

# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 20th August, 2010

## MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor J. Rodgers (Deputy Chairman) (in the Chair); and Councillors Adamson, Attwood, M. Browne, Campbell, Hartley, Hendron, N. Kelly, Lavery, McCann, McCarthy, Newton, O'Reilly, Robinson and Rodway.

Also attended: Councillors Kingston and C. Maskey

In attendance: Mr. P. McNaney, Chief Executive;  
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;  
Mr. R. Cregan, Head of Finance and Performance;  
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from the Chairman (Councillor Crozier); and Councillors D. Browne, W. Browne and Stoker.

### Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 4th and 18th June were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st July, subject to the omission of the minute of the meeting of 18th June under the heading "Requests for the Use of the City Hall Grounds – Poster for Tomorrow" which, at the request of Councillor Kingston, was taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

### Requests for the Use of the City Hall Grounds – Poster for Tomorrow

The Committee considered further the undernoted minute of the meeting of 18th June:

*"The Committee was advised that a request had been received from Poster for Tomorrow to exhibit within the grounds of the City Hall 100 posters marking World and European Day against the Death Penalty on 10th October. The posters would be selected from public competition submissions by a panel comprised of eminent local people and would be displayed within the grounds from 7th till 10th October. Belfast would be one of 100 cities across the world marking the event.*

*The posters would be displayed on trellis-type fencing positioned within the grounds. There would be no resource implications for the Council as the organisation would provide all of their own display materials. In addition, there would be no requirement for electrical power and the organisation would take out full indemnity insurance. Due to the nature of the subject, some of the posters might be sensitive in nature, although the Council did have the option of vetoing specific posters if it were deemed that they were controversial or offensive.*

*The Committee was advised that the death penalty was still supported by a number of countries, notably the United States of America and China, so the organisers' position would not have unqualified support. It was envisaged that the exhibition might receive significant media coverage. One of the criteria for use of the City Hall grounds stated that the request should comply with the Council's Equality and Good Relations obligations. The application by Poster for Tomorrow had been discussed with the Council's Good Relations Manager who had recommended, given that the United Kingdom had abolished the death penalty, that the application be approved by the Committee.*

*After discussion, it was*

*Moved by Councillor N. Kelly,  
Seconded by Councillor McCarthy,*

*That the Committee agrees to accede to the request.*

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

With the permission of the Chairman, Councillor Kingston addressed the Committee. He expressed the view that the grounds of the City Hall were an inappropriate venue for the display of posters opposing the death penalty. He made the point that the application had not specified the contents of the posters and, whilst the Council did have the option of vetoing specific posters if they were deemed to be controversial or offensive, there was a possibility that the display could include pictures of persons who had been convicted of committing serious crimes. He stated that the United Kingdom had already abolished the death penalty and therefore it was unnecessary for a campaign seeking for it to be abolished to be located within the grounds of the City Hall and he requested that the Committee refuse the request.

Moved by Councillor McCarthy,  
Seconded by Councillor Attwood,

That the Committee agrees to affirm its decision of 18th June and approve the use of the City Hall grounds by the Poster for Tomorrow organisation.

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

**Transition Committee Business**

**Review of Public Administration - Update**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Relevant Background Information**

**1.1 Members will recall that discussions in relation to the future of the Review of Public Administration and reform of local government had concluded on Monday 14th June with the NI executive not having agreed on the way forward. Subsequently, the Environment Minister wrote to the Northern Ireland Office recommending that it proceed with elections to twenty-six, and not eleven, councils in 2011.**

**1.2 While it is understood that the Environment Minister is to submit a report to the NI Executive in September 2010 setting out proposals in regards to taking forward the RPA, there remains significant uncertainty in respect of the nature and timescale for any future reform programme.**

**2.0 Key Issues**

**2.1 Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency**

**2.1.1 Despite such uncertainty the local government sector has recognised the need to maintain momentum and seek to develop its own proposals in respect of an ‘improvement, collaboration and efficiency’ programme for local government. The intention would be to support councils in delivering more efficient and value for money services to the citizen.**

**2.1.2 Exploratory work is ongoing to examine and identify potential collaborative opportunities on a local, sub-regional and regional level, which may support service improvement or drive out efficiencies in delivery. Areas currently under consideration include procurement, information systems, Human Resources, asset management and support services.**

**2.1.3 Members will note that BCC officials are involved in this scoping work in line with the Committee’s previous decision that the Council engage with potential partners to explore possible collaborative efficiency saving and to ensure that these issues are considered within the context of the Council’s own efficiency programme.**

- 2.1.3 It is intended that this work will culminate in the development of an over-arching business case for local government which sets out potential opportunities and undertakes a cost-benefit analysis. Members will be kept fully informed as this work progresses and, in particular, of any potential opportunities which may emerge. It is important to note that there is no impetus for any council (including Belfast) to participate in any collaborative opportunities other than voluntarily and if there is a demonstrable business case for doing so.
- 2.1.4 Preliminary discussions are ongoing also between council officials and other public service providers within the city to examine potential opportunities for securing greater investment and more integrated service delivery within the city (i.e. focus on 'Place'). Again, Members will be kept fully informed and engaged in such discussions as they evolve.
- 2.1.5 Members will recognise that such discussions are particularly important within the context of the growing economic and financial pressures facing the entire NI public sector in the coming years and the push to 'do more with less'. In fact, councils have already received notification from DoE of in year cuts to the resources element of rate support grant aid paid by the Department. Although this will not affect Belfast as we do not receive resource support, it is evidence of the scale of the financial challenge facing Departments this year. It should be noted that central government departments are anticipating cuts of around 20-30% in total allocations in the next Comprehensive Spending Review period which will inevitably impact upon the level of investment into the city.

## 2.2 Regional Governance arrangements

- 2.2.1 It is suggested that critical to the delivery of an improvement, collaboration and efficiency agenda will be the development of a suitable regional Governance arrangements which is connected to and representative of the 26 councils.
- 2.2.2 A consultation paper recently issued by NILGA sets out options for putting in place interim governance arrangements to focus on overseeing the work being taken forward by local government in respect of developing an improvement, efficiency and collaboration programme.

**2.2.3 The options presented within the paper for the consideration of councils include:**

- (i) Do nothing – no formal governance structures put in place but rather activities are progressed through the existing 26 councils in an ad-hoc manner**
- (ii) Inclusive regional option – development of a regional structure which provides political oversight and is representative of the 26 Councils (or all those who participate)**
- (iii) Full implementation of transition committees – retain the 11 Transition Committees and Transition management Teams and implement a statutory based Regional Transition Committee and Regional Transition Management Team**

**2.2.4 In reviewing the options set out within the consultation paper, the following observations are highlighted for Members consideration.**

- Option (i) runs the risk of potential collaborative opportunities being missed through councils continuing to progress any consideration on an individual basis with no mechanism in place to facilitate discussions across the sector on a sub-regional or regional basis**
- Option (ii) representative body of those councils who wish to participate in the process and supported by a senior officer team. While it would be the aspiration that the majority of councils would be engaged, there would be no statutory requirement for councils to participate within the governance arrangement.**
- This model would not prevent potential collaborative activity to take place at a sub-regional or local level if one or more councils believed it to be beneficial or between the council and other public service providers around a place agenda.**
- Option (iii) illustrates those preferred structures which had originally been planned for taking forward the RPA reform process. However, with the recent delay within the NI Executive in the implementation timetable and associated legislative programme (including the Local Government Reorganisation Bill) it will be difficult to bring these proposals forward at this stage.**

It is suggested, for Members consideration that while option (iii) may have been the preference for moving forward, given the difficulties in delivering this option with the delay in the wider RPA programme, the most viable interim option would be option (ii) for the reasons cited above.

2.2.5 While option (ii) would be voluntary (non statutory), it would put in place appropriate governance arrangements to provide political oversight and input into discussions around improvement, collaboration and efficiency. The common goal for moving forward should be to deliver value for money services to the citizen.

2.2.6 The consultation document also seeks views from councils on a series of operating principles which it is suggested would underpin the activities of any regional body (e.g. equality of representation, consensus in decision making, shared funding of costs etc). Members should note that such principles are similar to and have been adopted from those principles which govern Arc21.

2.2.7 Members will further note that further work needs to be undertaken to establish any costs associated with the establishment of the proposed regional body. Again, it will be important that such costs are kept to a minimum and based on a business case. Any costs incurred by participating councils should only be on the basis that demonstrable benefits are to be accrued.

### 2.3 Transfer of Functions

2.3.1 While NI Executive discussions are ongoing in respect of reframing the delivery timetable for local government reform within NI, the context for moving forward any further consideration in respect of transferring services has also changed.

2.3.2 To date, the working assumption had been that the transfer of functions would be on an 11 council basis, however, the proposed 11 council model will no longer be implemented in 2011 as originally anticipated but rather elections will take place to the existing 26 councils. Furthermore, in the absence of the new governance and ethical standards regime which was to be put in place (linked to the pending Reorganisation Bill), it is unlikely that there will be any imminent transfer of functions to local government.

2.3.3 Within this context, and given the current financial pressures facing the NI public purse, there is now an opportunity to reconfigure the discussions relating to specific transferring functions towards a broader conversation in pursuance of integrated service delivery at the local level. As referred to above, there is a need for a real conversation between specific government departments (e.g. DETI, DSD, and Planning Service) and the Council to explore what potential opportunities may exist around 'Place'.

2.4 **Secondment opportunities – specialist planners**

2.4.1 Members will be aware of the proposed cuts to be made to the DoE Planning Service including proposals for the redeployment of approx 270 staff including 160 professional planners. A letter has been issued by the HR and Organisational Change Division of the DoE in relation to investigating the potential for secondment opportunities for specialist planners to local government. It is important to note that councils would be expected to meet the associated staff costs. Departments are presently considering this issue and a fuller report will be brought to Committee at its next meeting.

2.5 **Suspension of RPA Vacancy Control**

2.5.1 Members will recall that the RPA Local Government Reform Joint Forum (LGRJF), under the authority of the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC), introduced a Vacancy Control Procedure to minimise the potential level of redundancies created as a direct result of the RPA reform process. These procedures came into effect on 01 October 2009 and meant that if councils had a vacant Chief Executive, Director, Head of Service, PA to the aforementioned or Members' Services post, they had to seek to fill it from either their own council; the 'cluster' councils; the 26 councils; or the RPA Affected Group before the post could be externally advertised.

2.5.2 Following the NI Executive's decision not to proceed with RPA implementation, the LGRJF met on 23 June 2010 and recommended that the Vacancy Control Procedures be suspended with immediate effect. The LGSC has since issued a statutory recommendation confirming this suspension.

**2.5.3** Members will be aware that Belfast has had its own vacancy control process in place since April 2006. While this process will be amended to reflect the suspension of RPA vacancy control, each council vacancy will continue to be examined on a case by case basis to effectively control council employee costs. Council vacancies will also continue to be filled in accordance with the Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection and in consultation with the trade unions and LGSC, as required.

### **3.0** Resource Implications

There are no significant resource implications contained within this report. The council will continue its current and medium to long term work in relation to vacancy control.

### **4.0** Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of this report and, in particular:

- (i) the Ongoing work by local government in developing proposals for a 'Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency' programme;
- (ii) the discussions with central government departments in regards to securing investment and more integrated service deliver within the city;
- (iii) the suspension of the RPA Vacancy Control procedure; and
- (iv) consider and agree that the council respond to NILGA's consultation on regional governance proposals on the basis of section 2.2 above.

### **5.0** Decision Tracking

Further reports to be submitted to Committee in due course in relation to the following:

- Proposals for a Local Government 'Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency' programme
- Develop of the LGRJF's new approach to recruiting and developing local government staff"



During discussion in the matter, the view was expressed that the Council needed to be clear on which services and resources it wished to have transferred to local government. A Member pointed out that because of the delay in the Review of Public Administration the Council now had a further opportunity to identify those functions and ensure that local government was not given only the non-profitable elements of central government and those services which did not increase the power base of Councils. A Member stated that the Council should explore the opportunity for the secondment of specialist planners, particularly if it was ascertained that the Council required that sort of expertise.

After further discussion, during which the Chief Executive undertook to submit to a future meeting a further report taking into account the comments made by the Members, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Corporate Plan 2011 and Beyond**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“Purpose of the report**

1. To agree the scope and format of a Members workshop as part of the process of developing a new Corporate Plan for 2011 and beyond.

#### **Development of the new corporate plan 2011 and beyond**

2. This is the final year of the current corporate plan which means that over the coming months Members will lead the development of a new corporate plan for 2011 and beyond. This will be a key activity for the Committee, which has responsibility for setting the overall strategic policy, direction and priorities of the Council. A paper was submitted to the Committee on the 23 April advising Members of the work that is already underway to support this process including the Members; Public and Employee surveys and an analysis of external developments and socio-economic and demographic information.
3. As with previous corporate planning processes it is important that Members are given time to consider the Council's purpose, ambition and priorities in the light of this emerging information and to bring to bear their own views and those of parties on the process. Given the challenging economic environment and Members' focus on value for money and efficiency it is also important that discussions with respect to future priorities are taken forward within the context of affordability limits and

maximising the effectiveness of the Council's assets. It is therefore vital that the discussion on the new corporate plan is integrated with the setting of the rate for 2011/12 and consideration of the capital programme. In order to begin this process it is proposed that a workshop is held for the Committee, to which all other Members are invited, so that Members can consider and discuss these matters in detail.

4. Members had already agreed at the Committee's 18th June meeting that a workshop should be held to take forward consideration of key strategic planning issues. It is now proposed that this workshop should be held on 8<sup>th</sup> September, in the Group Space in the Ulster Hall to run from approximately 10.00am until 3.00pm. The key purpose of the workshop is to allow Members to begin to discuss and give direction on the Council's purpose, objectives and priorities for 2011 onwards. This session will serve as the opening of this discussion with Members and as part of the workshop we will also map out and agree how, from this point forward, Members will lead the process of developing the Council's new strategy.

#### Preparation for the workshop

5. A workshop report will be prepared in advance outlining all the background information Members will need to take into consideration when determining Council priorities including city profile information, feedback from the consultation exercises and information about the role of the corporate plan and the timetable and process for developing the new plan.
6. At the special SP&R on 6<sup>th</sup> August, Members considered information from the Strategic Regeneration Frameworks which have been created for the North, South, East, West and Shankill areas of the city. Members made the point that consideration of these frameworks could not be done in isolation to the development of the new corporate plan and to the Council's capital programme and asked for further briefings. These briefings are now being arranged and it is hoped these will also help Members' consideration of emerging priorities for the Council and the city.

7. As part of the workshop, consideration will be given to the roles of the SP&R Committee, other Committees, the Budget and Transformation Panel and the party groups in taking the process forward.
8. In previous corporate planning processes it has proved extremely valuable where parties have given consideration, in advance of a workshop, to the key issues which they feel will face the city and the Council over the next 4 years and their views on key priorities. Support and facilitation for these considerations can be provided for Party Groups through the Corporate Planning and Policy Team if required. If Parties adopt such an approach this year, Party Group leaders can then provide feedback on the issues emerging for their Party at the workshop.
9. Analysis of the public consultation exercise will be completed for presentation to Members at the workshop; however, in order to help Members consideration of these issues some information on citizen's views on future priorities is set out below.

**Priorities for the city**

10. The key priorities emerging from consultation with the public are that the council should be:
  - Creating a safer city (50%)
  - Making the city cleaner and greener (31%)
  - Supporting children and young people (31%)
  - Investing in improving local areas (30%)
  - Helping to support and improve the city's economy (24%)
  - Providing value for money services (23%)

The things identified as most likely to improve quality of life were:

- Lower levels of anti-social behaviour (46%)
- Lower levels of crime (39%)
- More activities for children and young people (37%)
- Better employment opportunities (33%)
- Cleaner streets (28%)

### Recommendation

- The Committee is asked to agree to a workshop on 8<sup>th</sup> September, to which other Members are invited, to commence discussion on the new corporate plan for 2011 and beyond.
- Members are asked to note that briefings will be held in advance of the workshop to facilitate Members' consideration of these issues and are requested to consider the key issues which they feel will face the city and the Council over the next 4 years and their views on key priorities in their party groups in advance of the workshop.

### Resource Implications

- Development of the new corporate plan and related will be taken forward in tandem with the budget estimating process so that resource implications can be assessed as part of the development process."

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that, due to the holding of the workshop on 8th September, the meeting of the Committee scheduled to be held on 10th September be cancelled.

### Democratic Services and Governance

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

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

Organisation / Body	Event / Date – Number of Delegates / Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Institute of Career Guidance	Annual Conference 3rd November, 2010 Approximately 75 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a finger buffet reception.	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of Belfast Castle and the provision of hospitality in the form of finger buffet reception.  Approximate cost £1,050

Organisation / Body	Event / Date – Number of Delegates / Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
British Standards Institution	Innovation and Investment Conference 9th November, 2010 Approximately 150 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception.	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500
Northern Ireland Tourist Board	Irish Tour Operators' Association Annual General Meeting 5th February, 2011 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 Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £480
University of Ulster	International Conference on Sustainable Energy Storage 23rd February, 2011 Approximately 300 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception.	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together', 'Better care for Belfast's environment' 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 £500

Organisation / Body	Event / Date – Number of Delegates / Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
University of Ulster	Council of Professors and Heads of Computing Annual Conference 18th April, 2011 Approximately 80 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception.	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £320
Royal College of Nursing	Education Forum International Conference 16th June, 2011 Approximately 300 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of drinks reception.	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500
Queen's University Belfast	15th International Conference on Thinking 20th June, 2011 Approximately 500 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of drinks reception.	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500

Organisation / Body	Event / Date – Number of Delegates / Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Neuro-anaesthesia Society	Annual Scientific Meeting 10 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012  Approximately 130 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'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500
Irish Association of Funeral Directors	The Association of Funeral Directors Convention 2012 22nd June, 2012  Approximately 200 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception.	A significant element of the conference programme will be taking place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better Services – listening and delivering'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500
Allergy NI	Launch of Allergy Awareness Week 13th September, 2010  Approximately 50 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee.	This event will launch Allergy Awareness Week and seeks to raise the profile of allergies and the support provided by Allergy NI. The event aims to inform the public about the relevant issues in respect of allergic disease and how they can gain the necessary support.  It is estimated that currently within Northern Ireland 180,000 children and 400,000 adults are affected by an allergy, some more severe than others.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee.  Approximate cost £75

<b>Organisation / Body</b>	<b>Event / Date – Number of Delegates / Guests</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
<p>Association for Real Change and the Skyway Group</p>	<p>Launch of the 'It's my Life' DVD 30th September, 2010  Approximately 100 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.</p>	<p>This event will launch a DVD which will promote the importance of including people with a learning disability in all aspects of policy formation and decision-making. The event will also seek to demonstrate that managers and policy makers can effectively listen to people with a learning disability and involve them in service delivery at all levels.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.</p> <p>Approximate cost £250</p>
<p>Constructing Excellence in Northern Ireland</p>	<p>Launch of the Constructing Excellence NI 2010 Demonstration Project Programme 21st October, 2010  Approximately 100 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.</p>	<p>This event will launch the 2010 Demonstration Project programme which aims to promote best practice in the built environment sector and to improve construction standards.</p> <p>Constructing Excellence in Northern Ireland has a working relationship with the Council and three of the four 2009 projects were based in Belfast, namely, The Obel Tower, the Royal Victoria Hospital Critical Care Facility and the numerous new schools projects being delivered under the Belfast Education and Library Board's £300 million Strategic Partnering Framework.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together', 'Better opportunities for success across the city' and 'Better care for Belfast's environment'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.</p> <p>Approximate cost £250</p>



Organisation / Body	Event / Date – Number of Delegates / Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Lyric Theatre	<p>Launch of the first new season</p> <p>23rd November, 2010</p> <p>Approximately 250 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.</p>	<p>This event will launch the brand new season of shows and events which will take place within the theatre. The event seeks to demonstrate the 'Lyric's' continued commitment to arts and culture across the city and beyond.</p> <p>Belfast City Council has a close working relationship with the Lyric Theatre and has played a major role in the rebuild of the theatre both in terms of funding and support.</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>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.</p> <p>Approximate cost £625</p>
JCI Belfast (Formerly the Junior Chamber)	<p>JCI Belfast Presidential and Civic Awards 2010</p> <p>4th December, 2010</p> <p>Approximately 50 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-event drinks reception.</p>	<p>This event seeks to recognise those members of JCI Belfast who have made a significant contribution to the civic, community, social, environmental and entrepreneurial sectors across the city.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.</p> <p>Approximate cost £200</p>

Organisation / Body	Event / Date – Number of Delegates / Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Health and Social Care Board	<p>Regional Social Work Awards Ceremony</p> <p>25th February, 2011</p> <p>Approximately 200 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall	<p>These awards aim to recognise individual social workers and teams who have demonstrated an outstanding contribution or achievement in their work. The event also seeks to raise the profile of social work as well as providing a platform to recognise best practice.</p> <p>The event meets the Council's Key Themes of 'Better support for people and communities' and 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.</p>	The use of the City Hall
Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce	<p>The Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce President's Dinner</p> <p>30th November, 2010</p> <p>Approximately 400 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall.	<p>The President's Dinner aims to provide a networking opportunity in order to encourage investment and business development opportunities for Belfast and beyond. The event, which will include representatives from both Local and Central Government, also seeks to facilitate discussion on economic and social regeneration.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	The use of the City Hall.

Organisation / Body	Event / Date – Number of Delegates / Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Northern Ireland Youth Forum	The Big Deal – A programme for Children and Young People 24th September, 2010 Approximately 70 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.	The Big Deal Programme sought to enable children and young people to become more involved in the decision-making process.  This event seeks to recognise the significant achievement of the children and young people who have successfully completed the programme.  Furthermore, the event will acknowledge the contribution made by the participants in terms of good relations, promoting civic participation and community development across the city  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better support for people and communities.	The use of Belfast Castle and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.  Approximate cost £105

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Notice of Motion: Paddy Barnes**

The Committee was reminded that at the Council meeting on 1st July the undernoted Notice of Motion had been proposed by Councillor C. Maskey and seconded by Councillor Mallon:

*“That this Council recognises the achievement of Paddy Barnes in winning the Gold medal in the European Amateur Boxing Championships in Moscow on Saturday, 12th June, 2010, this following his Bronze medal at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, and agrees to provide an appropriate reception, in the form of a finger buffet, for Paddy, his family and the wider boxing fraternity to coincide with the Belfast Boxing Exhibition which is being held in the East Entrance of the City Hall during September.”*

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

The Democratic Services Manager indicated that, if the Committee were minded to agree to the Motion, an appropriate amount of funding, up to a maximum of £1,700, for a reception could be made available from the Council's Civic Hospitality budget. Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee agree to provide hospitality for a finger buffet reception as set out in the Motion and note that the event would be arranged before, or to coincide with, the end of the Belfast Boxing Exhibition which would be held in the City Hall during September, 2010.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

### **Boston Bruins - Provision of Hospitality**

(Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development, attended in connection with this item.)

The Director of Development reminded the Committee that, as a celebration to mark the tenth anniversary of the opening of the Odyssey Arena, the Belfast Giants Ice Hockey Team was due to play a challenge match against the Boston Bruins on 2nd October, 2010. The Bruins was one of the leading ice hockey teams in the United States, competing in the National Hockey League, and this would be the first time the Bruins would be playing outside North America. The event was attracting significant media attention on both sides of the Atlantic. In recognition of the potential to present Belfast in a positive way and as a location for major sporting events, the Council, at its meeting on 1st June, had endorsed the recommendation of the Development Committee to underwrite the cost of the event up to a maximum of £40,000.

He explained that Invest Northern Ireland had agreed also to sponsor the game as it saw it as a means of attracting potential investors to attend the event as part of a wider promotional programme. Invest Northern Ireland hoped to bring up to ten potential investors to visit the City at that time. Tourism Ireland was hoping also to bring a delegation of North American tour operators and journalists to experience the tourism potential of the City. The United States Consul viewed the event as an opportunity to promote a positive image of the City, not only in Boston, but across the whole of the East Coast of the United States. Initial approaches to the Office of the Mayor of Boston had indicated that the Mayor, Thomas M. Menino, who had previously addressed the Council, might wish to attend the match. The Lord Mayor had issued a invitation to Mayor Menino and he had indicated that he might be able to accept the Lord Mayor's invitation.

The Director explained that, whilst the Council had agreed to invest up to £40,000 towards the cost of the Ice Hockey game, the event provided an opportunity to promote the image of the City to a general United States audience. In addition, there was an opportunity to develop civic linkages between Belfast and Boston and to demonstrate the Council's support to potential investors and tour operators who were bringing tourists to the City. The various partners involved, particularly Invest Northern Ireland, Sport Northern Ireland, Tourism Ireland and the United States Consulate, believed a civic

reception in the City Hall would greatly enhance the credibility of the City with potential investors, tour operators and journalists from the Boston area. The Lord Mayor had expressed a willingness to host a drinks reception, followed by a civic dinner on Friday, 1st October, the night before the ice hockey game. Such an event would help create a very positive impression with potential visitors to the City. That was particularly true should Mayor Menino be part of the visiting delegation.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to host a drinks reception, followed by a civic dinner on Friday, 1st October, 2010, for up to 200 people, the cost of which would not exceed £8,000.

### **Launch and Naming Ceremony for HMS Duncan**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 19th September, 2008, it had agreed to accept an invitation from Rear Admiral Philip Jones for the Council and the City of Belfast to become affiliated with the HMS Duncan, one of the Royal Navy's newest Type 45 Destroyers. The launch and naming ceremony for the HMS Duncan would take place at Govan Shipyard in Glasgow on 11th October and invitations to attend the ceremony had been received for the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and the Chief Executive. Given the Council's affiliation with the HMS Duncan, it was considered to be appropriate for the Council to be represented at the event. It was estimated that the cost per person to cover flights and subsistence would be approximately £250.

Moved by Councillor Newton,  
Seconded by Councillor Rodway,

That the Committee agrees to approve the attendance of the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and the Chief Executive (or their nominees) at the launch and naming ceremony for HMS Duncan.

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

### **Prison Review Team - A Review of the Conditions, Management and Oversight of Prisons**

The Committee was advised that, in line with the Hillsborough agreement of 5th February, 2010, the Minister for Justice had established a Prisons Review Team to conduct a rolling review encompassing the conditions of detention, management and oversight of all prisons. Correspondence had been received from the Chairperson of the Review team inviting the Council to submit written evidence setting out its views on the Review, which should be forwarded to the Team by 16th September, 2010.

The Committee noted receipt of the correspondence and agreed that, since the Council had no direct involvement in service delivery for that issue, it be referred to the Party Groupings on the Council.

**Belfast Health and Social Care Trust –  
Request to Make a Presentation**

The Committee was informed that correspondence had been received from the Stakeholders Communications Manager, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, seeking permission to address the Committee on how health and social care services in Belfast were developing and, in particular, to outline the Trust's current proposal to reorganise the delivery of acute services in Belfast. The reorganisation was currently part of a consultation exercise and the Trust felt that an opportunity to address the Members and to take questions and feedback would be invaluable to that exercise.

The Committee agreed that a briefing session, to which all Members of the Council would be invited, be held for that purpose.

**Proportionality to the Offices of  
Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor**

In accordance with Notice on the Agenda, Councillor Hartley requested that the Committee give consideration to the application of the d'Hondt system of proportionality to the offices of Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor.

The Committee agreed that a report in this regard be submitted to a future meeting.

**National Association of Councillors –  
Diversity and Media Seminar**

The Committee was advised that the National Association of Councillors was holding a training and development seminar in London from 24th till 26th September. The theme of the Seminar was "Diversity and Media" which aimed to cover issues that were relevant to how Members could work with the media to promote the Council's objectives. The Seminar would provide an opportunity to share best practice and to consider how best to work with the media in order to benefit local government. The estimated cost of attendance was approximately £580 per delegate.

The Committee agreed, in accordance with the Policy established by the Committee at its meeting on 14th March, 2008, to authorise the attendance at the training and development seminar of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Committee, the Council's representatives on the National Association of Councillors (Northern Ireland Region), the Democratic Services Manager (or their nominees) and a representative of each of the Party Groupings on the Council not represented by the aforementioned Members.

## Finance

### Renewing the Routes – Request for Specified Reserve

The Members were informed that the Development Committee, as part of the estimates and budget setting process, had agreed the provision of core budget funding of £300,000 for the delivery of the Renewing the Routes local regeneration activity for the current financial year. At its meeting on 9th June, that Committee had received a detailed report which outlined the proposed approach to the longer term delivery of local regeneration activity under the initiative and suggested approaches to the short-term delivery of implementation works during the current financial year.

The timescale for the completion of a survey and prioritisation process would, however, leave insufficient opportunity for the development and implementation of physical projects in new areas of the City within the remaining period to March, 2011. Accordingly, the Development Committee had resolved to seek a deferral of the implementation activity and carry forward the agreed resource allocation into the next financial year as a specified reserve. The deferment would enable the resources to be fully targeted on the new priority areas in combination without any future additional resource allocation.

The Head of Finance and Performance indicated that Section 56 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 only permitted the Council to maintain a Capital Fund and a Renewal and Repairs Fund in addition to the District Fund. However, the Council could identify parts of the District Fund Reserve for specific purposes. That would remain legally part of the District Fund and would not be shown separately from the District Fund Reserve on the Council's Balance Sheet. The issue of a specified reserve had been discussed and agreed previously with the Local Government Auditor and had been used for the Brighter Belfast Programme in similar circumstances. That approach would, however, require the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Accordingly, it was recommended that the Committee support the proposal to defer the implementation of Renewing the Routes local regeneration activity and accede to the request for the establishment of a specified reserve for the £300,000 to ensure the provision of resources in the 2011/12 financial year, rather than 2010/11.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

### Business Travel

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### “Relevant Background Information

**Members will recall that at their meeting of 18 June 2010 they discussed a recommendation concerning the authorising of travel by officers to locations outside the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, and requested that a further report be submitted to the committee in due course on the most appropriate mechanism for giving such authorisation.**

### Key Issues

#### A. Travel by officers to locations outside the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland

It is vital that members of staff undertake travel only where it is appropriate and justified and that the council has proper controls in place to ensure that this is the case. While the council has already established a significant number of controls to ensure that any such travel is justified and appropriately approved, it is proposed that a further control is added in relation to travel by officers outside the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

The following mechanism for approving such travel is therefore recommended:

1. Where an officer is travelling with members, then the relevant committee must approve the travel
2. Where an officer is not travelling with members, then the appropriate director and the Director of Finance and Resources must approve the travel
3. In cases under 2 where the officer travelling is the Director of Finance and Resources or where the Director of Finance and Resources is not available, then the appropriate director and the Chief Executive must approve the travel
4. In addition, in cases under 2 and 3, the relevant committee must also approve the travel, if in the judgement of the Director of Finance and Resources / the Chief Executive either:

- (a) the cost of the event is likely to be questioned or
- (b) attending the event is potentially controversial or of interest to the media or the public.

#### B. New travel contract

On a related theme and as an update for Members, the council has agreed a reduced cost exclusive contract for the provision of travel services with Knock Travel. The new travel contract includes provisions to ensure that the cost price of travel services charged by Knock Travel will not be greater than the price council officers or members could obtain directly, for example, by visiting the web site of the airline concerned. The council will carry out routine checks to ensure that the supplier is adhering to these contractual provisions.



In addition, in order to make processes more efficient and improve the quality of management/reporting, bookings for all travel services (flights, accommodation, car hire, etc including low-cost flights and all hotel bookings), will be placed exclusively with Knock Travel through the centralised booking service within the Finance & Resources Department. Out-of-hours arrangements with Knock Travel are also being put in place to provide cover and support in emergency circumstances.

#### **Resource implications**

As was reported to the committee on 18 June 2010, the cost of staff attending events has reduced in the financial year 2009/2010 as compared to previous years.

It is envisaged that the introduction of further control as recommended, together with reduced charges for travel services, will help to consolidate this cost reduction for future years.

#### **Recommendations**

Members are requested to:

- (a) agree the mechanism for approving travel by officers outside the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland as set out in Section A above
- (b) note the new arrangements for booking travel under the new travel contract.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

#### **Tenders for the Supply and Delivery of Annual Supplies**

The Committee granted authority for the commencement of tendering exercises and delegated authority to the Director of Property and Projects, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, to accept the most advantageous tenders received in respect of the following:

<u>Annual Supplies</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Indicative Costs Per Annum</u>
Supply of bottled water and mains fed water with dispensers	1st April 2011 to 31st March, 2012, with the option to renew for a further two years	£41,000
Supply, fitting and maintenance of fire extinguishers	1st April, 2011 to 31st March, 2012, with the option to renew for a further two years	£42,000

<u>Annual Supplies</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Indicative Costs Per Annum</u>
Provision of a courier service	1st February, 2011 to 31st January, 2012, with the option to renew for a further three years up to a date no later than 31st March, 2015	£13,000
Supply and delivery of broken stones and screenings	1st April, 2011 to 31st March, 2012	£85,000
Hire of machinery and motor tipping lorries	1st April, 2011 to 31st March, 2012, with the option to renew for a further two years	£300,000
Supply and delivery of general cleaning materials and consumables for Council buildings	1st April, 2011 to 31st March, 2012, with the option to renew for a further four years	£108,000
Supply and delivery of cleaning materials for leisure centres	1st April, 2011 to 31st March, 2012, with the option to renew for a further four years	£13,000
Supply of toilet hygiene and floor care services	1st April, 2011 to 31st March, 2012, with the option to renew for a further four years	£57,000
Supply and delivery of electrical supplies and lamps	1st April, 2011 to 31st March, 2012, with the option to renew for a further two years	£200,000

#### **Human Resources**

##### **Standing Order 55 - Employment of Relatives**

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

Noted.

### Asset Management

#### Disposal of Land at 35 Brookvale Avenue

In accordance with Standing Order 60, the Committee was advised that the Parks and Leisure Committee, at its meeting on 12th February, 2009, had agreed to the disposal to members of the public of three portions of land at different locations across the City. The Committee was advised that officers had been in contact with all perspective purchasers and, in respect of the land adjoining 35 Brookvale Avenue, agreement had been reached on the terms of disposal which were as follows:

- (i) the area of disposal comprised of approximately 429 square metres;
- (ii) use of the land would be restricted to open space and to garden use in particular;
- (iii) the disposal price had been agreed at £12,200; and
- (iv) the purchaser would erect a boundary fence at their own expense along any of the boundaries which were not fenced currently.

The Committee approved the terms outlined.

#### Review of Rents on Parks Houses

The Committee considered the undernoted report in respect of the review of rents on parks houses and adopted the recommendations:

##### “Relevant Background Information

**At its meeting on 18 June 2010 the Committee agreed to defer consideration of a report on the Review of Rents on Parks Houses. It is understood Members were seeking further information on the background to the level of proposed rents and this is provided within the body of the current report.**

##### Roles and Responsibilities

**These houses are located on land for which Parks & Leisure Department have operational responsibility. Parks and Leisure look after allocation of the dwellings to Council employees. During the course of the tenancies Parks and Leisure remain responsible for the maintenance of the dwellings and tenant management.**

**Property & Projects Department review rents and provide input, when requested, on the content of Tenancy Agreements.**

Reference to this Committee is made under Standing Order 46 (viii) (n) which states it is one of the 'Duties' of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee 'for the supervision and checking of all rents payable or collected by the Council'. Given the legal advice (provided below) the 'Tenancy Agreements' for Parks Houses are technically not 'disposals' and thus Members may wish to note that strictly speaking Standing Order 60 (which deals with acquisitions and disposals) would not apply to these rental assessments. In response to previous queries from Members, Committee may also wish to note that the Parks and Leisure Committee have no equivalent 'Duties' to Standing Orders, 46 (viii) (n), or 60.

#### Legal Basis

Legal advice obtained in 1992 (and recently updated) requires the Council to restrict these lettings to Council employees. Letting on the open market or to those on housing waiting lists, would fall outside the Council's functions and legal scope.

Legal advice provided by the Town Solicitor in 1976 (and recently updated) confirms that because the lettings are to employees and the wording contained in the 'Tenancy Agreements' states the occupancy is 'at the will and during the pleasure of the Council', the occupier has no legal interest in the property. This means the occupier's status is more akin to that of a Licensee rather than a tenant. In addition the Council has no duty to re-house any tenant whose tenancy is terminated. The combination of these factors offers less protection to the occupier than a Housing Executive or private rented sector tenancy.

#### Rental Assessments

Since 1991 Parks Houses rents have been calculated using the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Point Scheme. Points are allocated based on the number of rooms and facilities. The Points Scheme makes no adjustments for things such as location or surrounding environment.

#### Rental Adjustments

Due to the unique situation of many of the Parks Houses it is considered appropriate to make further adjustments for those houses which are situated in cemeteries, parks, or more out of the way locations. Adjustment is also made where the occupier has a duty, under their Tenancy Agreement, to

investigate any disturbance or unlawful entry occurring at anytime on the adjoining Council property, and report the same immediately to the police. In many cases the tenant will also have responsibility outside normal park opening hours (e.g. at night) to open, close and lock gates in order to gain access to, or egress from, the dwelling. Adjustments are also made for absence of parking arrangements where appropriate.

The condition of each house is also considered, taking into account renovations and improvements or any issues with dampness or other disabilities.

Finally adjustment is made on account of the relative insecurity of the tenants' tenure (see 'Legal Basis' above)

#### Summary of Each Property

The attached table (Appendix 2) provides some information of the nature of each property and the existing and proposed rental and level of adjustments.

#### Key Issues

The proposed rents take account of the relative insecurity of tenure, the accommodation, condition, location and any duties required of the occupier. These adjustments are reviewed periodically to ensure they continue to follow market trends. The levels of increase in the proposed rents over the existing rents reflect the latest review.

#### Resource Implications

##### Financial

As set out in previous report, appended.

##### Human Resources

No additional human resources required.

##### Asset and Other Implications

Ensures appropriate rental levels for dwellings.

#### Recommendations

The Proposed Weekly Rents contained in Appendix 2 to this report are recommended for Committee approval."

**B  
2088**

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,  
Friday, 20th August, 2010**

(Pages B2088 – B2089 can be viewed on [Modern.gov](http://Modern.gov) as Appendix 2 of the report)



### Glen 10 Development Framework

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### “Purpose

To update members regarding a proposed Development Framework in respect of lands at Glen Road known as ‘Glen 10’.

#### Relevant Background Information

In 2009 the Department for Social Development in conjunction with the Strategic Investment Board, commissioned consultants GVA Grimley to look at the development potential of a number of parcels of land (10 no approx) adjacent to the Glen Road & Monagh By Pass, known as ‘Glen 10’.

The research proposal arose from the work of the Glen 10 Workshops (chaired by BCC’s Chief Executive and Deputy Secretary of DSD), which later gave rise to the Glen Road Development Co-Ordination Group. This group was made up with representatives from DSD, BCC, SIB, NIHE, DOE and DRD. Minister Margaret Ritchie announced her intention to develop detailed plans for the area in November 2009, when launching this Glen 10 Research Report (the report is available on the DSD website).

The target area is defined by the Upper Springfield Road & the dBMAP development limit boundary to the north, Glen Road to the south; the east is bounded by the Monagh By-Pass, and to the west, Hannahstown Hill. Within this boundary is a mix of established residential, employment, educational & sporting uses. BCC own various portions of land within this area, as identified on the map, and are also landlord for the sites leased to St Teresa’s GAC and Sport & Leisure FC.

The preferred development scenario identified by the consultants in the report was a sustainable urban extension and strategic mixed use development, which offers scope to bring forward development in a sustainable, co-ordinated manner with a land use mix that can achieve wider regeneration benefits for the West Belfast area, particularly in terms of addressing housing need and introducing appropriate employment opportunities.



Key elements of the proposal included the potential for establishing the Glen Road as a destination with a distinctive neighbourhood identity; significant social/affordable and private housing provision; complementary employment generating uses and associated community, leisure and recreation uses; high quality green space including a greenway linking recreation opportunities on the Belfast Hills and Colin Glen; improved physical connections through the provision of rapid transit and improved vehicular access and exemplar educational facilities. It was recognised however that the delivery of such an ambitious programme is not without its challenges and would clearly be a major long term project, requiring careful co-ordination of the various landowner and stakeholder interests.

Following on from Minister Margaret Ritchie's announcement to develop detailed plans for the area, DSD now propose to commission a detailed Development Framework for the target area that tests and appraises in more detail the proposed land use options.

#### Key Issues

- The proposed Development Framework will set out guiding principles for development and recommend a detailed framework for development that represents the best balance between benefits, costs, and deliverability. It will seek to optimise the value of sites, address physical, planning and infrastructure constraints and promote integration of the sites with the surrounding neighbourhoods. It is to also scope options for financing & delivery of the framework proposals and incorporate a comprehensive transport & infrastructure assessment, as well as undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment.
- A Project Board comprising key statutory interests (DSD, BRO, BCC, DOE Planning Service, DETI, SIB, DRD & DE) will directly manage the commissioning & preparation of the Development Framework, with the objective of securing a joined up approach to future development. A Project Reference Group, comprising statutory, landowner & community interests, will advise DSD and the appointed consultants on the commissioning & preparation of the framework & consider related issues including communication & consultation. There is BCC officer representation on both groups.

- The appointed consultants will undertake a programme of consultation with identified stakeholders and will provide a bulletin at key milestones. Identified Stakeholders include the elected representatives for the area; the West Belfast Partnership Board; West Belfast & Greater Shankill Enterprise Council; residents & occupants; private landowners & statutory organisations with a key strategic interest or operational/service delivery interest. Political engagement is seen as being key to the preparation and delivery of the Development Framework.
- Consultants are being appointed (through CPD) this month and the proposed timeframe for preparation of the draft Development Framework is January 2011, with agreements to the framework, following consultation, envisaged for May 2011.
- Whilst there are certainly potential significant benefits to be gained from the proposed approach, the complexity of the project cannot be underestimated, not least because of the myriad of different ownerships & different objectives of land owners. The Development Framework would not however be binding on any of the land owners and the intention is not to constrain development but to influence landowners to develop proposals that will complement the wider development of the area to the benefit of all.

#### **Resource Implications**

##### **Financial:**

DSD are funding the consultants cost for preparation of the Development Framework.

##### **Human Resources:**

BCC officer time as part of the Project Board & Project Reference Group.

##### **Asset & Other Implications:**

BCC own lands within the defined area. The Development Framework should provide a sustainable framework for investment that optimises the value of the development sites, although it is not binding.

### Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of this report and to further note that as part of the stakeholder engagement process the appointed consultants will undertake a programme of consultation with the Elected Members for the area. Further update reports will be brought back to Committee in due course.

### Key to Abbreviations

DSD: Department for Social Development  
BRO: Belfast Regeneration Office  
SIB: Strategic Investment Board  
BCC: Belfast City Council  
DOE: Department of Environment  
NIHE: Northern Ireland Housing Executive  
DETI: Department of Enterprise Trade & Investment  
DE: Department Education”

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### Update on Peace III Priority 2.1 Capital Bids for Shared Space

The Committee considered the undernoted report which provided an update on the Peace III Priority 2.1 Capital Bids for Shared Space:

#### “Purpose of Report

Members will recall that a paper was taken to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee in June 2010 updating Members on the status of the Council’s four applications under Priority 2.1 ‘*Creating Shared Public Spaces*’ of the Peace III programme that were submitted to the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) in November 2009. As Members know at this stage the status of the Council’s applications was as follows -

<i>Proposed Project</i>	<i>SEUPB Decision</i>
<i>Girdwood Community Hub - the development of an integrated hub containing leisure, community, library and educational facilities in a shared space with an associated plan of shared space activities</i>	Deferred
<i>Giant’s Park Community Sports Village - a partnership between the Council and Crusaders/ Newington Football Clubs to develop a shared sports complex using sports and heritage to promote peace and reconciliation</i>	Rejected

<i>Proposed Project</i>	<i>SEUPB Decision</i>
<i>North Belfast Cultural Corridor</i> - to improve the physical environment, in order to create an attractive, welcoming and shared public realm in an area uniquely rich in the city's built and cultural heritage	Rejected
<i>Gasworks Bridge</i> -the development of a pedestrian and cycle bridge to improve connectivity between the city centre, Gasworks Business Park, Lower Ravenhill and Ormeau Park	Rejected

At this time the Committee agreed that debriefing sessions should be arranged with SEUPB to gather further detail on SEUPB's reasons for the deferment and rejection of the Council's bids. Delegated authority was granted to the Director of Property & Projects to meet with SEUPB on these and to decide if there was merit in formally appealing any of SEUPB's decisions. The purpose of this paper is to update Members on the outcome of these debriefing sessions and to seek guidance from the Committee on the next steps in this process. A briefing session on this process, to which all Members were invited, was also held on Tuesday 10th August.

#### Relevant Background Information

Members will recall that the Council agreed, at its meeting in November 2009, to submit 4 bids as outlined above to the call for capital bids under Priority 2.1 'Creating Shared Public Spaces' of the Peace III programme. The central issue that projects needed to demonstrate was their ability to deliver peace and reconciliation outcomes and to be iconic, transformational projects that would provide a lasting legacy to the PEACE III programme. All monies under this call have to be committed by December 2013 and spent by 2015 so the timescales are extremely tight for capital projects.

As Members are aware, of the 4 projects submitted, the Girdwood Community Hub and the Sports Village went to economic appraisal in February 2010 while the North Belfast Cultural Corridor and the Gasworks Bridge were rejected at the first stage. Independent consultants, Cogent Consulting, were appointed to carry out the economic appraisals. In light of the economic appraisal, the SEUPB Priority 2.1 Steering Committee then discussed the Girdwood Community Hub and Sports Village projects at its meeting in May and at this stage the decision on the Hub project was deferred while the Sports Village bid was rejected.

As reported to SP&R Committee in June the Council had the right to meet with SEUPB for a debrief session on all the projects and following this debrief the right to formally appeal the decisions. Appeals could only be made on the grounds that

- The outcome/decision by the Steering Committee was unreasonable or
- The proper procedures were not followed

Appeals had to be made within 14 days of the debriefing session and it is quite a protracted process with little guarantee of success. The Director of Property and Projects was granted delegated authority at the Committee meeting in June to formally appeal any of the decisions if he felt it appropriate given the tight timescales for the appeals to be lodged.

#### Key Issues - Update on the debriefing sessions

Officers from the Council have now had debriefing sessions on the 4 projects with senior officers from SEUPB. Key points arising from the debriefs include -

#### Girdwood Community Hub

SEUPB have advised that the Steering Committee felt that this project has the capacity to be transformational and iconic but that this was caveated by the risks involved in moving forward. SEUPB have requested further information on this project be submitted including -

- an implementation timetable for the Hub and the wider site (including housing and infrastructure) within an agreed masterplan
- further evidence that there is full political and local community support, particularly in the Protestant/ Unionist community, for the project
- an Equality Impact Assessment incorporating further consultation
- further details on the programming of the facility by strategic partners and SLAs

#### Next steps

The SP&R Committee agreed in June that work was progressed on submitting the further information as requested above by SEUPB in relation to this application. As a result -

- The Director of Property & Projects has forwarded a letter to the Minister for Social Development, Alex Attwood, requesting a meeting to get an update on the overall Girdwood masterplan and funding for the site infrastructure and to get an update on the DSD's plans for the Shankill and Lower Oldpark areas
- An engagement matrix for consulting with local political and community representatives has been developed and the first meetings will take place over the next few weeks

An update on these areas will be brought to Committee as necessary over the coming months. Members are asked to note that SEUPB have not set a timeframe for the submission of the additional information in relation to the Girdwood bid but that it is recommended that, if it is possible following the outcome of the above meetings, that this information is submitted as quickly as possible to ensure the deliverability of the project if it is successful.

#### Sports Village

SEUPB facilitated two debriefing sessions on this application which included very full discussions on the reasons for its rejection. Copius Consulting who primarily helped Crusaders/Newington Football clubs in the preparation of this bid were also in attendance. Cogent Consulting were present at one of the debriefing meetings to go through in detail the economic appraisal. Key points made by SEUPB on this bid included -

- the application did not adequately demonstrate peace and reconciliation outcomes and fell down on its ability to provide a lasting legacy to the Peace programme – it was considered to be more of a sports development project with peace outcomes as an add on
- the deliverability and sustainability of the project were highlighted as an issue – concerns were raised over the financials and the value for money demonstrated by the project

Decision – Not to appeal on the basis of the discussion with SEUPB

Next steps - Crusaders/Newington are now exploring alternative avenues of moving this project forward. Discussions are ongoing with the Council to explore potential for involvement

### North Belfast Cultural Corridor

SEUPB advised that they felt the Corridor project was much more an environmental and tourism project and that it was weak in demonstrating peace and reconciliation outcomes at a local level. Members are asked to note that this project was rejected by SEUPB at the first stage of the process and did not reach the threshold for getting through to economic appraisal stage, unlike the Sports Village and the Girdwood Community Hub. SEUPB scores are based on projects demonstrating levels of evidence in meeting the programme objectives. The Cultural Corridor scored medium points across all the programme criteria but to be successful it would need to score highly across all areas. The project failed to score the threshold in the cross cutting themes. Whilst there were some weaknesses in the application, the feedback from SEUPB was that this was a reflection on how the Cultural Corridor fits with this specific programme as opposed to the application presented. SEUPB are seeking iconic flagship capital projects; it is more difficult to present the development of a corridor through a series of smaller projects as iconic compared to a defined space or building. It should be noted that if the Council was to resubmit this application, the project concept would need considerable work as SEUPB's feedback suggests that the current project is unlikely to meet the aims of the Priority 2.1 Programme. Members should note that there may be alternative sources of funding for this type of project, including Heritage Lottery Fund, which may have more appropriate criteria. The project could be delivered on a phased approach.

Decision – Formal appeal not proceeded with on the basis of the discussions with SEUPB as it was indicated that this would not be successful

### Gasworks Bridge

Like the Cultural Corridor project above the Gasworks Bridge also did not meet the threshold scores for progressing to economic appraisal stage and was knocked out by SEUPB in the initial round. Discussions with SEUPB indicated that this project fell down on its demonstration of peace and reconciliation outcomes and its ability to provide a lasting legacy to the peace programme. It was also considered weak in terms of its ability to act as a catalyst and be transformational. Concerns were also raised over the value for money and the need for the project. SEUPB drew comparisons with the Peace Bridge in Derry which had successfully received funding under an earlier call for this priority highlighting that this was seen as a project which had an impact on the whole city whereas it was considered that the impact of the Gasworks proposal would be much more localised and therefore less iconic and transformational.

**Decision** – Formal appeal not proceeded with on the basis of the discussions with SEUPB as it was indicated that this would not be successful

At the briefing session on 10th August several Members expressed their concern and disappointment at the decisions taken by SEUPB in relation to the Council's 4 applications and the complete absence of engagement with local political representatives as part of the process, either during application stage or during the economic appraisal stage. Members are asked to consider if they wish to formally write to SEUPB to raise these issues within the context of the overall process.

**Points to note**

**Reopening of the call under Priority 2.1**

Members are asked to note that there is €29million available under this call. At present only one application has been successful while two other applications, in addition to Girdwood, have been deferred. Discussions with SEUPB have indicated that they are confident that all the money under this Priority will be allocated and spent within the necessary timeframe.

SEUPB have indicated that it is their intention to reopen the call for applications under this priority in October/November of this year. This presents the Council with a number of options -

1. a significant opportunity to consider any new projects that might be suitable for submission under this call
2. resubmit any of the projects above – however it should be stressed to Members that these projects have already been rejected by the Priority 2.1 Steering Committee, and that Cultural Corridor project and the Gasworks Bridge projects in particular were knocked out in the first stages and did not reach the threshold for proceeding to economic appraisal. However these projects can be reworked if Members wish these to be pursued

It is important that the learning from the previous rounds of applications is taken on board if any new projects are submitted, including –

- a. it is recommended that if new projects are chosen for submission this should be limited to 1 or 2 very well defined projects



- b. in order to maximise the Council's chances of a getting a successful application under the next call it will be necessary that any new projects which are chosen can clearly demonstrate their peace and reconciliation outcomes, are iconic and transformational, will provide a lasting legacy to the Peace programme in Northern Ireland, clearly identify the need for the project and are fully costed.

Members are therefore asked to start to consider this process and potential new projects now. These issues will also be further discussed with Members at the North/South/East/West briefings which are being held at the end of August/start of September. A further report on Peace III will be brought back in September.

### Resource Implications

#### Financial

None at present.

#### Human Resources

Additional officer time will be required to progress work on the Girdwood bid and to work up any additional bids if the Council wishes to proceed with these.

### Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the information in this report and to -

1. note that work is progressing on submitting the additional information that SEUPB have requested regarding the Girdwood bid and that updates on this will be brought back to Committee as necessary
2. note the decision taken not to formally appeal any of the rejected bids due to the tight parameters within which appeals can be taken and the feedback from SEUPB during the debriefing sessions that it was highly unlikely that any of these projects would be successful
3. agree if the Council should formally write to SEUPB to express its disappointment at the absence of engagement with locally elected political representatives throughout the process

4. in light of the fact that SEUPB are intending to reopen this call, start to consider other projects which could be submitted. A further report seeking views on potential projects will be brought to Committee in September.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendation.

### **Titanic Signature Project - Flying Theatre Alternative**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“Relevant Background Information**

Members are aware that the Titanic Signature Project (TSP) a flagship tourist attraction to which the Council has committed £10m funding is now under construction with a completion date of 2012.

#### **Key Issues**

As part of performance reporting it is intended to regularly update Committee on the progress of major projects which the Council are supporting via the City Investment Fund ie TSP, Lyric, MAC and Connswater Community Greenway. The first formal report on major projects is due in September. Members have also agreed to forming a Member stakeholder group for TSP and this will be detailed in the September report.

However an important issue has arisen in regard to the TSP which requires Council input this month.

First of all it is important to note that progress in terms of construction is well on target with no additions or omission to this contract sum and with £25m expenditure certified to date. Up to date photographs of construction have been circulated.

Harcourt Construction who are building the scheme and TQL who are now also responsible for operating the venue have over the past few months been considering an Immersive Theatre as opposed to the agreed Flying Theatre concept. Details of what this entails have been received this month.

Members will recall that the Flying Theatre is a thrill ride designed to take visitors on a dive to the Titanic or on a flight over Northern Ireland, using a combination of dynamic motion and cinematic production technology.

The Flying Theatre is part of the contract and any change will be a major variation to the contract. The Flying Theatre was broadly welcomed as part of the business case analysis for the project but was seen as separate from and not an integrated part of the main exhibition. It was also seen as offering a flexible multi purpose space for use for lectures and other one off events as well as playing a key role during festivals and other seasonal offerings.

As the design of the overall project and operating contract has progressed a number of drawbacks of the Flying Theatre have become more evident ie possible lack of interest to older people, height restrictions affecting young children and family groups and the cost of refreshing the film experience. While the Flying Theatre was believed to be the best option at the time TQL/Harcourt who are now the operator favour a change to an Immersive Theatre.

The Immersive Theatre proposal arose from discussions between Harcourt Construction and Professor Ballard, who first located the remains of Titanic. Discussions were confidential to begin with as the relationship with the Ballard team had to be nurtured to ensure the option was deliverable before raising expectations.

Wider stakeholders become aware of the concept earlier this year as options were discussed at the Storyline Group which is working on the details of how the Titanic story is told.

A detailed report from Harcourt was recently received this month and argues the case for change.

In essence the new Immersive Theatre overcomes the issue of a disconnected formal gallery but meets all the other performance criteria for the Flying Theatre. It also brings the unique Ballard asset base to Belfast and adds of course to the whole authenticity of the visitor experience. Included in this feature as an Ocean Exploration Centre allowing direct real time exchange with scientists on board Ballard's exploration vessels as well as linking to the universities and marine schools across Europe.

### Current Position

Titanic Foundation the charity established to manage the project overall has recommended the Immersive Theatre proposals be accepted subject to:

- an assurance from Harcourt Construction that the capital costs are capped at £3.625m, the cost of the Flying Theatre to ensure that funders/doners are not exposed to a risk of further funding requirement.
- the capital costs be subject to a value for money assessment.

Titanic Foundation acknowledges that the emergence of the Immersive Theatre as an option has arisen late in the process with construction well advanced and creates difficulties for stakeholders both in terms of perception and timescales for decision. However it is convinced that it significantly strengthens the exhibition in terms of storyline and quality of visitor experience providing a more inclusive offering accessible to all visitors.

Accordingly Titanic Foundation would appreciate the views of funders.

**Resource Implications**

None.

**Recommendations**

- (i) The Committee is asked for its views on the proposed immersive theatre and to consider a further presentation from Titanic Foundation.
- (ii) The Committee considers a site visit before establishing a stakeholder group in September.”

The Committee approved the proposed immersive theme, agreed to receive a presentation from the Titanic Foundation and agreed also to undertake a site visit to view the progress of the Titanic Signature Project.

**Good Relations and Equality**

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

**Minutes of Meeting of Memorabilia Working Group**

**Somme Resolution**

In considering the minutes of the Memorabilia Working Group of 5th August, a Member drew the Committee's attention to the decision of the Group under the heading "Somme Resolution" and suggested that the Committee adopt the proposed text as submitted by Councillor Crozier.

Accordingly, it was

Moved by Councillor Newton,  
Seconded by Councillor Robinson,

That the Committee agrees to adopt the following resolution:

“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  
the 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.”

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

The Committee accordingly agreed that the following resolution be adopted:

“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, 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.”

The minutes of the meeting of the Memorabilia Working Group of 5th August  
were thereupon approved and adopted.

### **Minutes of Meeting of Good Relations Partnership**

The Committee approved the minutes of the meetings of the Good Relations  
Partnership of 25th June and 13th August and adopted the recommendations in respect  
of the following:

#### **Peace III - Shared Cultural Space Funding**

The approval of the issue of letters of offer for funding to those groups which had  
achieved the necessary minimum score, subject to the undertaking of site visits and  
further checks by the Peace III Programme Officers.

#### **Migrant and Minority Ethnic Projects**

The commissioning of a suitable organisation to develop and deliver training  
programmes aimed at advice workers to provide them with the specialist knowledge  
required to advise migrants on related issues; and to invite quotations for the design and  
printing of a directory of services for migrant workers. The cost of which would be  
£29,500 and £2,500 respectively.

**European Union Open Days 2010**

The attendance of the Chairman of the Partnership, Councillor Hendron, at the European Union Open Days event in Brussels from 4th till 7th October, the cost of which would be met fully by the Special European Union Programmes Body and the European Union Commission.

**Proposed Development Event for  
Good Relations Staff**

The proposal to the organisation of a Good Relations Unit staff development event at a cost of approximately £1,000.

**Event for Funded Groups**

The recommendation of the Partnership to approve the holding in the City Hall, during the month of September, of a small event to launch pamphlets which had been prepared by three former prisoners groups. The cost of the event would not exceed £500 and 75% of that cost could be reclaimed from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister under the District Council's Good Relations Programme.

**Cross-Cutting Issues**

(Mrs. S. Wylie, Director of Health and Environmental Services, attended in connection with these items.)

**Safer City 2010/11 Business Plan  
and 2009/10 Plan Update**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“Relevant Background Information**

**At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (24 April 2009) members agreed the council's Safer City Framework and Safer City Plan for 2009/10. A Safer City Strategic Group was set up to manage and lead a mechanism for integrated action across the Council to bring about a 'one council' approach and ensure, where necessary, resources devoted to community safety are more joined up. The Safer City Strategic Group now meets on a monthly basis, chaired by Suzanne Wylie (Director of Health & Environmental Services) and is made up of senior cross-departmental representatives.**

**This report is therefore intended to provide:**

- 1. A performance report against the 2009/2010 Safer City Business Plan**
- 2. The proposed 2010/2011 Safer City Business Plan.**

The 2010/2011 plan has been developed following consultation with elected members at a Councillor Summit on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and consultation with departments throughout Council. Where possible the 2010/2011 Council Safer City Plan has been closely aligned with other inter-agency strategies such as the Good Relations Plan, the Community Safety Partnership's Safer Belfast Plan and the DPP Local Policing Plans.

### Key Issues

#### 2009/2010 Business Plan – Key Achievements

In 2009/10 we established a Safer City Framework and Action Plan for the council. Some of the key achievements of the 2009/10 Plan include:

- the development of corporate ASB information management system (being launched in July 2010) to capture ASB reported incidents across the council
- delivery of training for frontline staff;
- the development of an ASB incident diary to be used by members of the public experiencing ASB to help identify those responsible;
- the development of an Authorisation Policy to ensure effective and appropriate utilisation of enforcement powers for relevant council officers.

#### Proposed 2010/2011 Safer City Business Plan

In November 2009 a Councillor Summit was held with elected members to identify priorities for our work that would benefit from greater internal coordination. The proposed 2010/11 Safer City Business Plan reflects the matters raised by members at this event and builds on the achievements of the previous twelve months.

In addition, the 2010/11 Business Plan links the overarching strategic priorities of the council and is therefore in keeping with the council's strategic aim and objectives, the proposed aim of the Safer City Business Plan 2010/11 is:

**“To take a leading role in improving the quality of life now and for future generations by supporting our organisation to work together to help people feel safer.”**

The proposed Safer City Business Plan 2010/11 has been circulated. However the proposed key priorities for this year are:

1. Antisocial Behaviour
2. Hate Crime & Good Relations
3. Alcohol Fuelled Crime and underage drinking
4. Communication & Engagement
5. Information Management
6. Policy, Planning & Performance.

### Resource Implications

#### Financial

The Safer City Business Plan aims to make more effective use of existing resources – both internal and external. For example, it was felt that much of the work to tackle underage drinking could be met through existing Council, CSP and DPP resources. Other examples of more effective use of existing resources include greater coordination of out of hours work and frontline staff across departments to enforce alcohol bye laws, greater use of council facilities to support community-based information events or development work and administrative savings through the joint allocation of summer intervention funding by Good Relations and Community Safety.

At a meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 22nd January 2010 a thematic budget allocation of £140,000 was agreed for the delivery of the Safer City Plan. The 2010/2011 Safer City Business Plan outlines how the thematic allocation of £140,000 should be directed in support of a number of the chosen priorities:

#### Antisocial Behaviour: Allocation - £107,000

1. Support deployment of citywide wardens scheme to areas identified as having high levels of ASB
2. Deliver ASB training to 40 frontline staff
3. Explore feasibility of developing a mediation service to assist residents experiencing neighbourhood disputes

#### Hate Crime & Good Relations: Allocation - £10,000

1. Support interventions in and around interface areas
2. Support inter-agency tension monitoring process and neighbourhood based-interventions



**Policy, Planning and Performance: Allocation - £3,000**

1. To conduct a review of small grants to identify best value practices in order to enhance Safer City outcomes from small grant distribution:

**Information Management: Allocation - £10,000**

1. To support the rollout of new corporate ASB IT system

**Communication and Engagement: Allocation - £10,000**

1. To support communications and media campaign(s) targeting known seasonal peaks in ASB and interface violence.
2. To hold an event for young people, linked to intergenerational work of Older People's Officer Group, to debate safer city issues
3. To ensure Safer City materials are available in requested languages

**Human Resources**

None – officer time to support both the Strategic Safer City Group and emerging work has been committed by departments within existing resources.

**Recommendations**

Members are asked:

- To agree the Safer City Business Plan 2010/11
- To note yearly progress report on the Safer City Plan 2009/10

**Decision Tracking**

Director of Health and Environmental Services to present half yearly progress reports.

**Key to Abbreviations**

ASB - Antisocial behaviour  
CSP – Community Safety Partnership  
DPP – District Policing Partnership.”

A Member expressed the view that the Council needed to be more proactive in consulting with the local communities regarding some of the issues which had been highlighted within the Plan, particularly in relation to anti-social behaviour, and to have those issues and any proposed actions incorporated into the Plan to ensure that such actions were implemented. The point was made also that the Council needed to be better co-ordinated in relation to requests from the community to help prevent anti-social behaviour.

In response, the Director indicated that the Safer City Plan, which the Committee was being asked to approve, was an internal document and was aimed at co-ordinating the Council's own services and responses to help deliver a Safer City. She indicated that the internal Plan would put in place a mechanism to address the issues which had been raised and ensure that the Council was working cross-Departmentally, working with other agencies and consulting with the communities. She pointed out that the Community Safety Partnership, in conjunction with other statutory bodies, was embarking on a process to develop a new city-wide plan, which would involve consultation, and the issues which had been raised by the Member could be included within that, as well as being included within the Corporate Planning Process.

After further discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Healthier City Framework and  
Healthier Cities Plan 2010/2011**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“Relevant Background Information**

**The Council's overall purpose is to improve quality of life but it is clear in Belfast, as in other cities, that health and illness follow a social gradient; the lower the socioeconomic position the worse the health. This 'health gap' and indeed the general health of the population of Belfast are worse than many other UK cities. For example, smoking levels remain high and smoking is still one of the main causes of preventable death; economic inactivity in Belfast is among the highest in the UK, and obesity is increasing. Misuse of alcohol continues to place an enormous burden on the health and wellbeing of the people of Belfast. Alcohol misuse kills more people directly than illegal drugs; it is closely linked to violence and crime and contributes to mental illness.**

**The Council has a key role to play in addressing these issues and has included the development of a healthier city as one of its key cross cutting priorities under the Supporting People and Communities theme of the current corporate plan.**

**In recognising the opportunities presented by the reform of the health service, including Councillor representation on the newly formed local health commissioning group the Council agreed to work with the Public Health Agency and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust in establishing a joint health development unit for the city. The new unit was launched by the Minister for the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety in March this year. The Council also recognised the importance of incorporating health improvement in the development of significant council strategies**

such as leisure, community safety, anti poverty, and good relations, and an interdepartmental officer group was formed to take this work forward. An extensive mapping exercise was carried out to get an initial snapshot of the range of programmes and services that the Council is involved in to improve health and wellbeing in the city and a health and wellbeing coordinator was appointed to support cross council working and the development of a healthier city framework and plan.

The purpose of this report is to present the Healthier City Framework and Plan for 2010-2011.

### Key Issues

The purpose of the Healthier City Framework is to clearly set out how the Council will contribute to developing a healthier city. It describes the delivery, leadership and accountability mechanisms that will achieve an integrated and coordinated 'One Council' approach to improving the health and wellbeing of the people of Belfast.

In particular the framework provides a mechanism:

- To align health improvement work with the Corporate Plan enabling the Council to meet its obligations and responsibilities in a coordinated and integrated manner
- To develop, monitor and review the Healthier City Plan
- To inform the Health and Wellbeing Plan for Belfast currently being developed with our partners in the Belfast Health Development Unit.

Central to the Healthier City Framework is the internal Healthier City Plan, which will shape our approach. The plan was produced after widespread mapping of current internal and external areas of work and strategies. The plan focuses on programmes and services that really add value to improving health and wellbeing; in particular:

- Programmes and services where there is potential to extend and work better across the Council, for example, tackling alcohol misuse and obesity in young people
- Innovative, high profile programmes, for example 'Healthier Families'
- Areas of work where we can share and learn from good practice, for example work on healthy ageing.
- Localised working within communities to improve health and wellbeing, for example the development of community gardens.
- Improving services and programmes for older people.

The plan is organised around a number of key areas of work, which are healthier communities, policy and strategic planning, capacity building and communication, promotion and marketing. The actions contained in the plan are aligned to external priorities and in particular to the themes that have been identified by the Belfast Health Development Unit. These include mental health, improved outcomes for children and young people; improving outcomes in disadvantaged neighbourhoods; healthy ageing; improved physical activity for all, alcohol; and the health needs of black and minority ethnic groups.

The Council's action plan for older people is now also included under the umbrella of the Healthier City Framework, which will improve coordination, monitoring and accountability. Reporting performance against this aspect of the plan will continue to be to the cross party reference group on older people.

Improving health and wellbeing is a significant challenge as it cuts across many different aspects of life in the city from housing to education to delivery of services by the Council, the police, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and others. It is essential therefore that we work together to coordinate what we do and make better use of the staff and money we have to do this work. The Healthier City Plan and Framework enable us to do this.

The strong links between the Healthier City Framework and Plan and the recently formed Belfast Health Development Unit will enable the Council to carry out its health improvement work and programmes in a way which will have much more impact in communities and in a context where there is an agreed strategic direction and priority work programmes between all of the key agencies.

This is particularly important given that the Unit's role will be to identify priority actions that can address some of the key problems which lead to ill health in the city and to ensure that the key agencies (represented on a wider partnership) re-align or combine resources behind delivering programmes that are known to work. This is a forerunner for community planning and, given the current financial climate, it is important for the Council to work closely with organisations such as the Public Health Agency and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to maximise its impact on improving the health and wellbeing of the people in Belfast.

#### Resource Implications

At a meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 22nd January 2010 thematic budgets of £100,000 for Health and Wellbeing and £85,000 for Older People were agreed (this was a similar allocation to the previous year). Both of these budgets are to be used in the effective implementation of the Healthier City Plan in the following ways:

### Health and Wellbeing

The budget allocation of £100,000 is to be used to support the work of the Belfast Health Development Unit and Council led projects to improve health inequalities.

Last year the Committee approved the appointment of three jointly funded posts with the Health Trust and the Public Health Agency to manage the Belfast Health Development Unit and deliver projects focusing on the health and wellbeing of children and young people, alcohol and obesity and specific work within more deprived neighbourhoods. £59,000 is needed to support these posts this year

The remainder of the Health and Wellbeing thematic budget, £41,000 is to be used to contribute to the costs of high profile programme work within the Healthier City Plan, such as suicide prevention; 'Healthy Families' (a whole family intervention approach combining weight management, education and physical activity); a family focused alcohol programme; and Community Gardens.

### Older People

The budget of £82,000 is allocated as follows:

£45,000 – Oil stamps saving scheme (this was agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in March 2010);

£37,000 – to support Council led local neighbourhood and community programmes and events for older people specifically aimed at combating social isolation, including the annual Senior Citizens Convention.

### Recommendations

The Committee is asked to agree the Healthier City Framework and Healthier City Plan for 2010-2011, recognising that both are living documents that will be subject to continuous development and improvement.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Chairman