catholic Council for Maintained Schools, Barnardo's and Queen's University Belfast.

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The Peace III Programme Manager informed the Partnership that the project would be delivered in each school by trained instructors who would be sourced from the participating organisations. Each instructor, who could, for example, be a Health Visitor, a Classroom Assistant, or a Community worker, would undertake four days of intensive training. He pointed out that the total cost associated with the delivery of the project would be £33,501, provision for which had been made under the theme of Shared Organisational Space and, specifically, the allocation for learning and dissemination activities. Accordingly, he requested that the Partnership approve, in principle, the Routes of Empathy Project, subject to further consultation being undertaken with the Special European Union Programmes Body and participating organisations.

The Partnership granted the approval sought.

Peace III – Funding for Shared Cultural Space

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th February, it had approved the undertaking of an open call for applications under the theme of Shared Cultural Space. The Peace III Programme Manager reported that the call for applications had closed on 1st April and that eleven applications had been received. He provided a brief overview of each application and advised the Partnership that they had been subjected to an assessment process which had been developed in line with guidance laid down by the Special European Union Programmes Body. Each application had been evaluated against pre-determined criteria and a minimum of score of 65% was required before funding could be considered under the Peace Programme. He pointed out that initial assessments had been subjected to a moderation and quality assurance process involving senior Council staff and that scores and rationale would be made available to all applicants, together with a debriefing session where requested. The Special European Union Programmes Body had established a review procedure for the entire programme, details of which would be communicated to all applicants.

The Peace III Programme Manager explained that six applications had achieved scores above the required threshold of 65% and, therefore, would be eligible for funding under the Peace III Programme. He stated that the approved allocation of funding in relation to this latest call for applications had been £225,000 and that the total amount requested had amounted to £149,780.

During discussion, several Members highlighted the fact that several notable organisations had been unsuccessful in their applications. The point was made also that the Council needed to undertake more outreach work in order to encourage other groups to avail of funding under this theme. In response, the Peace III Programme Manager explained that those organisations which had failed to secure funding had either failed to submit sufficient detail within their application or did not meet the requisite funding criteria.

After further discussion, the Partnership agreed that letters of offer be issued to the following organisations, subject to site visits and further checks being undertaken by Peace III Programme officers:

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<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Recommended Amount up to £</u>
The Beat Initiative	Creating Carnival Together – Shared Celebration in our City	25,000
ArtsEkta	Belfast Mela 2010 – A Unique International Summer Festival	25,000
Festival of Fools	Festival of Fools 2011	25,000
Feile an Phobail	August Feile – Community Arts Festival	25,000
Irish Congress of Trade Unions	May Festival – a Celebration of Working People	24,780
Trans Urban Arts	Trans Festival including Base International Street Art Festival	25,000

Peace III - Proposal for Respect through Sport Programme

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th March, it had requested that further consultation take place between Council officers and the Partnership in order to develop a proposal under the theme of Shared Cultural Space aimed at using sport as a mechanism for tackling sectarianism and racism. The request had arisen in response to a level of uncommitted funding being available within in the current phase of the Belfast Peace and Reconciliation Plan, under Action 3.3 Cultural Diversity in Sport.

The Good Relations Officer reported that a proposal had been formulated in relation to Respect through Sport Programme which would bring together young people from socially disadvantaged and diverse communities across the City. The programme was designed to use sport and physical activity as a mechanism for developing awareness and understanding of community diversity and the consequences of anti-social behaviour, leading to sectarianism and racism. He explained that a pilot project, which had been funded by the Good Relations Partnership, had been delivered successfully at the Indoor Tennis Centre and Ozone Complex. It was proposed that this work be built on through a new project, incorporating delivery of two simultaneous, complementary programmes based at this location and at Shankill Leisure Centre in order to provide engagement with a wide cross-section of communities. He pointed out that the total costs associated with the project were £60,593, provision for which had been identified within the current uncommitted allocation under the theme of Shared Cultural Space and, specifically, the allocation for Action 3.3 Cultural Diversity in Sport.

The Partnership approved, in principle, the Respect through Sport Programme, subject to further consultation being undertaken with the Special European Union Programmes Body.

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**Consultation Document – Public Assemblies,
Parades and Protests**

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

The Partnership will be aware that, as part of the agreement reached at Hillsborough Castle on 5th February, 2010, a Working Group was established to bring forward a framework capable of achieving cross community support in addressing the contentious issue of parades and protests.

The terms of reference reflected the key principles of the Hillsborough Agreement, namely:

- Local people providing local solutions
- Respect for the rights of those who parade and respect for the rights of those who live in areas through which they seek to parade. This includes the right for everyone to live free from sectarian harassment.
- Recognising that at times there are competing rights
- Transparency, openness and fairness
- Independent decision making.

Building on the interim report of the Strategic Review of Parading (2008), work was to be taken forward in the following areas:

- Procedures relating to the receipt and notification of parades; related objections; the facilitation of dialogue and mediation
- In the event of failure of mediation, to detail recourse to independent adjudications and procedures
- Adjudication arrangements
- A code of conduct which is legally enforceable
- The right of citizens to freedom from all forms of harassment.

The Working Group presented its report in late February and its proposals have been formulated into this consultation paper, published on 20th April. The paper publishes the Code of Conduct from the Working Group’s report and the Draft Legislation with Explanatory Guide. It seeks to enshrine in law a framework to allow for the implementation of the report’s recommendations and introduction of new procedures governing public assemblies. It has been issued for public consultation for a period of 12 weeks, with responses to be received by 14th July 2010.

Summary of paper

Basically, the paper outlines a new 2-stage process to replace the current government-appointed Parades Commission and includes a new focus on encouraging dialogue, formal and informal, between those who organise parades and those who object to them.

The first body, to be known as the Office of Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests (OPAPP), will administer parade applications and objections, facilitating dialogue or providing a mechanism for mediation, where required.

A second adjudicating body, the Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Body (PAPPB), will make rulings where agreement cannot be found.

Dialogue will be the norm and failure to engage will be taken into account in subsequent adjudications.

Proposals

The report proposes new legislation - a Draft Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Bill (Northern Ireland) - aimed at avoiding conflict over controversial parades, with the intention that this will be in place early next year. This will cover all public assemblies, defined as public processions¹, including parades, public meetings (of over 50 people) and protest meetings.

Central to the legislation is a legally enforceable Code of Conduct that will apply to all those who organise and participate in parades, along with any bands and supporters in the vicinity. It will also apply to those who take part in protests. The Code confirms that 'it should be borne in mind by all those participating in any form of assembly that with rights come responsibilities.'

The Code of Conduct is designed to ensure that organisers take account of the local context, particularly of any sensitive locations, including those associated with past conflict or previous public disorder. Where the location is sensitive, organisers must identify and seek to address reasonable local concerns and issues that may give rise to a dispute. Participants must show respect and tolerance and behave with due regard for the rights and traditions of others. The Code aims to ensure that disputes are resolved quickly by the parties and where possible through local dialogue and consensus. Local agreement is strongly encouraged and mediation and adjudication are only to be considered where this is not possible.

¹ Funeral processions are excluded

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The paper states clearly that everyone has the right to live free from sectarian harassment; the Code of Conduct and the Draft Bill are both designed to ensure that all parties take measures to prevent sectarian harassment.

Office of Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests (OPAPP)

Under the proposals, the Office of the First Minister/Deputy First Minister will establish the first stage and administrative arm of the new system, the Office of Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests, (OPAPP), which will appoint professional mediators to encourage local dialogue to resolve disputes.

Those planning a parade must give notice to OPAPP 35 days in advance, with objectors obliged to file their objections or concerns within the next 7 days, while a further 21-day deadline will be put in place for permission to stage a protest against an event.

OPAPP must publish a notice on receipt of any notification of any parade, concern, objection or protest meeting, to a list of defined 'interested persons' including the PAPPB; PSNI; Fire and Rescue and Ambulance Services; elected representatives – MPs and MLAs; the local District Council and those who notify OPAPP that they want to be informed. For example, the Council will be automatically informed but a school, church or residents' group will have to register an interest to be notified.

OPAPP has no responsibility for adjudicating on public assemblies. OPAPP will aid discussion of issues in dispute, including paying venue costs of meetings and will publish copies of the results of such meetings to the interested parties. Where resolution through dialogue has not been possible, OPAPP will arrange for mediation, using an approved and agreed mediator.

Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Body (PAPPB)

Under the second stage of the process, the First Minister and Deputy First Minister will set up an Appointments Panel to select an 11-member adjudication panel, representative of the community, to be called the Public Assemblies, Parades and Protests Body (PAPPB). PAPPB will have the power to make decisions and adjudicate on all public assemblies that are the subject of notified concerns or objections not resolved through local dialogue or mediation. PAPPB must make and publish its decision at least 7 days before the proposed event. It may impose conditions or restrictions relating to:

- management or stewarding
- the behaviour of participants and non-participants

- commencement and dispersal times and its duration
- the size, position, location or route
- the participation or attendance of persons who have breached the Code of Conduct.

The Code states clearly that failure to comply with conditions may result in criminal charges.

Banning of parades

Parties can seek a judicial review of decisions and, with the backing of the First and Deputy First Minister acting jointly, the new Justice Minister will have the power to ban a parade, if this is necessary in the public interest. The paper makes it clear that prohibition orders are to be measures of last resort.

Key Issues

The consultation paper proposes a more accountable, though more bureaucratic, series of structures. It introduces the importance of dialogue at local level, currently not encouraged by the Loyal Orders. It recognises the need for respect for those who parade and for those who live in areas through which they seek to parade. The right of all citizens to freedom from all forms of harassment is enshrined in law.

Under these proposals, the City Council will only be regarded as an interested body and will be automatically informed of proposed parades/protests. (Under the previous proposals of the Interim Ashdown Report, as reported to the Good Relations Steering Panel in June 2008, the Council would have had an increased role, that of administering procedures in non-contentious areas.)

Recommendations/Decision required

The paper has been circulated to all the political parties seeking comments and individual party groups will make their own responses on the issue.

The Good Relations Partnership is requested to note the information provided, with the expectation that the new framework will help to resolve what has been a deeply divisive and contentious issue in Belfast. Some previous parades and protests have proved costly, not only in financial terms, but in terms of community relations and Belfast's image abroad.

The Partnership is requested to support an initiative which should assist in improving local dialogue, reducing tension and promoting better understanding and relationships within the city."

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During discussion, several Members expressed concern that the proposed legislation, if implemented, would prevent people from assembling in public in order to express their sympathy or opposition in relation to events occurring at both a national and international level, thereby removing their freedom of expression. The point was made that the document had been circulated to all of the Political Parties on the Council and that each of them would be making a detailed response in relation to the proposals.

Accordingly, the Partnership agreed to note the information which had been provided.

St. Patrick's Day 2010

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 4th December, 2009, it had agreed to allocate from its St. Patrick's Day Small Grants Scheme funding of up to £39,666.40 to 105 groups throughout the City. The Partnership had requested feedback in relation to those events and projects which had been funded under the Scheme. The Good Relations Manager explained that organisations did not receive funding until the event had taken place and all receipts had been received by the Good Relations Unit. In addition, organisations were required to submit to the Unit an evaluation form detailing the main activities of their project and were encouraged to submit also any photographs or media coverage associated with their event. Some of the photographs were on display at the meeting for the information of the Partnership. She pointed out that a wide range of projects had been undertaken as part of this year's St. Patrick's Day celebration, including visits to Armagh Cathedrals, Downpatrick Museum and Slemish Mountain, the holding of arts and crafts classes, ceilidh dancing, sports events, multi-cultural fun days and social events for senior citizens' groups. She reviewed the feedback which had been received and pointed out that it had been particularly positive and had provided a valuable opportunity for promoting good relations.

Noted.

St. Patrick's Day Grant – Divis Youth Project

The Partnership was reminded that, at its meeting on 4th December, 2009, it had approved funding of up to £39,666.40 under its St. Patrick's Day Small Grants Scheme to 105 groups. The Good Relations Manager reported that a list of groups which had applied, together with the amount requested and the level of funding which had been recommended, had been included within the report which had been presented to the Partnership. She pointed out that an award of £500 for Divis Youth Project had been included in the list of groups contained within the appendix to the report and had been included also in the overall total for funding. However, due to a typographical error, that group had not been included in the full list of recommendations within the main report and, therefore, had not been recorded within the minutes of the meeting.

Accordingly, the Partnership agreed that the minute of the meeting of 4th December be varied to include the allocation of £500 to the Divis Youth Project.

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Good Relations Partnership,
Friday, 14th May, 2010

Summer Intervention Fund

The Partnership considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

For the past few years, the North Belfast Community Action Unit of the Office of the First Minister/Deputy First Minister has provided summer intervention funding for a range of groups within North Belfast seeking to address the needs of young people at interfaces. The North Belfast Community Action Unit has now been disbanded and its staff transferred back to the Community Relations Unit within OFM/DFM headquarters.

Within the past few days, a request has been received from the Community Relations Unit that their Summer Intervention Fund, total value around £100,000, could be administered by the Council’s Good Relations Unit. In previous years, this funding was only been available to groups working on interfaces in North Belfast, being channelled via the Community Empowerment Partnerships.

Key Issues

It was explained to them that, if the Fund were to be managed and administered by the Council, it could not be ring-fenced for North Belfast and would have to be open to all areas of the city, although we could give priority to work with young people that live at or near interface areas.

As this funding is intended for summer intervention work, it is essential that all the necessary documentation – application forms, guidance – was prepared as quickly as possible and that the whole scheme is advertised immediately after Partnership approval.

To meet the very tight deadline for Partnership approval of our meeting on 11th June, the proposed timetable is:

Monday 17 May	Call for applications via website, e-mails etc
Friday 28 May	Closing date 12.00 noon
Tuesday 1 June	Assessments by Good Relations and Community Relations Unit staff
Friday 4 June	Report with recommendations go out to Good Relations Partnership
Friday 11 June	Good Relations Partnership approval
Monday 14 June	Letters of offer sent out to successful groups

Work will continue next week to devise the scoring matrix required for the assessments.

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Partnership members are requested to note that this Summer Intervention Fund is primarily for intervention and diversionary work in times of heightened tension over the summer months in Belfast. In accordance with our own Good Relations criteria, we propose offering support for longer-term engagement, particularly for cross-community work. This is in accordance with recent research by the Terry Enright Foundation, where young people who live at interfaces pointed out that one-off activities had limited value and they preferred programmes that ran over a longer time period.

The Fund seeks to promote and build on existing partnerships within and across communities. It will support direct interaction with young people and encourage their involvement in programme development and delivery.

Applications for the Fund will be assessed according to pre-set criteria, with a maximum amount available being £5,000, for projects that will take place over the summer period and ending before the end of October, 2010. Salaries will not be included but costs of facilitation to deliver programmes can be met, as is the case with the Good Relations grant aid programme.

Resource Implications

Financial

£100,000 total value of Fund – to be met 100% by the Community Relations Unit within the Office of the First Minister/Deputy First Minister; a large proportion of this to be transferred to the Council in advance to allay any cash flow problems.

Human Resources

Although our Unit is currently under-staffed, we feel that this is an important task and our Good Relations Officers have worked hard to prepare the necessary documentation in a very short time. All assessments will be undertaken in-house with Community Relations Unit observers.

Recommendation

The Partnership is requested to grant approval to the Unit's management and administration of this Summer Intervention Fund on behalf of the Community Relations Unit as outlined above."

The Partnership adopted the recommendation, subject to approval being granted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

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Funding for Hazelwood Youth Providers' Forum

The Partnership noted that a request from the above-mentioned organisation seeking funding of £3,500 to attend a Challenge for Youth Summer Camp would be processed through the Summer Intervention Fund.

Noted.

Wider Issues for Discussion

Living in Belfast Guide

The Partnership noted that an invitation to the launch of "Living in Belfast" pocket guide which was taking place in the City Hall on 19th May had been extended to Members of the Partnership.

Chairman



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Suicide Awareness and Prevention
Date:	Friday, 21st May, 2010
Reporting Officer:	Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)
Contact Officer:	Mr. Gareth Quinn, Development Officer (extension 6316)

Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that the Committee, at its meeting on 23rd April, agreed to receive a report detailing the actions which the various Council Departments were undertaking in relation to suicide awareness and prevention.

The prevention of suicide has been a major issue for some time with the numbers of such deaths in Northern Ireland running at extremely high levels, as illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 1: Deaths from suicide across Northern Ireland by age and gender 2005 – 2008

Year	Age (years)								Gender	
	1-14	15-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	85+	Male	Female
2005	3	77	45	40	31	11	6	0	167	46
2006	3	112	69	61	32	9	4	1	227	64
2007	4	80	52	51	30	15	9	1	175	67
2008	3	105	75	50	27	14	8	0	218	64

Source: DHSSPSNI, NISRA statistics, Registrar General Quarterly reports

Suicide is a recognised problem within Belfast as illustrated in Figure 2, with the north and west of the city recording the highest numbers of deaths.

Figure 2: Deaths from suicide and undetermined intent

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Belfast East	2	4	9	9	14	38
Belfast North	14	16	16	24	20	90
Belfast South	9	9	15	16	13	62
Belfast West	11	9	11	22	22	75
Total	26	38	51	73	69	257

Source: DHSSPS, NINIS statistics

Furthermore, it is well documented that these areas suffer from extreme social and economic deprivation and that the aftermath of the 'Troubles' has left a legacy of poor mental and physical health and wellbeing.

The problem in Northern Ireland led to the government introducing a Suicide Prevention Strategy, 'Protect Life – a shared vision', in October 2006 which advocates innovative and comprehensive local multi-sectoral approaches to help reduce the problem.

Key Issues

The Council recognises the urgent and imperative need to address actively the issues of suicide awareness and prevention. Various initiatives and activities have been undertaken in an effort to help deal with this problem. A list of these is set out below:

- In response to concerns about suicide rates in North and West Belfast, a multi sectoral Implementation Group for the prevention of suicide and self harm was established in October 2006. The Council has representation at both Member and officer level.
- The Council has taken a lead role in developing a community response plan which aims to provide a co-ordinated approach to enable early detection of possible suicide clusters in order to prevent further suicides by supporting those individuals at risk. The plan also aims to ensure that information is gathered effectively and that the success or otherwise of each case is reviewed so that improvements can be made where necessary.
- The Council has entered into a partnership with the Public Health Agency and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to form the Belfast Health Development Unit. This unit aims to produce an integrated city wide plan for tackling health inequalities and improving health and wellbeing, with mental health and wellbeing having been identified as an overarching theme for its work.
- Under Peace III, funding has been administered to groups who are undertaking work which will have a positive effect on the issue of suicide awareness and prevention. A summary of this funding is included in Appendix 1.
- As a major employer the Council has a duty to protect and promote the health and wellbeing of its employees, which includes providing support for employees who are affected by suicide.
- The civic dignitaries, both current and past, have attended events organised by suicide awareness groups from across the city. Furthermore, the current Deputy Lord Mayor is hosting later this month a charitable event in the City Hall for the PIPS Project.
- A youth column was recently featured in City Matters about depression and included the suicide prevention helpline number among other details. The following pieces have also been published in the magazine:
 - Launch of Suicide prevention helpline number - Spring 08 issue
 - Suicide prevention article expressing support for the recent World Suicide Prevention Day on 10th September – November 09 issue
 - Christmas Blues article with helpline numbers for young people – written by Youth Forum columnist – November 09 issue
- The Development Department is exploring currently bespoke training for play staff regarding suicide, particularly identification of early signs and support for children who have been affected by suicide.

- A sub-group of the Youth Forum examined in depth the issue of suicide, undertaking training and organising visits to external organisations dealing with suicide. An expert panel discussion, hosted in City Hall in April, engaged young people, policy makers and practitioners.
- Community Development staff have organised and participated in a range of suicide related training courses in conjunction with key community based organisations like FASA and the PIPS Project. In turn, awareness level and other relevant training sessions have been organised for volunteers. Several examples are cited below:
 - December 2008, Community Services organised a training session to raise awareness of Suicide in our society. The accredited training was delivered by the PIPS Project and was given to staff from Community Services as well as Youth Forum members.
 - Nineteen people in total took part in the 'Lifeguard Training', which sought to raise awareness amongst ordinary people and front line staff of the signs that might give an indication that someone might be at risk from self harm or suicide.
 - The Highfield area via Upper Springfield Healthy Living Project can now avail of services around Mental Health Alternative Therapies based in Highfield Community Centre. Personal Counselling in Forthspring is also being planned.
 - FASA's Suicide Awareness project has previously used the Hammer Area Pavilion to run playschemes at Easter and during the summer. These targeted children who had lost a family member as a result of suicide.
 - Both FASA and PIPS have had free use of Duncairn Community Centre for meetings and counselling and therapy sessions.
 - Approximately 12 volunteers in Inverary Community Centre completed PIPS training in Suicide awareness. This training was also rolled out to 12 volunteers from other community groups in the Inner East of the City.
- In addition, grant aid is provided via revenue grant to support organisations like FASA.
- The West Belfast Sub-Group of the District Policing Partnership has funded the Suicide Awareness and Support Group in West Belfast to produce an information leaflet in relation to youth issues. Funding in the sum of £500 was provided in March, 2010.
- The West Group of the District Policing Partnership has supported the work of the Suicide Awareness and Support Group through inviting them to present to a group of visitors from Tallaght West on an exchange project between West Belfast and Tallaght West. This was supported financially by the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

On a number of occasions the Council has unanimously passed notices of motion requesting that this important issue receives the required attention, most notably on 1st April, 2004 and again on 12th November, 2007, when the relevant statutory authorities were called upon to set up a task force to address the growing problem.

Members will also be aware that the Review of Public Administration will give Councils a new power of wellbeing. The Council will be able to utilise this functionality to become much more involved in promoting health and wellbeing in partnership with other key stakeholders. Furthermore, through the new duties associated with

Community Planning, the Council will be able to support greater co-ordination of services in these fields throughout the City.

It is apparent from the above information that the Council is undertaking a significant amount of work in relation to suicide awareness and prevention.

Resource Implications

N/A

Recommendation

To note the information provided and to agree that the problem of suicides in the city finds expression in the planning process for the new Corporate Plan and that detailed action lists on the actions the Council can usefully take in relation to the exercise of its functions are prepared as part of the planning process.



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Response to “Local Partnership Working on Policing & Community Safety: A Consultation Paper”
Date:	21 st May 2010
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Director of Health & Environmental Services, ext. 3260
Contact Officer:	Siobhan Toland, Head of Environmental Health, ext. 3281 or Eve Bremner, Safer City Manager, ext. 3275

Relevant Background Information

The Department of Justice (formerly NIO) is currently undertaking a consultation on the future of Community Safety and District Policing Partnerships. The deadline for response is 3rd June 2010.

The Community Safety and DPP teams within the Health & Environmental Services Department have been coordinating consultation on the proposals on behalf of Belfast City Council and the attached report (Appendix 1) is now being brought before members of committee for their consideration.

In Belfast consultation has taken place with the following:

- Belfast District Policing Partnership – Principal Partnership, North, South, East & West Sub-groups
- Belfast Community Safety Partnership – Strategic & Operational Tiers
- Chairman of Belfast District Policing Partnership
- Chairman of Belfast Community Safety Partnership
- Sinn Fein Party Group, Belfast City Council
- DUP Party Group, Belfast City Council
- UUP Party Group, Belfast City Council
- SDLP Party Group, Belfast City Council
- Alliance Party Group, Belfast City Council
- PUP Party Group, Belfast City Council
- Belfast City Council Inter-Departmental Policy Officers Group

Consultation took the form of:

- Party Group briefings
- Individual briefing sessions
- Partnership meetings
- A joint CSP and DPP consultation event
- Email circulation for comment to members of the CSP and Council departments.

Key Issues

Aim of the Consultation: To seek views on the best way to deliver the functions of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) in the future through a single partnership.

Rationale: CSPs and DPPs were set up as separate structures with specific, but complementary functions, in 2003 after a Criminal Justice Review. This was considered to be the best arrangement at the time, considering the political climate that existed.

CSPs are largely seen to deliver initiatives on the ground to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime, while the DPPs ensure local engagement and accountability for how policing is delivered. These partnerships have generally worked very well but there is an emerging consensus that the time is now right to bring the functions of CSPs and DPPs together and it is suggested that they should be delivered by a single partnership.

There are a number of reasons that the NIO (now DOJ) believe that a single partnership is the best way forward:

1. Taking a more joined-up approach will result in better local delivery , accountability and engagement
2. Single partnerships should also complement the introduction of community planning
3. By streamlining the administration and overheads involved, we should be able to make better use of the resources available for partnership working by directing more of the funding to initiatives on the ground.

While this review is not in itself a cost-cutting exercise, the NIO (now DOJ) believes that it is vital that the new arrangements provide good value for money. At present, CSPs administrative costs account for approximately £1.15m (35%) out of their total budget of £3.28m, and approximately £3.5m (85%) out of the total budget of £4.1m for DPPs. The proposed new arrangements should facilitate a reduction in these overhead costs and enable more resources to be targeted at front line delivery.

Role of the new Partnership: In preparation for this public consultation, the NIO (NOW DOJ) has undertaken substantial engagement with a range of key stakeholders to test the practicability of amalgamating local partnerships and to ensure that the right issues were identified. This included a consultation in 2009 to which this Council made a response supporting better working arrangements between both partnerships.

The consultation recommends that the new partnership should:

- Not lose any of the functionality of the existing partnerships
- Join-up policing and community safety activities and be capable of aligning with broader arrangements at council level for community planning
- Facilitate meaningful public engagement by enhancing the involvement of local communities and responding to their concerns
- Deliver improved value for money and quality of service
- Positively promote equality of opportunity
- Give equal weight to the functions of accountability, delivery and engagement
- Ensure that the policing accountability function is not diluted
- Facilitate the sharing of best practice across Northern Ireland
- Focus on outcomes/solutions rather than activities/ analysis of problems
- Be capable of being easily understood by the public

Recommended model: While 3 models were considered within the consultation document, the NIO (now DOJ) has proposed one model for primary consideration as they believe it offers the correct balance in terms of joining up the functions currently delivered by CSPs and DPPs while retaining a distinct local police monitoring role. Model 2 also offers a pragmatic approach that is likely to be acceptable to all parties. Lastly, it recognises that the accountability arrangements are likely to remain complex as accountability for policing issues and community safety issues respectively fall to the Policing Board and the new Department of Justice.

The suggested model proposes a single Crime Reduction Partnership (name to be confirmed) incorporating a separate monitoring group on policing. The DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board would jointly set regional priorities which would then be communicated to local councils. Councils would identify the local issues of concern for the Crime Reduction Partnership, which would be responsible for the development of a Partnership Plan to address these issues and for informing the Local Policing Plan. The Delivery Group (or Groups) would be responsible for the outworkings of the Partnership Plans. The local issues group or groups would support wider stakeholder and community engagement.

Other recommendations include:

- **Statutory Duties** – the NIO (now DOJ) would place a statutory duty on local councils to establish Crime Reduction Partnerships. The legislation would also carry across to the Policing Monitoring Group legislative duties that currently apply to District Policing Partnerships.
- **Membership** - The membership of the CRP would be drawn from four main areas:
 1. **Elected representatives** - nominated by Council proportionate to their party representation (*please note elected members would also be expected to sit on the Police Monitoring Group*)
 2. **Statutory organisations** – on invitation from Council to organisational representatives of an appropriate seniority
 3. **Community & voluntary sector** - which could include the business community and/or faith based organisations
 4. **Independent members** - who would be appointed by the Northern Ireland Policing Board (*please note independent members would also be expected to sit on the Police Monitoring Group*)

All sectors would be represented (possibly up to eight from each sector, not including the Partnership Chair) with the overall chair of the partnership to be agreed locally.

- **Accountability** - The Crime Reduction Partnership would be collectively accountable to the local council for delivery against the local Partnership Plan, and the council would in turn account to the DoJ for the Partnership's performance and how the council is exercising its statutory duties. The independent members and elected representatives (including the chair of the Crime Reduction Partnership) would, in addition to their role on the full partnership, form the separate Policing Monitoring Group. The Policing Monitoring Group would be responsible for monitoring the local police against achievement of the local policing plan and would be accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board, through the local council, for this specific area of work.

- **Public Engagement** - The local council would be required to set up a local forum, or fora (*the 'Local Issues Fora' in the proposed model*) which could subsume existing structures and engagement mechanisms - for the purposes of engaging with the public on the full range of issues to be addressed by the Crime Reduction Partnership, including policing matters. Depending on local circumstances, this could be on a thematic or geographic basis.
- **Delivery** - The Delivery Group(s) would be responsible for front-line delivery of the Partnership Plan objectives. The makeup and membership of this group would be left to the local Partnership to decide. The make-up of the Delivery Group could be based on a thematic or geographic basis and should, as far as possible, dovetail with, other local delivery mechanisms (for example, Neighbourhood Renewal). It should include members of the Crime Reduction Partnership with a specific knowledge or interest in the issue to be addressed and be led by a 'champion (s)' who would be responsible for reporting back to the main Partnership on progress and delivery. This advocate (s) would also lead the liaison between the Local Issues Forum (or fora) and the main Partnership for their respective theme.
- **Funding** - Funding would continue to be provided by both the DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board, though both organisations will consider how to provide a more streamlined and consistent approach for accounting to each organisation for how this funding is used, with a greater focus on achieving positive social outcomes.

Proposed Time scales: The NIO (now DOJ) believes that there is a clear consensus to press ahead with planning for the introduction of single partnership arrangements, coterminous with the proposed new council boundaries in May 2011. However, the Department is aware of the uncertainty around RPA and they have indicated that they would still wish to see a single partnerships established by May 2011; even if RPA is not implemented at that time. This decision will be dependent on a number of factors including the approval by the new DOJ Minister.

Resource Implications

Financial

None at present.

The DoJ and NIPB currently provide financial assistance to Belfast City Council to support the work of the DPP and CSP and other associated costs are included in annual revenue estimates. The consultation recommends that this is not a cost cutting exercise though it is hoped that the emerging structure would bring efficiencies.

Human Resources

At present the human resource implications of emerging recommendations are not known. However, work has already been undertaken to support the long-term integration of the CSP and DPP by bringing the two staff teams under the management of the Environmental Health Service.

Asset and Other Implications

N/A

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee considers and agrees the attached draft response.

Decision Tracking

The Director of Health and Environmental Services will ensure that the agreed response is submitted to the DoJ by 3rd June. She will also report back to the Committee on the outcome of the consultation and proposals for implementation at the appropriate time

Key to Abbreviations

NIO– Northern Ireland
CSP – Community Safety Partnership
DPP – District Policing Partnership
NIPB – Northern Ireland Policing Board
DoJ – Department of Justice
RPA – Review of Public Administration

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Consultation Response Paper
Appendix 2 – “Local Partnership working on Policing & Community Safety: A Consultation paper”

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APPENDIX 1

Response to “Local Partnership working on Police and Community Safety: A Consultation Document”



Please note that this response that has been considered by Belfast City Council's Strategic Policy & Resources Committee and will be presented to Council on 1st June 2010. The response has been informed by Belfast Community Safety Partnership and the District Policing Partnership who will also respond to the consultation; though it is hoped that given the extensive, and joined-up consultation undertaken that the responses will be closely aligned.

On behalf of: Belfast City Council

Response Date: 3rd June 2010

Full Consultation document available at: www.dojni.gov.uk

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Background

Title: Local Partnership working on Police and Community Safety: A Consultation Document

Aim of the Consultation: To seek views on the best way to deliver the functions of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) in the future through a single partnership.

Rationale: CSPs and DPPs were set up as separate structures with specific, but complementary functions, in 2003 after a Criminal Justice Review. This was considered to be the best arrangement at the time, considering the political climate that existed.

CSPs are largely seen to deliver initiatives on the ground to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime, while the DPPs ensure local engagement and accountability for how policing is delivered. These partnerships have generally worked very well but there is an emerging consensus that the time is now right to bring the functions of CSPs and DPPs together and for them to be delivered by a single partnership.

There are a number of reasons that the NIO (now DOJ) believe that a single partnership is the best way forward:

1. Taking a more joined-up approach will result in better local delivery , accountability and engagement
2. Single partnerships should also complement the introduction of community planning
3. By streamlining the administration and overheads involved, we should be able to make better use of the resources available for partnership working by directing more of the funding to initiatives on the ground.

While this review is not in itself a cost-cutting exercise, the NIO (now DOJ) believes that it is vital that the new arrangements provide good value for money. At present, for CSPs administrative costs account for approximately £1.15m (35%) out of their total budget of £3.28m, and approximately £3.5m (85%) out of the total budget of £4.1m for DPPs. The proposed new arrangements should facilitate a reduction in these overhead costs and enable more resources to be targeted at front line delivery.

Role of the new Partnership: In preparation for this public consultation, the NIO (NOW DOJ) has undertaken substantial engagement with a range of key stakeholders to test the practicability of amalgamating local partnerships and to ensure that the right issues were identified.

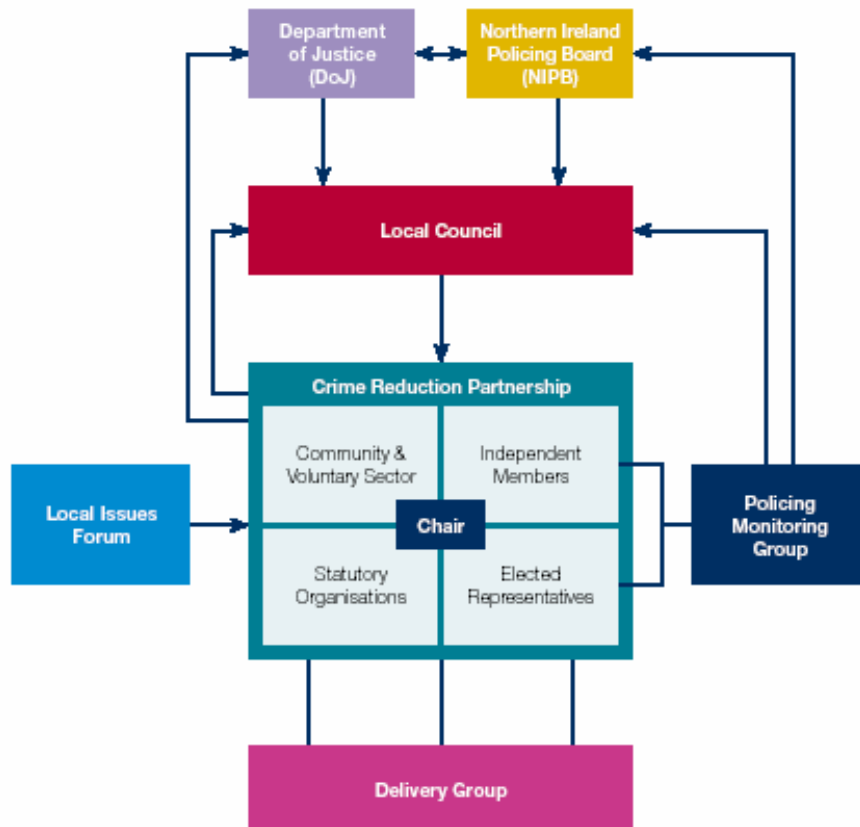
The consultation recommends that the new partnership should:

- Not lose any of the functionality of the existing partnerships

- Join-up policing and community safety activities and be capable of aligning with broader arrangements at council level for community planning
- Facilitate meaningful public engagement by enhancing the involvement of local communities and responding to their concerns
- Deliver improved value for money and quality of service
- Positively promote equality of opportunity
- Give equal weight to the functions of accountability, delivery and engagement
- Ensure that the policing accountability function is not diluted
- Facilitate the sharing of best practice across Northern Ireland
- Focus on outcomes/solutions rather than activities/ analysis of problems
- Be capable of being easily understood by the public

Recommended model: While 3 models were considered, the NIO (now DOJ) has proposed one model for primary consideration (Model 2 as below) as they believe it offers the correct balance in terms of joining up the functions currently delivered by CSPs and DPPs while retaining a distinct local police monitoring role. Model 2 also offers a pragmatic approach that is likely to be acceptable to all parties. Lastly, it recognises that the accountability arrangements are likely to remain complex as accountability for policing issues and community safety issues respectively fall to the Policing Board and the new Department of Justice.

Model Two –Crime Reduction Partnership



‘Belfast Crime Reduction Partnership (CRP)’

The suggested model proposes a single Crime Reduction Partnership incorporating a separate monitoring group on policing. The DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board would jointly set regional priorities which would then be communicated to local councils. Councils would identify the local issues of concern for the Crime Reduction Partnership, which would be responsible for the development of a Partnership Plan to address these issues and for informing the Local Policing Plan. The Delivery Group (or Groups) would be responsible for the outworkings of the Partnership Plans. The local issues group or groups would support wider stakeholder and community engagement.

Other recommendations include:

- **Statutory Duties** – the NIO (now DOJ) would place a statutory duty on local councils to establish Crime Reduction Partnerships. The legislation would also carry across to the Policing Monitoring Group legislative duties that currently apply to District Policing Partnerships.
- **Membership** - The membership of the CRP would be drawn from four main areas:
 1. **Elected representatives** - nominated by Council proportionate to their party representation (*please note elected members would also be expected to sit on the Police Monitoring Group*)
 2. **Statutory organisations** – on invitation from Council to organisational representatives of an appropriate seniority
 3. **Community & voluntary sector** - which could include the business community and/or faith based organisations
 4. **Independent members** - who would be appointed by the Northern Ireland Policing Board (*please note independent members would also be expected to sit on the Police Monitoring Group*)

All sectors would be represented (possibly up to eight from each sector, not including the Partnership Chair) with the overall chair of the partnership to be agreed locally.

- **Accountability** - The Crime Reduction Partnership would be collectively accountable to the local council for delivery against the local Partnership Plan, and the council would in turn account to the DoJ for the Partnership’s performance and how the council is exercising its statutory duties. The independent members and elected representatives (including the chair of the Crime Reduction Partnership) would, in addition to their role on the full partnership, form the separate Policing Monitoring Group. The Policing Monitoring Group would be responsible for monitoring the local police against achievement of the local policing plan and would be accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board, through the local council, for this specific area of work.

- **Public Engagement** - The local council would be required to set up a local forum, or fora (*the 'Local Issues Fora' in the proposed model*) which could subsume existing structures and engagement mechanisms - for the purposes of engaging with the public on the full range of issues to be addressed by the Crime Reduction Partnership, including policing matters. Depending on local circumstances, this could be on a thematic or geographic basis.
- **Delivery** - The Delivery Group(s) would be responsible for front-line delivery of the Partnership Plan objectives. The makeup and membership of this group would be left to the local Partnership to decide. The make-up of the Delivery Group could be based on a thematic or geographic basis and should, as far as possible, dovetail with, other local delivery mechanisms (for example, Neighbourhood Renewal). It should include members of the Crime Reduction Partnership with a specific knowledge or interest in the issue to be addressed and be led by a 'champion (s)' who would be responsible for reporting back to the main Partnership on progress and delivery. This advocate (s) would also lead the liaison between the Local Issues Forum (or fora) and the main Partnership for their respective theme.
- **Funding** - Funding would continue to be provided by both the DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board, though both organisations will consider how to provide a more streamlined and consistent approach for accounting to each organisation for how this funding is used, with a greater focus on achieving positive social outcomes.

Proposed Time scales: The NIO (now DOJ) believes that there is a clear consensus to press ahead with planning for the introduction of single partnership arrangements, co-terminous with the proposed new council boundaries in May 2011. However, the Department is aware of the uncertainty around RPA and would wish to see single partnerships established by May 2011; even if RPA is not implemented at that time.

Summary of consultation process in Belfast

Consultation was coordinated on behalf of Belfast City Council by the Community Safety and DPP teams within the Health & Environmental Services Department.

In Belfast consultation has taken place with the following:

- Belfast District Policing Partnership – Principal Partnership, North, South, East & West Sub-groups
- Belfast Community Safety Partnership – Strategic & Operational Tiers
- Chairman of Belfast District Policing Partnership
- Chairman of Belfast Community Safety Partnership
- Sinn Fein Party Group, Belfast City Council
- DUP Party Group, Belfast City Council
- UUP Party Group, Belfast City Council
- SDLP Party Group, Belfast City Council
- Alliance Party Group, Belfast City Council
- PUP Party Group, Belfast City Council
- Belfast City Council Inter-Departmental Policy Officers Group

Consultation took the form of:

- Party Group briefings
- Individual briefing sessions
- Partnership meetings
- A joint CSP and DPP consultation event
- Email circulation for comment to members of the CSP and Council departments.

Questions considered by Belfast

General issues

Q1. Do you agree that the proposed model (Model 2) is the best option?

While consultation focussed on the proposed model there was some concern voiced that the proposed structures would not 'simplify' the existing framework. It was noted that the dual lines of accountability and the proposal to establish Local Issues Fora and a Delivery Group might add to the existing myriad of structures in place throughout the city and it was suggested that this exercise should be used as an opportunity to either rationalise, or use existing, structures rather than create more and additional layers of partnership.

The view was also expressed that the proposed model was not radical enough and simply reframed what was already in place as opposed to trying to establish a single, genuinely integrated partnership and agenda. It is suggested that the model needs to be more visionary and that there may be merit in reconsidering the other models¹.

Q2. Do you agree with the proposed functions of the partnership?

It was largely agreed that there was a need to support community engagement, partnership working, service delivery and accountability. However, there were differing views on whether it was appropriate to hold the police accountable through a separate process and structure. The view, for example, was expressed that there should be accountability for the strategic work of the Partnership and any sub-structures and not merely the police alone. It was recognised however that there were communities who would feel strongly about retaining the opportunity to influence and monitor local policing and to ensure transparency.

Q3. Do you agree with the name – Crime Reduction Partnership?

Universally it was agreed that this name was unsuitable. It was agreed that the name presents a narrow view of the broad agenda that the Partnership would be addressing and that much of the work of the partnership would not only be about reducing crime but increasing reporting, tackling fear of crime, and dealing with antisocial behaviour. Views from other statutory services such as the Fire and Rescue Service or Ambulance Service expressed concern that this name would not reflect the extensive outreach programmes they deliver and the proactive approach to improving and encouraging safer environments.

Possible alternative suggestion: Safer [Belfast] Partnership

Rationale: In Belfast this would build upon the existing Safer Belfast Plan (2009-2011). It would also offer the Partnership flexibility to address a broad range of 'safety' issues and is easily marketable.

¹ Please see Appendix 1

Q4. Do you agree that the Council should oversee delivery of the partnership plan?

There was broad support for this proposal as it was agreed that the emerging structure and process should be aligned with community planning in the future; in which Council will play a leading role. It was also agreed that this would strengthen governance and accountability arrangements and ensure elected members had appropriate oversight and input into the work of the Partnership.

Membership

Q5. Do you agree with the proposed membership of the CRP?

There was a variety of views expressed in relation to this:

- There was broad agreement for representation from the statutory sector, elected members and the community/voluntary sector. It was noted however that the private sector is not expressly articulated as a potential member and in Belfast the role of the Chamber of Trade and Commerce, among other organisations, would be seen to be beneficial. Moreover, the view was also expressed that there should be linkages with the wider Criminal Justice system, and in particular the PPS and Courts Service.
- Concern was raised on a number of occasions in relation to the appointment of independent members and the need to ensure that these representatives were truly 'independent' and reflective of society in general
- It was acknowledged that appointment of the community/voluntary sector presented challenges in ensuring true representation; and also there was the perception that those groups on the structure had a greater opportunity to access services and funding. It was suggested that this could be overcome by combining the community/voluntary and independent sectors and through the Local Issues Fora.
- There was also a strong suggestion that the role of faith groups play a vital role in delivering community safety and their membership should be considered in the definition of the voluntary sector.
- Some elected members were of the opinion that there should be a greater balance, or perhaps outright majority, of elected members on the CRP; however there was no consistent view on this matter either by party groups or the Community Safety Partnership.
- Some elected members also raised concern about capacity as they may be asked to sit on multiple structures.
- In general therefore it was agreed that there should be clear guidelines on the roles and responsibilities of member organisations and an agreed appointment system.
- It was noted that the current make up of the DPP and sub groups reflected a broad demographic range and this was of working benefit to them, consideration should therefore be given

in selection to ensure diversity and including young people was key.

There was broad agreement that there should be as much flexibility for local determination as possible within the legislation; but that basic principles such as the categories of representatives, how they should be selected, and the proportion of seats that each should be allocated should be outlined in the legislation. It was suggested that the actual number of members could then be agreed locally to allow larger cities such as Belfast to accommodate the large number of potential members.

Lastly, it was noted that while the Council should play a leading role in supporting and driving the partnership that there should be commitment from other participating organisations – both to commit financial resources and support service delivery. It is hoped that putting the partnership and membership of certain organisations on a statutory footing would assist this.

Local accountability and engagement

Q6. Does this model provide suitable opportunity to engage at a local level?

It was largely agreed that a single Local Issues Fora would not allow for adequate community engagement within Belfast. Again it was suggested that there should be flexibility within the legislation to support local determination to establish structures as appropriate. The view was also strongly held that this consultation should support a rationalisation of structures and as such, where possible, existing structures (such as those supported by the Area Partnership Boards) should be built upon rather than establishing new ones.

Key to supporting this model is the need to put the local community at the heart of the model. It was suggested that to enable local communities to have a voice there was a need to support and resource community development to build local capacity. This was considered key to any successful model.

It was also noted that the Local Issues Fora for Belfast was likely to be needed at a geographical level possibly in a North South, East and West of the city however the groups would need to be structured to be inclusive of all the community and that local communities should be offered equal access to participate.

The meetings in public held by the DPP were largely felt to be an ineffective way of engaging with the community (in most but not all areas) and it was suggested that greater use could be made of PACT and CPLC structures already in place that appear to have been more successful in engaging with local residents.

Q7. Who should sit on the Local Issues Fora?

It was suggested that the Local Issues Fora could mirror the strategic partnership/CRP at a local level; thus potentially involving elected representatives as well as representatives from the community, voluntary and

statutory sectors. In order to support this considerable investment in community capacity and infrastructure would be required therefore it is important that the work of this structure is closely aligned with other agendas such as Neighbourhood Renewal and Shared Futures.

A number of elected members and organisations raised concern about their capacity to attend the litany of partnership structures (whether geographical or issue-based) and so expressed some concern about this proposal. Some elected members also felt it was essential that locally elected representatives should have the opportunity to represent their areas and it was suggested this could be achieved by building on the existing DPP sub-group structure and broadening membership and function to include other partners, development of local [community safety] plans (that would in turn align with local policing plans), and local delivery. However, this again raised the issue of capacity for members (statutory and elected alike) to sit on multiple structures.

Importantly, it was felt that were elected members to sit on the Local Issues Fora that the appointment system should ensure that it is representatives from that area that take up these seats. This is not currently the case in the Belfast DPP sub-groups due to the agreed appointment system (i.e. De Hondt).

Q8. Do you agree with the proposed accountability lines?

The dual accountability and reporting lines were largely seen to be confusing and perpetuating the current separation of roles and agendas. In general it was felt that a single line of accountability would be preferable though further discussion would be required at a local and regional level on this matter.

It was also felt that there should be greater linkages, perhaps through membership, between the Local Issues Fora and the CRP and Police Monitoring Group. Elected members were also keen to ensure the close working between Council and PSNI was not lost and the view was also expressed that policing should be held accountable in line with the current PSNI District structures.

The view was taken by many that the CRP should be held accountable for performance against agreed strategic and local priorities for the city and neighbourhoods. The CRP could therefore develop a strategic plan and priorities for the city from which Local Issues Fora would then develop local plans. These would inform and align with the local policing plans and would be reported on to the main CRP and the public [on a quarterly basis]. The CRP could then take responsibility for reporting on performance to the public on a city-wide basis. It is suggested this process would prevent duplication of effort, establish a clear link between community input and eventual service delivery, and ensure there is transparency and accountability at a local and strategic level.

It was articulated that accountability should be against shared, priorities that require the input of a range of organisations. Therefore it was questioned whether a separate Police Monitoring Group was either necessary or

appropriate; as often outcomes measured at current DPP meetings are as a result of inter-agency working. Further consideration therefore of the other models may be warranted or alternatively there should a longer-term goal articulated with a staged approach.

Importantly, it was also noted that the Partnership should ultimately be accountable to the people it serves and that they should be able to feel the impact of the partnership's work on the ground. Therefore any model should be transparent, inclusive and accessible.

Remuneration

Q9. Should members of the CRP (or its constituent parts) be remunerated and if so which ones?

There was a wide range of views on this point; including that:

- No members of the partnership should be remunerated – this would ensure equality, ensure true commitment to the agenda and allow savings to be re-directed to front-line services
- Elected and independent members should be paid - this is due to the time commitment asked of them by sitting on multiple structures, recognising loss of earnings and the time commitment required for work outside formal meetings and to ensure buy-in.
- Only independent members should be remunerated - this role is played on a voluntary capacity and you would be unlikely to get applicants without this incentive
- If one sector is paid that all members (excluding the statutory sector) should be remunerated – but that this would lead to spiralling costs

In general it was felt that if elected and independent members were to be remunerated in some way to at least cover expenses that it should be on the basis of attendance and not a fixed payment. It was also agreed that the aim should ultimately be to direct as much resource as possible into actual delivery.

Finance

Q10. How can it provide best value?

In general it was agreed that this exercise should bring efficiencies and allow potential administrative savings to be re-directed to front-line services. However, elected members were keen to ensure that the current funding commitment offered by the Policing Board and Department of Justice (formerly NIO) to support the running of the DPP and CSP would not be diminished. Concern was also raised about the potential impact on staff that had supported the two partnerships' work over the last 7 years.

Conclusions

Broadly Agreed principles

While there were varied views on a range of the proposals, there was broad agreement on one central point – **that a single, integrated partnership should be created in the place of the existing CSP and DPP**. In addition, **there was universal rejection of the proposed name** and an acknowledgement that a single ‘Local Issues Forum’ structure would be insufficient to support community engagement in Belfast.

While there was not universal support for the proposed model it is recognised that Model 2 offers a pragmatic approach that may be acceptable to all parties. It is suggested, however, that this change process requires a staged approach and that a **longer-term goal** of full integration should be articulated; and that Model 2 might therefore be an initial step in this process.

While there are clear challenges in determining who and how members should be appointed it was agreed that the partnership should be **inclusive** and **competent** in their delivery. Importantly, the role of elected representatives on the partnership is crucial as they bring democratic legitimacy to the partnership and also act as representatives for their constituencies. It was suggested that being fully representative of all sectors would be more difficult but that perhaps modern technology, such as social network sites and the internet, might allow the partnership to establish a community of interest that would ensure accessibility in a more effective way that merely allocating seats on a formal structure.

There was also agreement that the new structure should continue to play a role in supporting the following key functions:

- establishing strategic priorities for the city and supporting associated strategic planning
- engaging with the public to support local planning and improve service delivery
- supporting service delivery to meet identified need
- providing transparency of decision making and resource accountability
- supporting performance management and accountability against agreed community safety targets

How this might be achieved is a different matter and further discussion will be required at both a regional and local level. In respect of Belfast it was agreed that the recommended model would not cater for the scale and complexity of engagement needs across the city. Therefore it is recommended that there should be **sufficient flexibility within the legislation** to allow the partnership to determine appropriate engagement and delivery structures. However it was acknowledged that it may need to specify basic ‘guiding principles’ governing these decisions. For example, while local areas may wish to agree the number of representatives on their CRP legislation should outline from

what sectors they should be sought, how they should be appointed and the proportionate allocation of seats.

There was varied views consensus on the issue of remuneration - though there was consensus that as much resource as possible should support service delivery - and there were differing views on the potential benefits and drawbacks of offering remuneration. With regard to accountability it was largely felt that the current separation of accountability would be confusing and perpetuate the current separation of roles. It is suggested that there should be **shared accountability** for the broader role and work of the partnership and therefore there may be merit in exploring the other Models further. In order to support this we have undertaken to illustrate alternatives to the model presented in the consultation (See Appendix 1). Further consultation and political agreement would be required to take these forward but we would be keen to discuss this in conjunction with the Department of Justice and the Policing Board.

On a more practical note it was felt strongly that guidance should be given by the DoJ and NIPB as soon as possible on the role and operational priorities for the CSP and DPP in the interim period. It was also acknowledged that while the consultation document highlights a completion date of May 2011, this would not be feasible as local Council elections around that time would inevitably delay the ability to appoint elected members to the new partnership; likely **until Autumn 2011**.

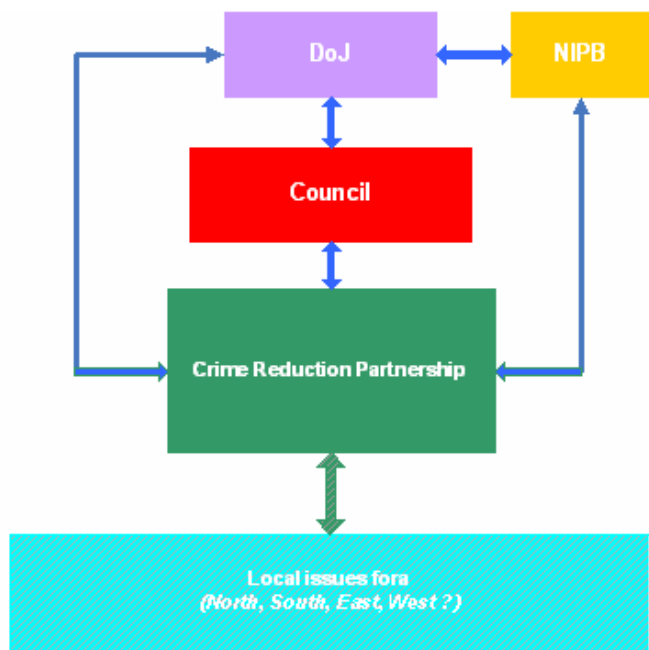
In conclusion, within Belfast, the consultation was well received. Belfast City Council has previously indicated its commitment to moving towards a community planning approach and the basic objectives of this consultation would support this emerging agenda. While a great deal of further discussion is required on the Belfast Model and who would play a role on the new structure Belfast City Council, the CSP and DPP welcome the opportunity to shape this consultation and would look forward to making further comment on developing proposals.

For further information on this response please contact:

Eve Bremner, Safer City Manager, Belfast City Council on 9027 0469 or bremnere@belfastcity.gov.uk

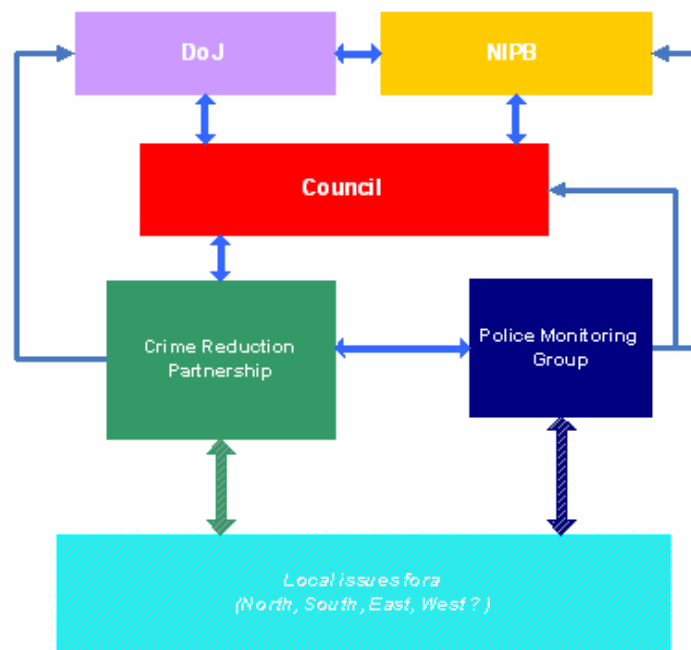
APPENDIX 1 – POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES

It was recognised throughout the consultation that there would need to be specific consideration of the Belfast model and that the legislation should offer sufficient flexibility for Belfast to establish appropriate local engagement structures and processes. The following, therefore, represent some potential models for consideration. Further discussion however would be required at both a local and regional level to agree structure, role and membership.



Further engagement and delivery structures as appropriate for example, PACTs, CPLCs, Get Home Safe Partnership etc.

MODEL A



Further engagement and delivery structures as appropriate for example, PACTs, CPLCs, Get Home Safe Partnership etc.

MODEL B

Role of the Safer Belfast Partnership (SBP; name to be confirmed):

1. To establish strategic priorities for the city and ensure these are reflected in constituent organisations' strategies
2. To support community engagement and consultation in identification of priorities and delivery against these
3. To direct resources, both locally and on a strategic basis, to support delivery against these priorities
4. To support the development of strategic services where appropriate
5. To support alignment with other key strategies such as Neighbourhood Renewal, Shared Future etc
6. To hold local SBP accountable for delivery against local [crime reduction] plans

Potential Membership:

- **Chairperson (elected member) +**
- 10 elected members (34% of membership)
- 8 statutory organisations (25%)
- 8 community/voluntary sector representatives (including 4 Chairpersons of sub-groups) (25%)
- 5 independent representatives (16%)

Role of Local Issues Fora (building upon existing structures such as DPP sub-groups and other neighbourhood Fora):

1. To develop local [crime reduction] plans based on local prioritisation of strategic priorities; part of which will include the informing of local policing plans
2. To support community engagement and consultation in the development and delivery of local plans
3. To oversee delivery against agreed plans and report to the SBP on performance and support monitoring of performance at a local level
4. To help secure resources to support delivery in local neighbourhoods

Potential Membership?:

- **Chairperson (Community/voluntary sector) +**
- 6 elected members (32% of membership)
- 5 statutory organisations (26%)
- 3 community/voluntary sector representatives (21%)
- 4 independent representatives (21%)

Role of the Police Monitoring Group (NB If Model 'A' was favoured these functions would be subsumed within the Safer Belfast Partnership and Local Issues Fora as appropriate):

1. Monitoring police performance against achievement of the local policing plans and city-wide policing priorities
2. Informing the priorities of policing plans

Potential Membership?:

- 11 elected members from SBP (55%) – including Chair
- 9 (5 independent representatives from SBP + 4 independent representatives nominated from Local Issues Fora) (45%)



Northern
Ireland
Office

Northern Ireland Office

Local Partnership Working on Policing & Community Safety: A Consultation Paper

March 2010

Northern Ireland Office

Local Partnership Working on Policing & Community Safety: A Consultation Paper

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Ministerial Foreword



I am pleased to be launching this public consultation on proposals to create new Crime Reduction Partnerships in Northern Ireland. The future delivery of local partnership working on policing and community safety is an issue which is important to everyone in Northern Ireland and which can make a real difference to the quality of life in every neighbourhood.

We look forward to responsibility for policing and justice being passed to a local devolved minister, and it will be for that new Minister to take the final decisions and implement any changes. However, the changes in council boundaries planned for May 2011 give us a golden opportunity to put public safety at the heart of local service delivery. If we are to have these new partnerships in place in time to coincide with these changes it is important to start planning now.

Over recent years, Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) have been bringing substantial benefits to communities across Northern Ireland, by delivering local solutions and increasing local accountability. They show that partnership works.

The purpose of this consultation is to look at how the existing functions of DPPs and CSPs, which currently sit side by side, can be brought together in anticipation of the changing landscape in local government. There is an emerging consensus that the time is now right to create single partnerships. Moving from 52 partnerships to 11 will free up resources for frontline delivery and allow the new partnerships to have a bigger impact on the ground.

CSPs and DPPs have made a real difference. I pay tribute to those who have served as members and the staff who have supported them for the role they have played in helping to make communities safer. This review has been about building on those achievements, and taking partnership working to the next level.

Engaging with the public and responding to their concerns should be hardwired into any new partnership. There should be a stronger connection than ever between the issues brought to a partnership and the outcomes it can deliver.

I strongly encourage you to have your say by responding to these proposals.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Goggins".

Rt Hon Paul Goggins MP

Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office

1 | Introduction

This consultation paper seeks your views on the best way to deliver the functions of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) in the future through single partnerships.

At the moment, there are two sets of local partnerships delivering separate but complementary functions. The CSPs deliver initiatives on the ground to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime, while the DPPs ensure local accountability for how policing is delivered. These partnerships have generally worked very well and there are a growing number of good examples of where the partnerships have come together to work on issues of common interest. But there is an emerging consensus that the time is now right to bring the functions of CSPs and DPPs together and for them to be delivered by single partnerships – one for each council area. It is important now to consider how these new partnerships should work in practice.

There are a number of reasons to believe that single partnerships are the best way forward. Taking a more joined-up approach will result in better local delivery and accountability, with efforts being more closely targeted on the real issues of concern in local neighbourhoods. New partnerships should also complement the introduction of community planning as part of the reform of local government under the Review of Public Administration. By streamlining the administration and overhead involved, we should be able to make better use of the resources available for partnership working by directing more of the funding to projects and initiatives on the ground. Finally, we have engaged with a wide range of groups and individuals with a close interest and involvement in the current partnerships. The clear consensus is that now is the right time to move to single partnerships.

This consultation paper sets out the background and context for our review of local partnership working, a proposed model on which we are seeking your views and the process we have undertaken to date to involve the main stakeholders.

What Are We Asking?

We are being clear from the very outset that the best model for the future is a single partnership encompassing the functions currently delivered by both CSPs and DPPs. Our working title is “Crime Reduction Partnership”. This view has been reinforced through close consultation with a range of organisations already involved in this work.

The rest of this document has a number of sections providing fuller details on various aspects of the work of CSPs and DPPs and the types of issues we need to consider. The main questions are:

- What should the new partnership do?
- Who should be on it?
- What should it be called?
- Who should be responsible for the partnership?
- How can it provide best value?
- How should the public be consulted and engaged?
- How do you want to hear back from the partnerships on how they are addressing your concerns?

Policing and community safety are issues that matter to all of us. This is your opportunity to have your say on how they will be delivered in your neighbourhood in the future.

2 | Background

As part of the implementation of the Belfast Agreement (April 1998), there were two major reviews of policing and justice. These were the *Review of the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland* ('the Criminal Justice Review') and the *Independent Review of Policing in Northern Ireland* ('the Patten report').

Community Safety Partnerships

Recommendation 196 of the Criminal Justice Review suggested the establishment of Community Safety and Policing Partnerships. Responding to this recommendation, Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) were established in all local council areas by the Northern Ireland Office (NIO). The NIO's first Community Safety Strategy, published in 2003 (*Creating a Safer Northern Ireland through Partnership*), said that CSPs would be reviewed as part of the Review of Public Administration (RPA) and the introduction of community planning. CSPs were established as voluntary partnerships, although there is provision within the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 to put them on a statutory footing. CSPs are multi-agency partnerships drawing their membership from the statutory, voluntary, community, business and faith sectors.

District Policing Partnerships

The Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland (also referred to as the Patten Commission) recommended the establishment of District Policing Partnership Boards. District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) were set up under the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 and they report to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. DPPs comprise a mix of elected representatives and independent members; their number varies depending on the council area. The legislation states that DPPs must be co-terminous to Council boundaries, and so the effect of the reform of local government would be for these partnerships to reduce to eleven, in line with the proposed number of new councils.

What Do These Partnerships Do?

While it is the case that the focus of the various partnerships can differ depending on local circumstances, the overarching remits for CSPs and DPPs are summarised below.

The overarching function of CSPs is to facilitate the implementation and delivery of local community safety strategies and action plans. This includes:

- carrying out regular audits in order to identify local problems and establish priorities;
- consulting the community in order to gather information on the perceptions of local residents;
- developing local strategies and action plans which seek to reduce crime and the fear of crime, and tackle anti-social behaviour;
- identifying which member organisation will be responsible for taking forward the appropriate action to achieve the defined objectives;
- carrying out evaluations of proposals in order to evidence good practice and improve performance; and
- helping to deliver crime reduction initiatives at local level, including regional initiatives.

The DPPs' main activities include:

- consultation with the public to find out what issues in relation to policing and crime are of concern within the council district;
- identification of local policing priorities arising from that consultation and recommending these to the District Commander so that they can be taken into account when the Local Policing Plan is being drawn up;
- monitoring police performance against the objectives contained in the Local Policing Plan and the Northern Ireland Policing Plan as it relates to the District;
- engagement with the community to obtain the cooperation of the public with the police in preventing crime; and
- acting as a general forum for discussion and consultation on all matters relating to the policing of the district.

Although both sets of partnerships have distinct roles, a number of the functions carried out by both can be seen as overlapping or duplicatory. On occasion, this has led to confusion and the perception of wasted resources. This is particularly likely in areas such as public engagement, consultation, and the delivery of local projects.

The CJINI View

In an inspection of Community Safety Partnerships, carried out in November 2006, Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland (CJINI) recommended that the optimum position post RPA would be to have one operational community safety/policing tier in each council area. This view was echoed in a subsequent inspection of Policing with the Community in Northern Ireland, undertaken in March 2009.

Changing Government Context

The reform of local government under the Review of Public Administration (RPA) will reduce the current 26 local councils in Northern Ireland to 11. This restructuring, and the subsequent introduction of community planning, will see significant changes to local delivery. It is also considered to be the optimum vehicle and opportunity for rationalisation and streamlining across many government structures. This is not only the case for the criminal justice sector, but is also being implemented in other areas such as health and education.

Other Factors

We also need to take into account the impact of the devolution of policing and justice, the changing financial climate, and forthcoming developments in the policing and justice field, all of which are considered in more detail in the next chapter.

The proposed amalgamation of DPPs and CSPs will not happen overnight and we must ensure that the functions of the existing partnerships continue to be delivered effectively in the interim. Steps are already being taken at local level to ensure the partnerships work more closely together.

3 | Context

The reform of local government will see the number of CSPs and DPPs reduce to 11. These planned changes provide an opportunity to consider whether amalgamation of the functions of DPPs and CSPs would benefit local delivery.

While it made sense at the time to have separate sets of partnerships, it was always accepted that the partnerships could be subject to change to reflect developments in local government. Standing still is no longer an option and we need to start to plan ahead.

When Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) were first established it was envisaged that they would be re-assessed in light of the implementation of the Review of Public Administration (RPA). Likewise, District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) (as laid out in Section 14 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000), must be aligned with local council boundaries and so would have to reduce in line with implementation of the recommendations of the Local Government Boundary Commissioner. Even without this review, therefore, the reform of local government would see the number of CSPs and DPPs reduce.

This changing landscape provides an ideal opportunity to introduce single partnerships.

Impact of The Review of Public Administration (RPA)

The current timetable for the implementation of the Executive's decisions on the future shape of local government will see the existing 26 councils reduce to 11 in May 2011. Local Government elections to the new councils will also see the number of local councillors

reduce by around 150. Responsibility for a number of functions will transfer from central to local government. These include: local development plan; development control and enforcement; public realm aspects of local roads; urban regeneration and community development; some housing related functions; and certain aspects of local economic development functions.

The introduction of community planning will, in addition, see significant changes to the role of councils and the way in which local services are delivered. This new responsibility will provide the framework whereby councils, central government departments, statutory bodies and other relevant agencies and sectors can work together in linking the delivery of public services with local needs and aspirations.

These proposals have already been the catalyst for major change and will create significant opportunity for greater synergy and cross governmental working. This closer working, across the whole range of priorities, will have a major impact on the work of the new partnerships and other areas relating to good relations, Neighbourhood Renewal and some of the work undertaken by the Department of the Environment. A more joined up approach in all these areas has the potential for a substantial and positive impact on more effective local delivery, and the well-being of local communities.

Devolution of Policing and Justice

Devolution of Policing and Justice to the NI Executive will mean significant change. It will see the establishment of a Department of Justice (DoJ) under the direction of a locally accountable Executive Minister. In addition an Assembly committee will be established to oversee and scrutinise the work of the DoJ.

Devolution will provide considerable opportunities for close collaboration with all government departments and agencies; this in turn should mean better joined-up delivery. There will be major advantages in the Northern Ireland Executive setting priorities across justice and policing as well as the social and economic fields.

Financial Climate

Whilst the devolution of policing and justice powers will be supported by an additional allocation of £800m, the DoJ will not be immune from future financial pressures.

It is more important than ever that resources are targeted at front line delivery. While this review is not in itself a cost-cutting exercise, it is vital that the new arrangements provide good value for money.

At present, for CSPs administrative costs account for approximately £1.15m out of their total budget of £3.28m, and approximately £3.5m out of the total budget of £4.1m for DPPs. The proposed new arrangements should facilitate a reduction in these overhead costs and enable more resources to be targeted at front line delivery.

Related Policing & Justice Developments

• Re-Constitution of DPPs

DPPs comprise a mix of elected representatives and independent members. DPP members are appointed to serve up to a date following the next local government election. The make-up of each DPP is reflective of all sections of the local community as far as possible.

The process of nomination and selection of independent members is a significant undertaking and takes a considerable length of time to complete. Being mindful of this the Northern Ireland Policing Board, who oversee

the selection exercise, will, during 2010, commence the process of selection of independent members for post 2011 partnerships. This process will therefore run in parallel with this review of future structures. It should be noted that if there is a reduction in the overall number of partnerships, this will mean that the number of elected representatives and independent members involved may also reduce.

• Community Safety Strategy

Work is ongoing to produce a new Community Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland – *Together, Stronger, Safer*. The main focus of this revised strategy is to put communities at the heart of service delivery and includes:

- Creating safer neighbourhoods;
- Focus on families and young people; and
- Building strong, confident communities.

Again the work on this strategy is progressing in tandem with, and is complementary to, this review.

• Community Policing

The PSNI Chief Constable, Matt Baggott, has placed a particular emphasis on visible and responsive personal policing in shaping the future strategy for the PSNI. The Policing with the Community Strategy is being refreshed and a number of other local structures, operating below the DPPs and CSPs, are already in place, or being planned. These include initiatives such as Partners and Communities Together (PACTs) and Community Police Liaison Committees (CPLCs) which will make a positive contribution to local partnership working. It will be essential that the new partnership arrangements take account of, and where possible complement rather than replicate, existing structures. It is also important to recognise that a “one-size-fits-all” approach may not be appropriate and the arrangements should be sufficiently flexible to ensure they can take account of local circumstances.

Against the backdrop of these developments, the challenge now is to devise a model for new Crime Reduction Partnerships that can maximise the impact of local partnership working within local communities.

4 | Assessing the Options

In preparation for this public consultation, there has been substantial engagement with a range of key stakeholders, both to test the practicability of amalgamating local partnerships, and to ensure that the right issues were identified.

We are extremely grateful to all those who took the time to contribute to this pre-consultation process, the feedback from which is reflected throughout this document.

In summary, there was an overall consensus among the main stakeholder organisations on the principle of closer working, but some very important points have been registered about the need to get this right if we are to ensure that these new partnerships really deliver for local communities.

One of the key pieces of feedback received during the pre-consultation process was that there should be a clear line of sight from the consultation document through to the final policy decisions. In order to achieve this, we have developed the following set of key principles against which the policy options have been assessed and the comments received on them are to be analysed.

The new partnerships should:

- Join-up policing and community safety activities and be capable of aligning with broader arrangements at council level for community planning
- Ensure that the policing accountability function is not diluted
- Facilitate meaningful public engagement by enhancing the involvement of local communities and responding to their concerns
- Deliver improved value for money
- Deliver improved quality of service
- Positively promote equality of opportunity
- Give equal weight to the functions of accountability, delivery and engagement
- Facilitate the sharing of best practice across Northern Ireland
- Focus on outcomes/solutions rather than activities/analysis of problems
- Be capable of being easily understood by the public

The main issues underlying these key principles are set out in more detail in chapter 6.

5 | Models

This chapter sets out the options we have considered for new Crime Reduction Partnerships and outlines our preferred model.

Each model preserves the current responsibilities that will fall to the Department of Justice (DoJ) and the Northern Ireland Policing Board and they would continue to provide strategic direction.

We also see there being an important role for local councils in providing local leadership, building on existing best practice, and ensuring the partnerships link effectively into community planning in the future. We have allowed for a degree of local flexibility. In particular, local councils are likely to need some flexibility in how the Partnership delivers the engagement function – there should be scope, for instance, to have additional engagement activities on a more localised basis (which would be important for rural councils covering large geographic areas) or on a thematic basis (which could vary from one area to another, depending on local needs).

The role of the centre – the DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board - would be to ensure that the work of the partnerships reflects strategic priorities and achieves the right outcomes. Councils would determine the operational details. There would be a Partnership Plan, which would be developed by all partners and informed by meaningful consultation with the community. Once community planning is introduced, the Partnership Plan would need to feed into the local Community Plan and align with it.

In developing a model for Northern Ireland, we have taken account of what is happening in the rest of the United Kingdom, and Annex C describes the partnership arrangements that apply elsewhere. However, we cannot simply lift an existing model and transpose it to Northern Ireland. Special accountability arrangements apply to the police here to meet our unique circumstances. From the pre-consultation discussions, we are clear that there is a strong body of opinion that this accountability mechanism should be maintained and this has been reflected in our key principles (chapter 4). It must be an integral part of the partnership and has been mapped onto each of the models proposed below.

We are using “Crime Reduction Partnership” as a working title but are open to others’ views on the name of the partnership.

Proposed Models

Model One

This model proposes a fully integrated single partnership. The DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board would jointly set regional priorities. These would be reflected, along with the local council’s priorities, in an overall local Partnership Plan.

The Plan would contain specific actions which would be delivered by multi agency task groups established at the operational level. These groups would be monitored by the strategic tier of the Crime Reduction Partnership. The Partnership would be responsible for public engagement and consultation, and the identification of the local issues of concern. The Partnership would be required to hold regular public meetings which would be inclusive of all sections of the community.

Model Two

This model proposes a single Crime Reduction Partnership incorporating a separate monitoring group on policing. The DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board would jointly set regional priorities which would then be communicated to local councils. Councils would identify the local issues of concern for the Crime Reduction Partnership, which would be responsible for the development of a Partnership Plan to address these issues and for informing the Local Policing Plan.

The Delivery Group (or Groups) would be responsible for the outworkings of the Partnership Plans. As with model one, regular dialogue with the community will be the responsibility of the Crime Reduction Partnership.

Model Three

This model proposes a single strategic partnership with separate monitoring, consultation and delivery groups. Again, the regional priorities would be set jointly by the DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board and communicated to local councils. These regional objectives, combined with locally identified issues, would be used to develop a Partnership Plan. The Partnership would also inform the development of the Local Policing Plan. Project delivery would be taken forward by a separate Delivery Group with police monitoring and community engagement and consultation under the control of two further sub-groups.

In summary, model 1 has the police monitoring function incorporated as part of the overall partnership function while models 2 and 3 retain this as a separate function outside the main partnership body.

Overall Assessment			
	Model One	Model Two	Model Three
Pros	This model scores well against all but one of the key principles.	This model is strong on linking public engagement and delivery.	This model would allow for a very clear allocation of responsibilities within the partnership and would be a natural progression from the current partnership arrangements.
Cons	This model is seriously undermined by the requirement to ensure that the policing accountability function is not diluted.	There is a risk that police monitoring could be seen as an “add-on” to the main Partnership.	This model is closest to what we currently have, and so the potential to join-up functions and improve value for money and effectiveness would be more limited.

Proposed Way Forward

All three models were built around the key principles. The accepted need to retain a specific local monitoring function for policing effectively rules out model one. Model three is considered too similar to the current arrangements and would not deliver the full potential for improving service to the public under this review.

Model two, we believe, would deliver the right balance in terms of joining up the functions currently delivered by CSPs and DPPs while retaining a distinct local police monitoring role.

We have included greater detail for each model and how we assessed the models against our key principles at Annex A.

How Would Model Two Work in Practice?

The next section further expands model two to illustrate how it might operate in practice. This worked example has been informed by the feedback received during the pre-consultation responses.

Statutory Duty

We would place a statutory duty on local councils to establish Crime Reduction Partnerships.

The Crime Reduction Partnership would be required by statute to tackle local issues of serious harm and anti-social behaviour, to contribute towards reducing levels of offending and to implement measures designed to facilitate early intervention. It should operate on the basis of clear, evidence-based criteria, and one of its primary areas of focus should be on maintaining or improving public confidence.

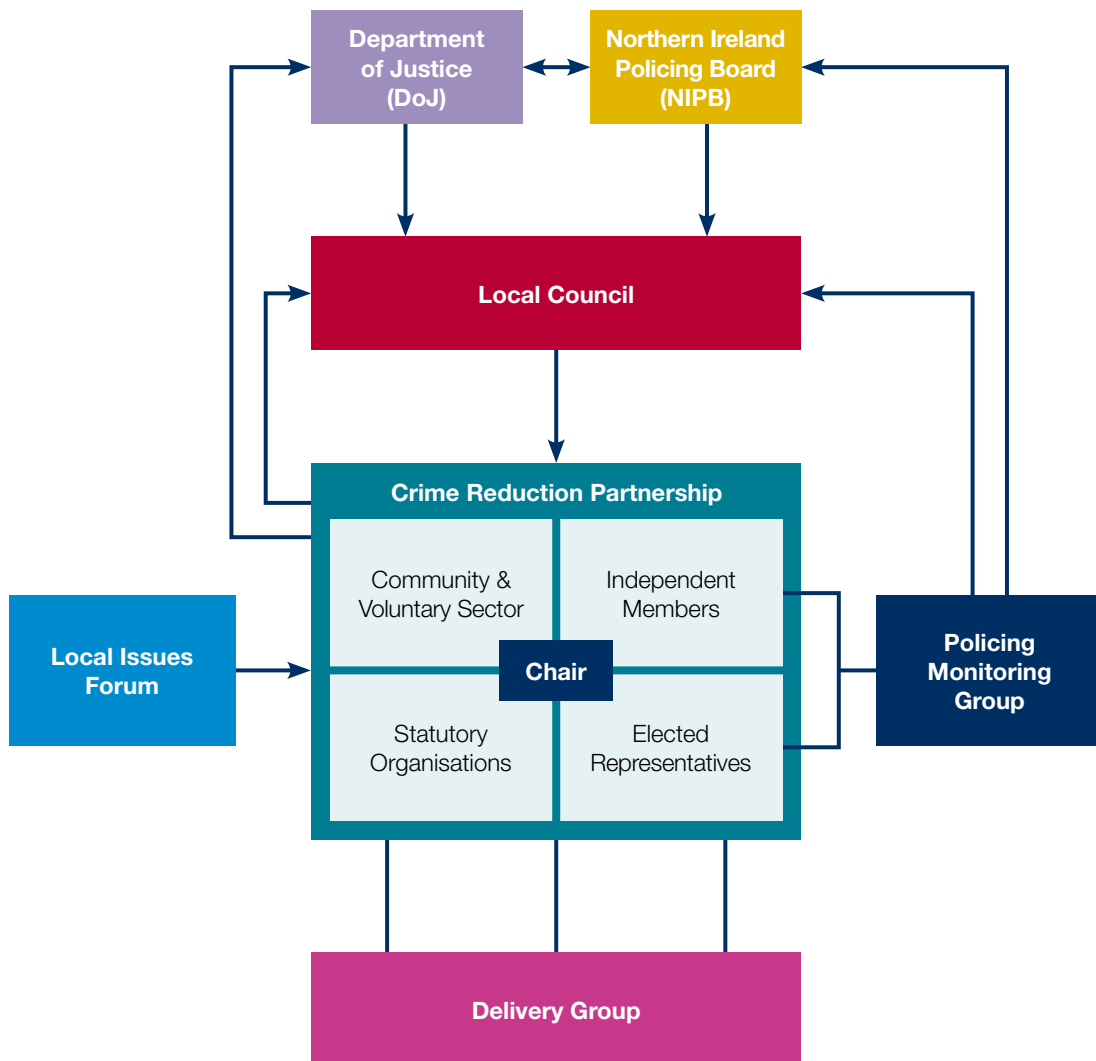
The legislation would also carry across to the Policing Monitoring Group legislative duties that currently apply to District Policing Partnerships. The role of this Group should be to focus on local policing issues, critical incidents and broader geographical differences in policing confidence.

Membership

The membership would be drawn from four main areas – elected representatives, statutory organisations (which could include, for example, criminal justice agencies and representatives from the social development, health and education sectors), community & voluntary sector (which could include the business community and/or faith based organisations) and independent members. Councils would appoint elected members and could invite nominations from statutory agencies and third sector organisations. Independent members would be appointed by the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

All sectors would be represented (possibly up to eight from each sector, not including the Partnership Chair) with the overall chair of the partnership to be agreed locally. For the purpose of the example below we have suggested an elected member be the chair, though we would welcome your views on who you think should chair the Partnership. The example below uses membership of thirty three for illustrative purposes.

Model Two
Single Partnership with Separate Monitoring Group on Policing



Elected members would be nominated by local councils proportional to their party representation. For the purposes of this example we have suggested the Chair would be an elected member proposed by the local council, bringing the total number of elected members to nine.

Statutory members would be nominated by their respective organisations and would be of a sufficiently high rank to be able to take decisions on behalf of their organisation and to implement actions on behalf of the partnership. While some organisations could be specified in the legislation (for example the Police Service of Northern Ireland, other justice agencies, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and relevant health and education organisations) there would be a degree of local flexibility built in to allow for a specific response to locally identified issues.

The independent members would be appointed by the Northern Ireland Policing Board. For the purposes of ensuring that the Policing Monitoring Group remains representative of the local community, we would envisage this following a similar process to that currently used for appointing independent DPP members.

The membership from the community and voluntary sector may vary depending on the council location and the specific locally identified issues. Some views were expressed, during the pre-consultation process, that it would be difficult to fully represent all interest groups on the partnership itself. It was further suggested that the views of this sector should also be sought through the Local Issues Forum (or Fora) suggested in this model.

Public Engagement

The local council would be required to set up a local forum, or fora - which could subsume existing structures and engagement mechanisms - for the purposes of engaging with the public on the full range of issues to be addressed by the Crime Reduction Partnership, including policing matters. Depending on local circumstances, this could be on a thematic or geographic basis. The remit of the fora would have the potential to expand in the future as community planning is introduced.

Accountability

The Crime Reduction Partnership would be collectively accountable to the local council for delivery against the local Partnership Plan, and the council would in turn account to the DoJ for the Partnership's performance and how the council is exercising its statutory duties. In addition to the specific arrangements for the monitoring of police performance (which are outlined in more detail below), other statutory agencies would be accountable for their contribution towards the achievement of the Partnership Plan, and their deployment of public funds, to their respective departments.

The local fora would be used to provide feedback to the public on the Partnership's performance against the Plan. The Partnership would be expected to contribute to the achievement of the DoJ's regional strategic objectives, as well as to relevant strategic objectives set by other central government departments.

Over time, the Crime Reduction Partnership would also be expected to contribute to the wider community plan for the council area, once the community planning framework has become embedded in local government.

The independent members and elected representatives (including the chair of the Crime Reduction Partnership) would, in addition to their role on the full partnership, form the separate Policing Monitoring Group. The Policing Monitoring Group would be responsible for monitoring the local police against achievement of the local policing plan and would be accountable to the Northern Ireland Policing Board, through the local council, for this specific area of work.

Funding would continue to be provided by both the DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board, though both organisations will consider how to provide a more streamlined and consistent approach for accounting to each organisation for how this funding is used, with a greater focus on achieving positive social outcomes.

It would also be envisaged that local councils and other statutory partners would continue to contribute to the overall budget of the Partnership, though it is hoped that a smaller proportion of this funding would be consumed by running costs and a higher proportion could be targeted on front-line delivery.

Delivery

The Delivery Group(s) would be responsible for front-line delivery of the Partnership Plan objectives. The make-up and membership of this group would be left to the local Partnership to decide, though some overarching principles should be consistently applied across all areas.

The make-up of the Delivery Group could be based on a thematic or geographic basis, depending on locally identified priorities. It should be mindful of and, as far as possible, dovetail with, other local delivery mechanisms (for example, Neighbourhood Renewal or Peace III).

It should include members of the Crime Reduction Partnership with a specific knowledge or interest in the issue to be addressed and led by a 'champion' who would be responsible for reporting back to the main Partnership on progress and delivery. This advocate would also lead the liaison between the Local Issues Forum (or fora) and the main Partnership for their respective theme. This would allow for a continual flow of information between the Partnership, the community and what is being delivered on the ground.

The Delivery Group should also include additional members from relevant statutory organisations (who are responsible for front-line delivery), community and voluntary sectors and appropriate third party delivery organisations.

Do you agree that model two is the best option?

How do we ensure this model works most effectively?

6 | The Main Issues

This chapter sets out the main issues that we have considered in taking this work forward, and explores in more detail how we have captured the feedback received through our pre-consultation process.

Where we have made firm proposals for the way forward these are highlighted, though we recognise that there are a number of issues which would benefit from further debate, through this public consultation. In this way, we are aiming to provide a clear line of sight between earlier discussions with stakeholder interests and the proposals on which we are now consulting.

Structural Issues

The main purpose of our review of local partnership working was to find the best way of bringing together the key functions of the current partnerships – engagement, delivery and monitoring - so that these could be joined up more effectively. The outcome was a strong appetite for bringing together the functions of CSPs and DPPs in a smaller number of single partnerships.

Engagement

A strong theme throughout our discussions with stakeholders was that effective community involvement and engagement was paramount to the success of the new partnership. While considerable work has been undertaken to engage with local communities since CSPs and DPPs were established, there is a real appetite for finding fresh ways of engaging at local level; ensuring that not only are their specific concerns understood, but that good quality feedback is given on any action taken.

This will be even more important once there are eleven, geographically larger, council areas.

There was also a strong feeling that there should be room for local flexibility – what works in Belfast might not work in Ballymena, Banbridge or Belcoo.

During the stakeholder engagement process our discussions with representatives of the community and voluntary sector helped us to look beyond the structural issues, such as lines of accountability and reporting arrangements, which had been more prominent in the consultations with statutory bodies. During these wider discussions, views on the extent to which local communities felt connected to the existing arrangements differed greatly. It was suggested that the existing partnerships did not always appear to take community concerns on board and that it was imperative that the partnerships reported back to communities on what was being delivered; this was just as important when they did not deliver as when they did.

It was proposed that new methods of engagement, particularly with the traditionally harder to reach groups (for example, young people, ethnic minorities, emerging communities) would need to be explored by the new partnerships. The possibility of using representative groups could be a useful channel for encouraging participation.

In addition there was a recognition that the community sector might also need to change in order to respond to the changing landscape under RPA, so as to ensure they were an effective voice in raising community concerns.

Proposed Way Forward

The new Crime Reduction Partnerships should be required to have an effective mechanism for engaging with local communities in order to capture their concerns and provide feedback on how those concerns are being addressed. A couple of different mechanisms were explored in the previous chapter and we have outlined our preference for a Local Issues Forum or Fora. However, local councils should be given some flexibility in determining how these fora should work in practice. **How can the new Crime Reduction Partnerships encourage local communities to become involved? How should they provide feedback to the public?**

Monitoring and Accountability

While accountability was highlighted as vitally important to the new partnership, this was expressed in a number of different ways. The new partnership needed to be accountable to its funding bodies; but it was equally important to be accountable to communities. There was also consensus that the function of local accountability for policing, through the monitoring function currently provided by DPPs, needed to be retained.

Current Arrangements for Accountability

DPPs are established by district councils and the council has overall responsibility for ensuring the effective operation of the DPPs. The Northern Ireland Policing Board has a statutory responsibility to assess the effectiveness of DPPs in performing their statutory duties and to fulfil this requirement the Board undertakes an annual performance assessment of each DPP against an Effectiveness Framework. The Board also provides the council with 75% of the reasonable costs incurred by the DPP and the council funds the remaining 25%.

CSPs currently report to the Community Safety Unit (CSU), as their primary funder and are also required to report against the achievement of local strategic objectives. The majority of CSPs also receive funding from local councils and draw in local delivery monies from a number of other funding streams.

In response to the pre-consultation process, the majority of CSPs and DPPs indicated that it would be more efficient if a single funding stream was established with standardised financial returns and accountability frameworks established. There were also suggestions that the Northern Ireland Policing Board and CSU should work more collaboratively at the centre with more streamlined processes, including joined up planning timescales and training programmes. While a lot of joint work is already undertaken between CSU and the Policing Board, this review has provided a springboard for further ideas to foster even closer working.

The majority of statutory bodies currently report against different and, in some cases, competing targets and agendas. It is essential, therefore, that a way is found for all members of the new partnerships to be held accountable for delivery against the local Partnership Plan.

Proposed Way Forward

We propose that the main funding for these partnerships should come from the DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board. But we should seek to ensure that strategic priorities are set in a complementary way and streamline the way in which the partnerships are required to account for their use of public funds. This will require close working between the CSU and the Northern Ireland Policing Board. **Do you agree?**

Policing Accountability

There was a clear consensus throughout the pre-consultation process that local policing accountability should not be diluted. The challenge is to ensure this continues while

recognising that the police would be an essential member of the Partnership. This is the principal reason why we need a model unique to Northern Ireland in order to preserve and enhance the public's confidence in policing.

Proposed Way Forward

Chapter 5 outlined our preferred option for accommodating the monitoring function and the requirements of the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

Delivery

Ultimately, the new partnerships will be judged by what they deliver on the ground.

Chapter 2 listed the functions currently undertaken by CSPs and DPPs. The pre-consultation exercise suggested that all of these functions should be carried through to the new partnership. However, they will not be delivered separately but collectively against a jointly agreed overarching plan, and bearing in mind that the evolution of community planning may require us to refresh the functions and responsibilities of the new Partnership in the future.

We envisage the local Partnership Plan taking direction from a number of regional plans and strategies. In particular, it will be shaped by DoJ strategic targets, the Community Safety Strategy, the priorities in the Northern Ireland Policing Plan and other locally identified policing targets. In addition the partnership will also take direction from the Executive's Programme for Government, flowing through departmental and strategic objectives down to local delivery plans. Equally important will be the views of local communities and it is imperative that the Partnership

seeks out and listens to these views in developing its priorities and local delivery plans. The potential for a closer connection between the views of the community and the content of the local Partnership Plan is one of the key benefits of having single partnerships.

Proposed Way Forward

Whilst all the functions of the CSPs and DPPs should be retained in the new Crime Reduction Partnerships, they should operate in ways that make the best use of public funds, are clearly understood by the public, and maximise the local impact on crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. There should be an overall Partnership Plan which should be shaped by a combination of relevant regional strategies and local priorities. **Do you agree?**

DPPs and CSPs are accountable for their performance to their main funders - the Northern Ireland Policing Board and the CSU. In addition the Policing Board has a statutory responsibility to assess the effectiveness of DPPs and public confidence in them. As the partnership will in future be working against a single plan, there should be a single system of performance reports. In addition, a generic monitoring framework, setting performance and monitoring parameters, needs to be developed and agreed, in order to measure the impact made by the Partnership. **How do you think the partnership's delivery performance should be measured?**

In addition PSNI are held to account on delivery against the local policing plan by the DPP and, again as highlighted previously, this function will be retained in the new Partnership.

When Should We Do This?

As outlined in Annex B, while there is a strong consensus on the principle of creating single partnerships, there were differing views from stakeholders with regard to the timescale for achieving this. Many stakeholders thought early implementation was preferable and that the introduction of new local government structures in May 2011 was the best time to make this change. Some believed that this was optimistic, and risked being out of step with whatever structures are required for the implementation of community planning further down the line. A few suggested that a phased approach may be more pragmatic – perhaps continuing with separate partnerships (i.e. 11 CSPs and 11 DPPs) for a limited period (possibly 1-2 years) to allow community planning to settle in, before moving to single partnerships. A common theme was the importance of avoiding a series of structural changes within a relatively short period of time and unnecessary upheaval for the partnerships. Another key theme was the need, in the context of devolution of justice and policing, to have the full buy-in of the incoming Minister and Executive to whatever decisions are reached. Consequently, some respondents believed this should mean putting the review on hold pending the completion of devolution of policing and justice.

Proposed Way Forward

One of the main reasons for undertaking the stakeholder engagement exercises was to explore these types of concerns and look at the options. Having listened to the debate, we believe the balance of interest lies in moving ahead now. To do otherwise would prolong uncertainty and potentially involve two major sets of changes: reducing the number of CSPs and DPPs from 26 to 11 in May 2011; followed by their amalgamation into single partnerships at some point thereafter.

There will be considerable change as the new local councils take shape. Given the importance that local communities attach to policing and community safety, it is vital that these issues are given early consideration alongside the delivery of other local services linked to health and well-being, good relations, community and economic development, education and learning, and neighbourhood renewal.

We recognise that there are some risks in moving ahead before there is a clear direction on community planning. In order to minimise this risk, we have had ongoing discussions, at ministerial and official level, with the Department of the Environment (DOE). The DOE Minister, Edwin Poots, has been fully supportive of the review process and regards it as complementary to the development of community planning.

We have also sought to keep in contact with the local political parties throughout the review process, so as to help achieve a seamless handover of this work at the point of devolution. The clear consensus points to pressing ahead with planning for the introduction of single partnership arrangements, co-terminous with the revised council boundaries in May 2011.

Other Issues

There are some other organisational elements of the new Crime Reduction Partnership on which we would also welcome your views.

Name of the Partnership

A number of ideas were put forward for the name of the new partnerships. In addition to “Crime Reduction Partnership”, these were:

- Community and Police Partnership;
- Community Planning Partnership;
- Community Safety and Policing Partnership;
- Community Safety Integrated Partnership;
- Crime and Community Safety Partnership;
- Crime and Disorder Reduction partnership;
- Crime Reduction and Policing Partnership;
- District Policing Community Safety Board;
- Policing and Community Partnership;
- Policing and Community Safety Partnership; and
- Public Safety Partnership.

Proposed Way Forward

Whilst all of these give a clear indication of the role of the new body, we have already stated our preference for **Crime Reduction Partnerships**. This would give the partnerships a strong focus on crime prevention and reduction. And by avoiding direct references to either policing or community safety, we remove any suggestion that one of the current partnerships is subsuming the other. Some respondents have suggested that this title risks focussing too narrowly on “crime” rather than encompassing wider issues, such as diversionary activities and education, but it remains our preference from among the ideas that have previously been put forward. **Do you agree that the new partnerships should be called Crime Reduction Partnerships or do you have a suggestion for a different title?**

Membership

We have received large numbers of representations regarding who should be on the new Crime Reduction Partnerships and how many members there should be.

CSPs currently draw their membership from elected representatives, the main statutory agencies, the voluntary and community sector as well as the faith and business communities. There is no prescriptive model for selection of members for CSPs nor is there a limit on the numbers. While the exact make-up of each CSP differs their membership includes MLAs, other local elected representatives, Police Service of Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, Victim Support, Women’s Aid, DPP members and local community representatives. The majority of CSP meetings are held during working hours. Some CSPs have wider networks or sub-groups either on an area or a thematic basis.

DPP membership is governed by Schedule 3 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. (The Belfast sub-groups are governed by section 21 of the same Act.) The number of members (outside Belfast) ranges between 15 and 19 as determined by local councils. They include elected representatives (who always hold the majority of seats) and independent members, and as far as possible reflect the make-up of the local community. The independent members are selected through a recruitment process and are appointed to serve up to a date following the next local government election. DPP meetings are a mix of private and public fora which enable members and the public to hold police to account against the delivery of the local policing plan. Meetings tend to be in the evenings.

One key difference in relation to the two sets of membership is that whilst DPP members are currently remunerated membership of CSPs is on a voluntary basis, although some members of CSPs, particularly those from the statutory sector, represent their respective organisations as part of their paid employment.

No overall consensus emerged from the stakeholder engagement exercises on this issue, although two main themes were identified. One set of respondents felt that an in-built majority (of any type of member) went against the concept of partnership, while the other main view was that politicians should have a majority of one given their mandate to represent local communities.

In terms of the size of the partnership, those who quantified their response gave a membership ranging between 13 and 40, with the majority view that more than 30 members would be impractical. Respondents expressed the view that the partnerships should comprise elected representatives, statutory and non-statutory members. There was a strong sense that independent and community members should have an equal place on the partnerships as well.

Proposed Way Forward

We envisage the new partnership members being mainly drawn, as now, from the statutory sector (including PSNI), elected representatives, independent members and third sector organisations. In some circumstances, it may be appropriate to broaden the membership to encompass other organisations that have a role to play in delivering local interventions - for example, the business community could be involved in delivering retail crime or night-time

economy initiatives. We have included, in chapter 5, a worked example informed by the views expressed during the practitioner engagement exercise. We propose that Councils should be allowed to establish the machinery within certain parameters. While we would wish to afford this flexibility to meet local needs there would be a uniformity of expectation and a set of minimum standards that all partnerships would have to meet. **Do you agree?**

From the feedback received, there appears to be a good argument for limiting partnerships to around 30 members since larger membership would prove unwieldy. **Do you agree that there should be up to around 30 members?**

We also expect the Crime Reduction Partnerships to ensure they have channels of communication with representative groups and local communities and clearly outline in their local Partnership Plan how these groups have been consulted with and how ongoing feedback will be facilitated.

The overall annual budget for the existing partnerships is close to £8 million and sixty percent of this is presently consumed by administration and expenses. In the current financial climate we believe that this level of expenditure on running costs is not sustainable and would like to see more funding directed to delivery. **Do you agree that less should be spent on administration and expenses, and more re-directed towards delivery?**

The remuneration of members is part of that cost and there have been arguments for and against paying some or all of the members. **Do you believe members of the new Crime Reduction Partnerships should be paid?**

7 | Legislation

There has been overwhelming support for the proposal that the new Crime Reduction Partnerships should have legislative underpinning.

This view has also been echoed, on various occasions, by CJINI and the PSNI Chief Constable. We agree that legislation is necessary for the new partnerships. As highlighted earlier, DPPs are governed by the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. Section 72 of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, if enacted, could put CSPs on a statutory footing. However neither piece of legislation would be a perfect fit for the new structures because each is predicated on the existence of separate partnerships. Therefore, rather than amending or enacting existing legislation, we propose to bring forward specific new legislation.

Elsewhere in UK

In England and Wales similar partnerships are governed by section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This established obligatory partnerships between the police, local authorities, probation service, health authorities, the voluntary sector, and local residents and businesses. In Scotland CSPs operate under the community planning banner.

Proposed Way Forward

As highlighted throughout this paper implementation will be a matter for the NI Executive. Therefore the intention is that legislation establishing the new partnerships should be taken through the Northern Ireland Assembly. This will afford locally elected members the opportunity to fully discuss the options, allowing for greater ownership of the process and ensure the appropriate linkages are made to community planning. **Do you agree that new legislation should be taken through the Northern Ireland Assembly to place the new Crime Reduction Partnerships on a statutory footing?**

8 | Equality

Equal treatment by public authorities, and fair representation in government and public life, are among the core principles underpinning Northern Ireland society today, and were central themes in the Belfast Agreement.

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 specifically requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and to the desirability of promoting good relations between certain groups of people.

What Are The Equality Issues?

There are three main sets of issues. The first is what are the equality impacts of the proposed change in policy, both in terms of moving from two sets of partnerships to single partnerships and also in respect of the different ways in which this might be done.

The second issue is what equality duties should be placed on the partnerships themselves.

Thirdly, are there potential equality implications once the partnerships are in the process of being established? This will include looking at how to achieve balance in membership and ensure the voices of different groups within society can be heard.

Meeting our equality duties should be a process rather than an event. This means keeping equality issues to the fore the whole way through the policy development and implementation phases and to mainstream equality considerations into the fabric of the new partnerships.

The Process To Date

An initial equality screening exercise (which can be viewed at www.nio.gov.uk) of the proposals has been completed. This looked at the **high level policy** objective of moving to single partnerships. To help inform the screening of the policy at this early stage, we drew on the views we received through the two focus groups which were arranged through the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action with voluntary and community organisations and from the two stakeholder engagement events held in October (which included facilitated break-out sessions and covered questions specifically relating to equality).

While there was no evidence put forward at this stage in the policy's development of how the policy would have an adverse differential impact to any group, a number of people flagged up the need for the policy development process to be constantly alert to the needs of section 75 groups, and in particular young and older people and women. This will need to be explored further as more detailed proposals are being developed locally, including those in relation to membership of partnerships and engagement structures.

Some people also felt that there were a number of positive opportunities. It was suggested that, under the framework of community planning, there would be increased opportunities to promote good relations and to contribute to the general well-being of all parts of society. A number of people also thought that by taking a fresh look at ways of engaging the public, there was the potential to give a stronger voice to those who feel marginalised or under-represented.

In the absence of evidence being provided of actual adverse differential impacts on any section 75 grouping, it is not our intention to undertake a full Equality Impact Assessment at this stage. The current focus is on high level structures, rather than how projects and initiatives will be delivered on the ground, which makes it difficult to determine what the effect might be at a working level. We will, however, need to continue to review the equality implications of these proposals. In particular, as it was suggested that the proposals may adversely impact on young people, older people and women, we intend to engage directly to elicit views from these sectors on the consultation proposals. If evidence emerges from the consultation that the policy has, or is likely to have, a significant impact on equality of opportunity we will look again at undertaking a full Equality Impact Assessment.

What are your views on what the impact of the new partnerships on equality of opportunity might be?

What do we need to do to prevent any section 75 grouping being adversely affected?

What opportunities are there to promote equality of opportunity and good relations?

Future Partnership Duty

At present CSPs are not public authorities in their own right and so are not subject to the requirements of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. DPPs are, however, regarded as individual public authorities. Each DPP must produce an equality scheme and run a disability awareness programme. In addition, equality and disability awareness training must be undertaken by all DPP members every two years. DPPs must also have individual Freedom of Information policies.

This raises the question of whether the new partnerships should be regarded as public authorities, and subject to the same requirements as DPPs currently are, or whether (as is the case for CSPs), each partner is responsible for contributing to its own organisation's equality scheme. Placing a specific duty on the new partnerships could be said to be an effective way of ensuring there is a strong focus on promoting equality of opportunity. However, during the stakeholder events, those involved in the DPP arrangements reported that having such a duty generated a disproportionate amount of bureaucracy.

Proposed Way Forward

Since it is intended that the new Crime Reduction Partnerships would, locally, be under the direction of the council, one option would be for the new partnerships to be governed by the statutory requirements of the council and not regarded as public authorities in their own right. This arrangement would avoid unnecessary bureaucracy while allowing for transparency and accountability of the partnership. In addition, all of the partners from statutory agencies would still be under a requirement to promote equality of opportunity under their own organisation's equality scheme.

Do you agree that the new Crime Reduction Partnerships should contribute towards meeting the local council's equality duties, rather than having separate duties placed on them?

9 | Next Steps

We will publish a summary of the consultation responses on the Department's website, alongside other key papers relating to this review.

It has always been expected that future partnership arrangements would be implemented, post devolution, by a local justice minister. Now that a date has been set for the devolution of policing and justice, what we are aiming to do is to start a debate on these proposals before this work passes to a locally accountable Minister, with a view to enabling the Minister to create new Crime Reduction Partnerships in time for the changes to local council boundaries.

The aim is to have the new arrangements in place as close as possible to the introduction of the new council boundaries, which is due to happen in May 2011. This is a challenging timescale but should be achievable given the willingness to date of all partners to actively engage in creating these new arrangements.

The new partnership will need legislative underpinning. This process will take a number of months to complete and will give locally elected Assembly members the opportunity to shape the legislation as it passes through its various stages.

It is important, in the meantime, for the existing CSPs and DPPs to work even more closely together to ensure the services they deliver to their local communities are as seamless as the current structures will permit. We will also consider opportunities to pilot elements of the proposed future arrangements alongside the operation of the existing structures.

Consultation Arrangements

Your views matter and can make a difference. Please take the time to give us your thoughts on the proposals presented in this document.

There has already been a pre-consultation exercise on the principles underlying the creation of single partnerships. This consultation will run for 8 weeks and responses are therefore requested by **6 May 2010**. Comments on the proposed creation of Crime Reduction Partnerships can be sent by post to:

Future Partnership
Working Arrangements
Room 45
Massey House
Stoney Road
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SX

Email responses should be sent to
csp-dppconsultation@nio.x.gsi.gov.uk.

Responses can also be faxed to (028) 9082 8566. Please call (028) 9082 8554 for queries in relation to this consultation. The textphone number is (028) 9052 7668.

This consultation document is available on our website:
<http://www.nio.gov.uk/index/public-consultation/documents.htm>

Printed copies of this consultation document may also be obtained free of charge from the above address. You may make additional copies of this document without seeking permission. This document can also be made available on request in different formats, for individuals with particular needs.

If you are responding on behalf of a group or organisation please make this clear. We are committed to publishing a list of those organisations that comment on this consultation and to making available, to anyone who asks for it, a copy of the comments and our response to them.

The information you send us may be passed to colleagues within the Department, the Government or related agencies. **Individual responses may also be published on the internet at www.nio.gov.uk, unless a respondent has requested otherwise.**

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes. These are primarily: the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations (2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice, with which public authorities must comply, and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations regarding confidence. In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances.

Please ensure that your response is marked clearly if you wish your response to be kept anonymous. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department. Confidential responses, included in any statistical summary of numbers of comments received and views expressed, will be anonymised. The Department will process your personal data strictly in accordance with the Data Protection Act. In most circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

If you have any concerns or complaints about the consultation process you should contact our consultation co-ordinator, Brendan Giffen:

Central Management Unit
Room 4.4, Block A
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SJ

Telephone (028) 9052 8138
Email brendan.giffen@nio.x.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A | Models Considered During The Development of This Consultation Paper

Model One

This model proposes a fully integrated single partnership.

It most closely reflects the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP) approach and suggests a fully integrated single partnership. However, a specific monitoring function for policing would not sit easily in this model. This model may, therefore, be a possible future structure once all partners are accountable to a single performance management framework.

Priority and Objective Setting

The DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board would, in close consultation with one another, set the strategic priorities for community safety and policing respectively, which would then be communicated to councils.

These regional priorities would then feed into the local council's priorities, set at area level (in conjunction with other agencies on the partnership). Both these sets of priorities would inform a single, thematic community safety and policing plan produced by the strategic tier of the partnership.

Delivery

This plan would contain strands covering each of the key issues around policing and community safety for the area. The plan's actions would be delivered by multi agency task groups established at the operational level, each one responsible for a different area of the plan. For instance, there could be task groups for anti-social behaviour, alcohol-related crime, the safety of older people or hate crime, depending on what the main problems and concerns of the local area might be. All of these groups would take their direction from the single partnership plan and report back to the main partnership. It would be important to avoid duplication in the work of these groups and ensure good communication between them.

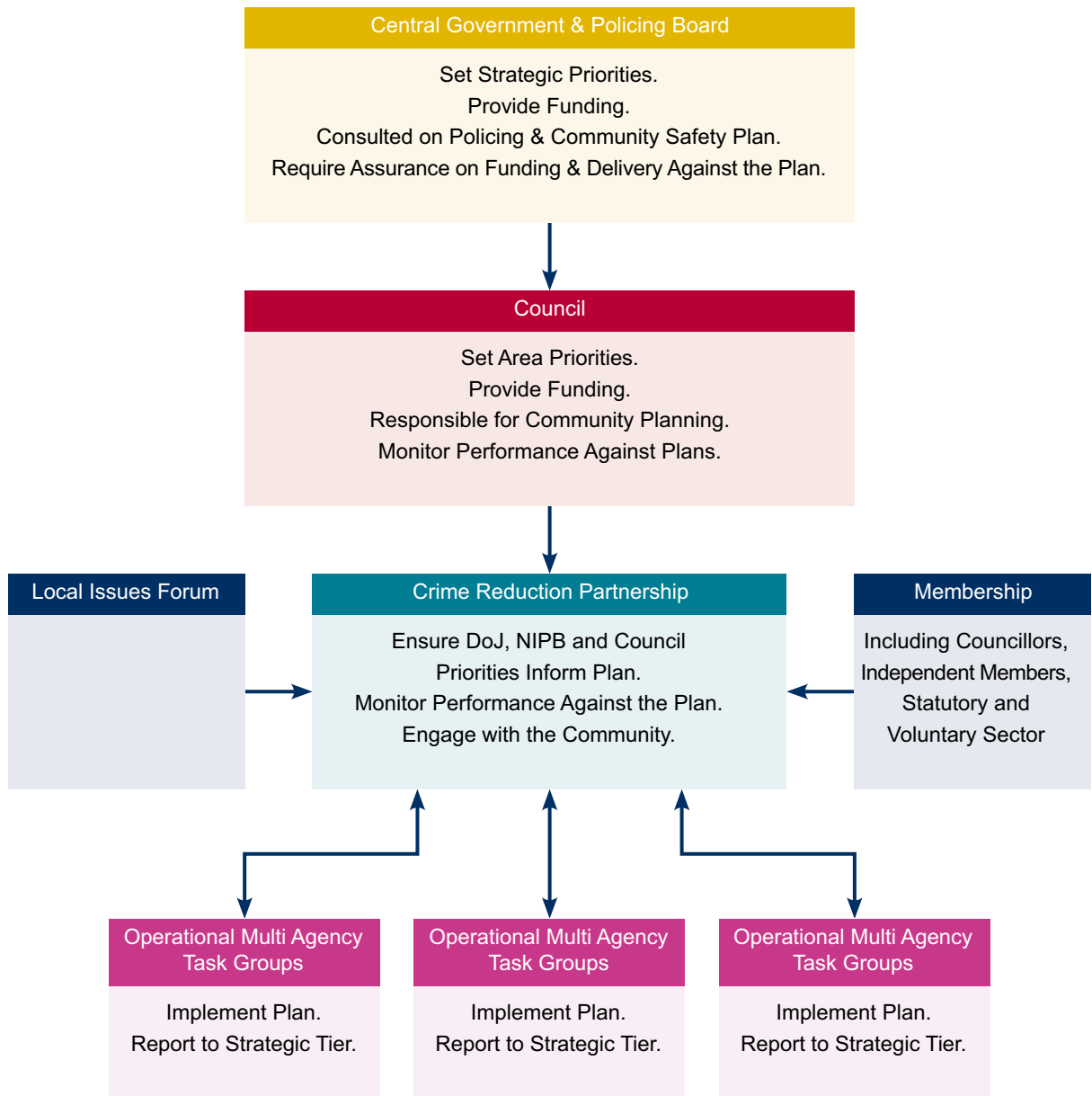
Monitoring

The plan would be monitored by the strategic tier of the Partnership; membership of this group would include representatives from relevant statutory and voluntary organisations, councillors and independent members.

Engagement and Consultation

The Partnership would be responsible for ensuring effective public engagement and consultation across the area, including identification of the issues of concern for the constituent neighbourhoods. This would include establishment of a Local Issues Forum, providing a dialogue between the Partnership and the community. The structure of such a forum (or fora) would vary depending on local circumstances, size of area, etc and may well incorporate a network of existing community engagement structures. The Partnership would also be required to hold regular public meetings, which would include a wide community safety and policing agenda, and to explore other methods of engagement and consultation, including with those groups representing section 75 interests.

Model One
Fully Integrated Single Partnership



Model Two

This model proposes a single partnership with separate monitoring group on policing.

Priority and Objective Setting

The DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board would, in close consultation with one another, set the strategic priorities for community safety and policing respectively, which would then be communicated to councils. The Council then leads on the identification of area level priorities in conjunction with other agencies. These combined priorities are used to develop a Partnership Plan for community safety and policing by the strategic tier of the Partnership and to inform the development of the Local Policing Plan.

Delivery

The delivery group of the Partnership would be responsible for completing the actions in the Partnership Plan.

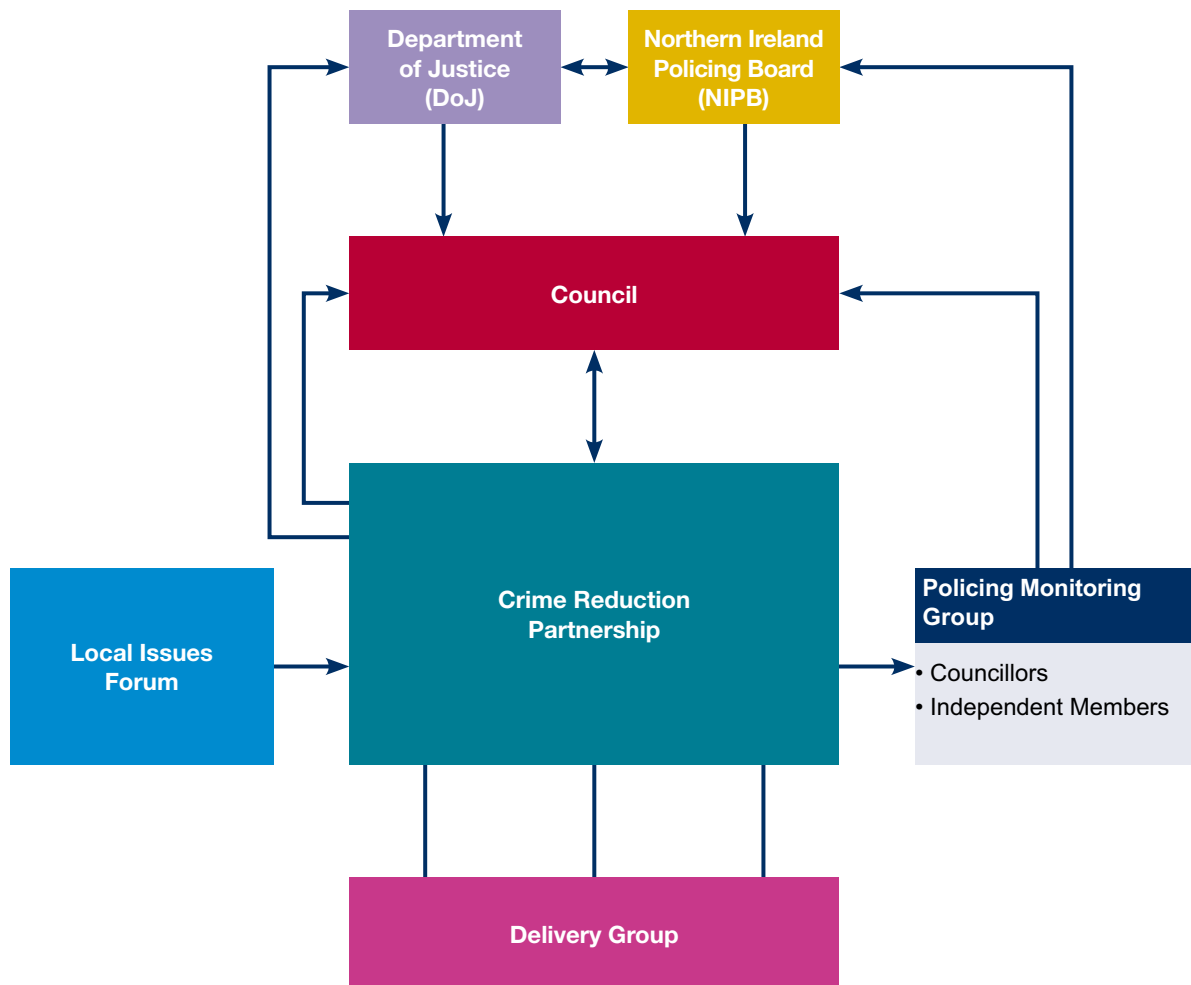
Monitoring

The Partnership Plan would be monitored by the strategic tier of the Crime Reduction Partnership. The Local Policing Plan would be monitored by a separate Policing Monitoring Group, reporting to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. It would also communicate with the Crime Reduction Partnership to ensure alignment. This group would be made up of councillors and independent members.

Engagement and Consultation

The Crime Reduction Partnership would be responsible for ensuring effective public engagement and consultation across the area, including identification of the issues of concern for the constituent neighbourhoods. This would include establishment of a Local Issues Forum, providing a dialogue between the Partnership and the community. The structure of such a forum (or fora) would vary depending on local circumstances, size of area, etc and may well incorporate a network of existing community engagement structures. The Partnership would also be required to hold regular public meetings, which would include a wide community safety and policing agenda, and to explore other methods of engagement and consultation, including with those groups representing section 75 interests.

Model Two
Single Partnership with Separate Monitoring Group on Policing



Model Three

This model proposes a single strategic partnership with separate monitoring, consultation and delivery groups.

Priority and Objective Setting

The DoJ and the Northern Ireland Policing Board would, in close consultation with one another, set the strategic priorities for community safety and policing respectively, which would then be communicated to councils. The Council then leads on the identification of area level priorities. These combined priorities are used to develop a Partnership Plan by the strategic tier of the Crime Reduction Partnership.

Delivery

The project delivery group of the Partnership would be responsible for completing the actions in the Partnership Plan. It may also need to establish specific task groups.

Monitoring

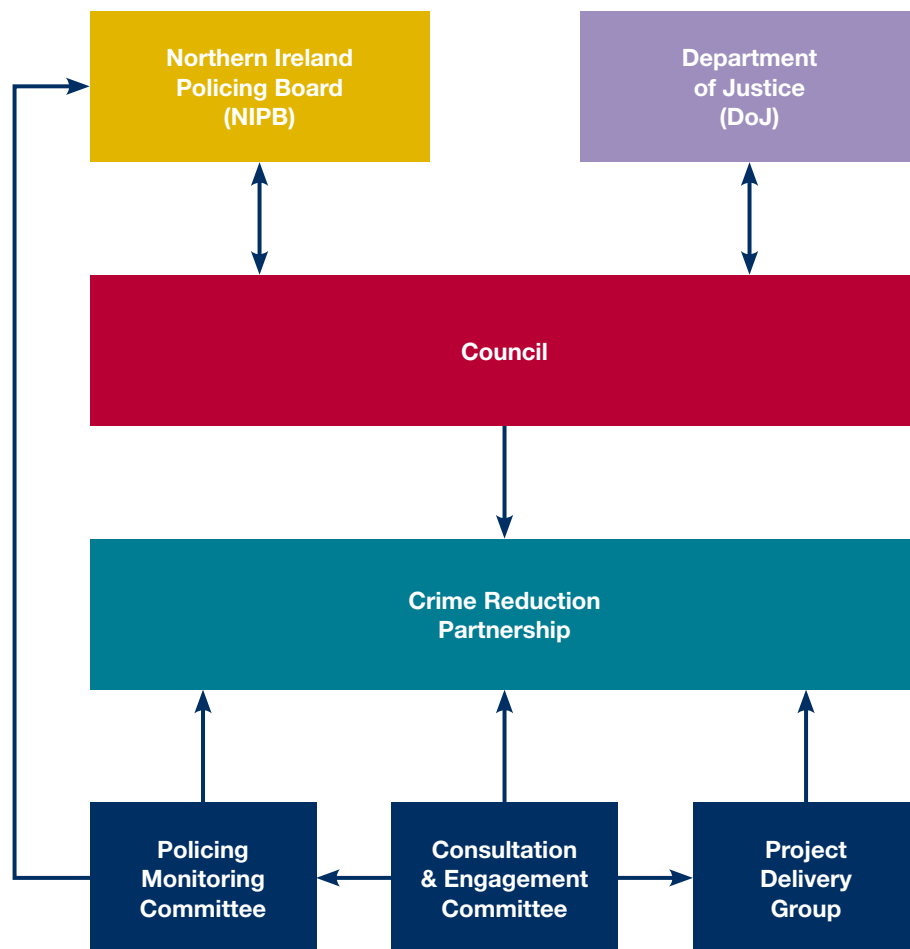
The Partnership Plan would be monitored by the strategic tier of the partnership. The Local Policing Plan would be monitored by a separate Policing Monitoring Committee, reporting to the Northern Ireland Policing Board. This group would be made up of councillors and independent members.

Engagement and Consultation

The Crime Reduction Partnership would be responsible for ensuring effective public engagement and consultation across the area, including identification of the issues of concern for the constituent neighbourhoods. This function would be provided by a Consultation and Engagement Committee tasked with establishing a dialogue between the Partnership and the community. The Partnership would also be required to hold regular public meetings and to explore other methods of engagement and consultation, including with those groups representing section 75 interests.

Model Three

Single Strategic Partnership with Separate Monitoring, Consultation and Delivery Groups



Assessing The Models Against Our Key Principles

In terms of assessing these three models against the key principles set out in chapter 4, each model has particular strengths and weaknesses. We have included below a synopsis of how we consider each model rates against each principle.

Key Principle 1

Join-up policing and community safety activities and be capable of aligning with broader arrangements at council level for community planning.

All three models allow for more joint working. Model one would be the most joined-up, while model three would maintain a highest level of separation between policing and community safety activities, including at the highest level.

Key Principle 2

Ensure that the policing accountability function is not diluted.

While all three models should ensure that the policing accountability function is retained, models two and three explicitly reflect existing arrangements, with a separate policing accountability function. All three models would preserve the line of accountability between the police monitoring function and the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

Key Principle 3

Facilitate meaningful public engagement by enhancing the involvement of local communities and responding to their concerns.

Models one and two both involve the creation of a Local Issues Forum. Model three has a Consultation and Engagement Committee as a sub-group of the main partnership. Model three would probably work best for responding to particular issues of concern, though models one and two would probably allow for a wider range of interests to be represented on a standing basis. These issues would have to be central in the development of any preferred model.

Key Principle 4**Deliver improved value for money.**

All three models have the potential to deliver improved value for money, with more funding targeted at front-line delivery and less on overhead. Model three would probably cost more, since there would be more groups to be serviced. Whatever model were adopted the expectation would be that resources should be channelled to activities that make the biggest impact on reducing crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Key Principle 5**Deliver improved quality of service.**

All three models have the potential to provide an improved quality of service because they bring together the key functions of engagement, accountability and delivery.

Key Principle 6**Positively promote equality of opportunity.**

Provided the public engagement mechanism works well, and the partnerships are proactive in seeking out the views of all sectors of society, each of the models has the potential to promote equality of opportunity. Achieving this objective will be crucial when developing any preferred model. It is recognized that the wider community planning process will, in the future, influence local engagement frameworks.

Key Principle 7**Give equal weight to the functions of accountability, delivery and engagement.**

Models one and three are more likely to satisfy this principle. There is the scope for greater emphasis to be given to police monitoring in model two.

Key Principle 8**Facilitate the sharing of best practice across Northern Ireland.**

Model one is probably more likely to facilitate the sharing of best practice, as the most integrated approach. In order for this principle to be satisfied, implementation will need to ensure that mechanisms for communication and benchmarking are managed by the centre, and by partnerships.

Key Principle 9**Focus on outcomes/solutions rather than activities/analysis of problems.**

Bringing together the engagement, delivery and accountability functions should help the partnerships focus on outcomes and solutions under any of the proposed models, though model one (as the most integrated model) would probably best achieve this.

Key Principle 10**Be capable of being easily understood by the public.**

Most people will be more interested in what the partnerships do than how they are structured. However, model one, as the most streamlined, would probably be most easily understood.

In summary, the following is how we would rank the models against the key principles and overall.

Ranking Against the Key Principles			
Key Principle	Model One	Model Two	Model Three
KP 1	1	2	3
KP 2	3	2	1
KP 3	1	1	2
KP 4	1	2	3
KP 5	1	1	1
KP 6	1	1	2
KP 7	2	3	1
KP 8	1	2	2
KP 9	1	2	2
KP 10	1	2	2

Footnote: Where we do not see a significant difference between particular models we have given them equal ranking.

Annex B | The Pre-consultation Process

Throughout the review, we have engaged with key stakeholders to take their views on what the way forward should be.

Work on the closer alignment of CSPs and DPPs began with the establishment of a steering group in June 2007. This group drew its membership from the Northern Ireland Office (NIO), the Department of the Environment (DOE), Belfast City Council, the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE), the Police Service for Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB).

This group was a pre-cursor to the current Local Partnership Working Group (LPWG) which was established in May 2009 to take forward the development of proposals to deliver closer integration. Whilst similar in make-up, the LPWG also has representatives from the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE).

Practitioner Engagement Exercise

In March 2009, we began to seek practitioners' views on the future delivery of the functions of CSPs and DPPs. This exercise had two parts. Firstly views were sought on the principle of integrated partnerships and the steps required to align the existing partnerships more closely. The second aspect was a more in depth examination of some of the practical implications of closer working.

First Part

The majority (around 80%) of respondents to the first phase indicated that they were in favour of an integrated partnership and that the proposal to integrate was a logical and welcome path to take. The two strongest themes to emerge were that the new partnerships would need to fit within the strategic framework established by the RPA and that the police accountability function should not be diluted. Many respondents believed that whilst the strategic oversight of Ministers and the Northern Ireland Policing Board should be retained, district councils should have a leading role and be allowed as much flexibility as possible in tailoring local arrangements to best meet local needs. There was also a high level of agreement that any new partnership should be placed on a statutory footing, and that the principal focus needed to be on meeting local needs.

Some suggested that the scope of the review should be widened to consider linkages to other existing partnerships (such as PACTs) whilst affirming their opinion that the good practice that was already in place should not be diminished.

There was a great appetite for closer working in the interim and a number of areas were identified for early action.

Second Part

The second part focused on the practical implications of closer working. In response the majority of respondents again re-iterated support for the principle of integration, though there was a recognition that the proposed timescale of delivery of the new arrangements by May 2011 was extremely challenging. Many respondents recognized that the issue of accountability would be crucial for the new partnerships.

This was reflected in views on funding, with the majority of respondents envisaging that funds would come from a combination of local and central government sources.

The majority of respondents also supported closer working in the interim with a number of suggestions based on existing good practice. There was a clear desire for even closer co-operation.

Engagement with the Third Sector

In recognition of the important contribution of third sector organisations, the practitioner engagement exercise was extended to voluntary and community sector organisations with an interest in criminal justice issues over the summer. Two focus groups were held with the sector in September. The points raised during these events were, for the most part, similar to those from respondents to the practitioner engagement exercise.

The main challenge identified by those who participated in these events was of ensuring that effective community engagement was not lost within the larger council structure. They recommended the establishment of a clear remit and roles, including a mechanism for partnerships to report back to local communities as a means of mitigating this risk. It was again emphasized that the local accountability of the police should be preserved in the new arrangements.

The view was also expressed that communities were less worried about who and how many sit on the partnerships than about what it delivered. As with the earlier practitioner engagement exercise, the importance of community planning and the overall delivery of the changes of the RPA was clearly recognized.

Engagement Events

Finally, we invited a wide range of key representatives, including representatives of political parties, to come together for two stakeholder events in October. These events focused on the key issues which are set out in Chapter 6 of this consultation paper.

If you are interested in learning more about the pre-consultation process, you can access our records of the various engagement exercises and events at the following website address www.nio.gov.uk.

Annex C | Partnership Working in the Rest of The United Kingdom

Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) operate in England, while Scotland and Wales have Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).

CDRPs (in England) and CSPs (in Wales) have a statutory duty to work with other local agencies and organisations to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime and disorder and misuse of drugs in their area. Each partnership comprises the police, police authorities, local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, primary care trusts (in England) or local health boards (in Wales), as well as other private and voluntary agencies

Following a review of the partnership provisions in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, legislative changes in the Police and Justice Act 2006 introduced minimum standards for CDRPs in 2007. These include producing a strategic assessment (a document which identifies the crime and community safety priorities in the local area) and a partnership plan which lays out the approach for addressing these priorities. The local community is given a chance to influence the strategic assessment, for example through public meetings and questionnaires. Most CDRPs sit within the community planning framework and are included in Local Area Agreements signed between regional government and local government.

In Scotland, CSPs are local authority-led partnerships that bring together representatives from the local authority, police service and fire and rescue services. Health, education and other public sector interests are also represented in many partnerships. Under the community planning process, the partners sign up to single outcome agreements and are held accountable for delivery.

These CSPs work to reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime and to promote safer, more inclusive and healthier communities. They provide a wide range of day-to-day services such as community warden teams, CCTV operations and diversionary activities for young people.

