

# Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section  
Chief Executive's Department  
Belfast City Council  
City Hall  
Belfast  
BT1 5GS**



4<sup>TH</sup> October, 2011

## **MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room (Room G05), City Hall on Friday, 7th October, 2011 at 10.00 am, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

PETER McNANEY

Chief Executive

### **AGENDA:**

1. **Routine Matters**
  - (a) Apologies
  - (b) Minutes
2. **Corporate Plan and Performance Management**
  - (a) Future Work Plan (Pages 1 - 6)
3. **Modernisation and Improvement**
  - (a) Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency Programme - Update (Pages 7 - 46)
4. **Democratic Services and Governance**
  - (a) Appointments to Belfast Education and Library Board (Pages 47 - 48)

5. **Finance**

(a) Tender for the Provision of a Banking Service (Pages 49 - 50)

6. **Human Resources**

(a) Standing Order 55 - Employment of Relatives (Pages 51 - 52)

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



### Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Future work plan
<b>Date:</b>	Friday, 7 October, 2011
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Gareth Quinn, Senior Democratic Services Officer

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will recall that the Committee, at its meeting on 17 June, considered that the review of the current Corporate Plan and the development of priorities and projects for the new Corporate Plan should commence in August/September through a series of party briefings and facilitated workshops for Members. The timetable for the development of the new Plan would then become aligned with the timetable for the development of the Council's medium-term financial plan and the setting of the rate for 2012/13.
1.2	<p>The purpose of the Workshops would be to seek agreement on what Members wished to achieve by the end of the Council term and to consider how this could be delivered in the context of available resources. Among the issues which Members would consider during the next three months would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambition – what the Council would deliver across the City in terms of both projects and programmes;</li> <li>• Advocacy – where and how to influence on behalf of the City;</li> <li>• Affordability – what was achievable and realistic;</li> <li>• Delivery – understanding what it took to get things from concept to delivery and making sure things happened; and</li> <li>• Governance – ensuring effective decision-making and clarifying the roles of Members and officers in achieving the priorities.</li> </ul>
1.3	<p>The first workshop, held on 17 August, incorporated two sessions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 'Place-shaping' and potentially "game-changing" projects that Members wanted to see delivered in Belfast on a NSEW and City Centre basis.</li> <li>2. Consideration of the Council's Corporate Themes – leadership, economy, environment, people and communities and improving services.</li> </ol>

1.4	Subsequently, on 23 September, the Committee considered a report which outlined the direction given by Members at the workshop to inform the development of the Corporate Plan 2012-15 and an 'investment package' which would communicate the Council's Commitment to tackling the effects of the economic downturn in the city.
1.5	The second workshop, held on 28 September, aimed to foster an understanding of 'city competitiveness' and incorporated a presentation by Neil Gibson of Oxford Economics who outlined the challenges and opportunities facing Belfast and proposed what the Council may consider in supporting the economic growth of the city. The findings of the workshop will be used to inform the second iteration of the 'Belfast Investment Package 2011' Document.
1.6	Furthermore, area based working sessions have been scheduled to take place over the coming weeks in advance of the next meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel. These sessions, will aim to build upon discussions among Members at the recent Place-Shaping workshop. The briefing sessions will enable Members to further discuss and refine the projects and priorities previously identified.
1.7	Members will be aware that there are quite a few meetings, workshops and other sessions being arranged in order to complete a draft Corporate Plan as well as informing the striking of the rate. A work plan is enclosed as Appendix 1 which aims to outline upcoming issues and when they will be considered.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	<p>Through the workshops Members have stressed the need <b>to create a long-term vision</b> for Belfast and have identified the key elements which should be considered under the Council Corporate Themes of 'Economy', 'Environment', 'People and Communities' and 'Improve our Services'. Under the Corporate Theme of 'Leadership' Members agreed to <b>review the Council's governance and decision making structures</b> in order to ensure that the Council was fit for purpose and could deliver on its Corporate Plan.</p> <p><b>Governance Arrangements</b></p>
2.2	<p>A vital element in the overall success of the Council's new vision for the City is our governance arrangements, <b>that is the way in which we take decisions</b>, are fit for purpose. The Council, through the Corporate Planning process, has emphasised that, in order to maximise the effect we can have, it is crucial that we have a positive and coherent relationship with the Northern Ireland Executive and other key partners in the City to ensure that the Council is aligned to the Programme for Government and makes maximum use of potential external sources of funding. Members have stressed the importance of the Council developing <b>effective external relations and international relations strategies</b> so that the Council's influence on all issues affecting quality of life can be managed effectively. <b>Governance arrangements therefore must also have an externally focused dimension to enable effective partnership working with statutory agencies to deliver on the priorities for the City.</b> Another important element of the governance arrangements, as agreed by Committee at its last meeting, will be to ensure that <b>Party Leaders have the support they need to work effectively across parties in order to ensure that all strategic issues are taken forward effectively.</b></p>

	<p><b>Council Constitution</b></p> <p>2.3 Members are due to consider certain elements of the Council's Governance arrangements over the next number of months. The culmination of these deliberations will be the establishment of a <b>Council Constitution</b> which will set out how we take decisions, deal with the scheme of delegation, the equality scheme, the financial regulations, codes of behaviour and the Standing Orders. The Constitution will be a <b>key governance document</b> which covers 'who we are', 'what we do', 'how we do it' and 'Our values. It will be a 'living' document and once updated it will be reviewed, along with its supporting documents and policies, on a regular basis to ensure they remain up to date. <b>The Party Leaders, Party Groups and Committee will be consulted over the next few months</b> before the new Constitution is finally submitted for the Committee's consideration.</p> <p><b>Council Representation</b></p> <p>2.4 The matter of Council <b>representation on outside bodies</b> and the issue of <b>declarations of interest</b> will be dealt with by way of two separate but complementary reports. The first will seek to establish a '<b>Register of Members' Interests</b>' which will be compiled following consultation with each Member and which will be maintained and updated on a regular basis and will give advice on the declaration of private pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests at Council and Committee meetings. The second report will deal with the <b>roles and responsibilities of Members who sit on outside bodies</b> and will give advice on how declarations of interest which might arise through that membership should be handled. Both reports will focus on ensuring that Members are protected from any claims that relevant interests were not declared.</p> <p><b>Decision Making Structures</b></p> <p>2.5 With regard to the overall decision making structures in the Council, Members will be aware that the current Committee structure broadly reflects the Departmental structure with each Committee seeking to deliver on the priorities set out in the individual Departmental Plans. The Council has agreed through the recent Corporate Plan Workshops that it <b>wishes to become more outward facing whilst maintaining a focus on delivering locally</b>. Although the intention of the current Committee structure is to deliver on the key priorities in the Corporate Plan, it would be useful if the Committee could give consideration to whether this model of governance is the most appropriate for the new Council vision. One example could be to <b>consider aligning the Committees with the priorities identified in the Corporate Plan</b>.</p> <p>2.6 It must be stressed that this model is not being proposed to the Committee as the way forward. It is only for the purpose of <b>opening up a discussion</b> on how we wish to align our decision making structures with the new and more outward facing Council vision. Members' views at this early stage of discussion would be most helpful and there will be <b>a number of subsequent discussions at Committee and through Workshops and Briefings</b> before any changes would be proposed to the Committee</p> <p>2.7 Party Leaders will meet with an external facilitator in the coming weeks to identify how best they can be supported, both individually and as a group, in helping to take forward strategic issues effectively. The intention is to produce a protocol which will ensure that the necessary mechanisms are in place to <b>fully support the work of the Party Leaders</b>.</p>
--	--

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	N/A

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality Implications</b>
4.1	N/A

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	It is recommended that the Committee notes the foregoing report and provides direction in respect of any further work to be undertaken when reviewing the Council's governance and decision making structures.

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
Officers responsible: Gareth Quinn, Senior Democratic Services Officer November 2011	

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
N/A	

<b>8</b>	<b>Documents attached</b>
Appendix 1 – Committee Work plan : October to December	

Page 5  
**Timetable of Engagement with Members**

**October – December 2011**

SP&R	7 Oct	Future Workplan
Party Leaders Meeting	12 Oct	
NSEW Briefing Sessions (NSEW/ Shankill)	10-17 Oct	Briefing sessions on area basis
Budget & Transformation Panel	18 Oct	
SP&R	21 Oct	Report on Economy Workshop to Committee Rate Setting report to SP&R

SP&R	4 Nov	Corporate Plan development update Update - projects arising from NSEW/Shankill/City
Centre		
People & Communities Workshop	TBA Nov	Member Workshop on People and Communities
Budget & Transformation Panel	9 Nov	Review revenue estimates
Party Leaders and Parties	TBA Nov	Discuss draft narrative, actions and targets
SP&R	18 Nov	2011/12 Quarter 2 Budget Report Further Update on 2012/13 revenue estimates Capital      Financial Strategy. Prudential
(including		

Budget & Transformation Panel	TBA Dec	Review budget position
Party Leaders and Parties	TBA Dec	Review Corporate Plan key messages Discuss plans for Conference
SP&R	9 Dec	Final iterations of draft Corporate Plan and budgets Agree draft plan for consultation and engagement in
Jan		

**January – March 2012 (Summary of tasks)**

Report recommending District Rate for 2012/13  
 Consultation and key messages launch  
 Budgets agreed  
 Standing Committee estimates and recommended district rate for 2012/13

Rate Struck

Corporate Plan finalised on basis of feedback

**Launch and Implement**

This page is intentionally left blank



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency Programme - Update
<b>Date:</b>	7 October 2011
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ciaran Quigley, Assistant Chief Executive Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kevin Heaney (Ext. 6202)

<b>1.0</b>	<b><u>Relevant Background Information</u></b>
1.1	Members are advised that during the past year local government have been working together to development a sector led 'Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency (ICE)' programme. The ICE programme seeks to identify potential collaborative opportunities to support service improvement and secure greater efficiencies within councils. As previously agreed by Committee, Council officers have been engaged in these discussions to explore the potential opportunities for the Council as part of its wider efficiency programme which has already recognised collaboration as one approach.
1.2	Although initially developed as a counter argument to the proposed establishment of a centralised Business Services Organisation to deliver a range of new functions which had been proposed to transfer to Local Government, the ICE programme seeks to reflect the vacuum created by the suspension of the RPA in June 2010, and the increasingly challenging financial environment facing councils. The stated aim of the programme is to reduce the financial burden on ratepayers and to make the Sector more efficient through identifying, sharing and implementing opportunities for improvement and efficiency via collaboration.
<b>2.0</b>	<b><u>Key Issues</u></b>
2.1	The exploratory work in relation to ICE cumulated in the release, in February 2011, of a 'Case for Change' document which sought to engage the sector in discussions on potential improvement opportunities. An Executive Summary of the ICE document is attached at <b>Appendix 1</b> , with copies of the full report (266 pages) previously circulated to Members. The Council submitted a detailed response to this consultation document indicating its support for the principles which underpin the ICE programme and confirming its continued involvement insofar as there may be potential tangible benefits for the Council in doing so.
2.2	In July 2011, a consultation findings report was issued to all councils for information summarising the feedback received on the ICE Case for Change report (copy attached at <b>Appendix 2</b> ), and setting out recommendations for moving the ICE programme forward including the establishment of a <b>Regional Governance Group</b> , a political forum, which would identify, consider and make recommendations to councils on potential collaborative opportunities.
2.3	Subsequently, the Chief Executive has recently received joint correspondence, dated 19 September, from the President of NILGA and Chair of SOLACE (attached at <b>Appendix 3</b> ) setting out proposals for the establishment of such a Regional Governance Group including its proposed role, political membership, secretarial support, resource requirements and operating principles.
2.4	In reviewing the proposals put forward, Members are asked to consider the following key issues:- <b>i) Membership of Regional Governance Group (RGG)</b> – it is proposed that each Council is asked to nominate one political representative, and a substitute member, onto the RGG. If the Council was to consider that it should participate on the RGG it is proposed that the Chair of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be nominated to represent the Council, with the Deputy Chair as the substitute nomination. <b>ii) Resource Implications</b> – The report indicates that the only costs to be met by councils as a result of their participation on the RGG will be those relating to expenses incurred (e.g. travel to meetings) by the RGG nominated Member and the potential costs associated with hosting meetings (which are proposed to be rotated across member councils). The report further states that councils will be consulted upon any potential additional costs which may be incurred by participating councils and such costs will be estimated in advance by a business case.

2.5 Whilst there clearly remains uncertainty around the scope of potential opportunity for the Council as part of the ICE Programme, the current financial pressures facing the local government and wider public sector will undoubtedly act as a compelling driver for encouraging greater collaboration where real benefits, greater value for money and efficiencies can be demonstrated at no detriment to councils.

### 3.0 Resource Implications

There will clearly be staffing implications attached to the Council's continued participation in the ICE programme, albeit the level of resources has yet to be quantified.

There will also be financial costs attached to payment of Members expenses for participation on the RGG and hosting meetings as required.

### 4.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- i) consider the proposals for the establishment of a Regional Governance Group (as set out in paragraph 2.4 above and the correspondence attached at Appendix 3; and
- ii) agree that the Chair of the Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee will be the nomination onto the Regional Governance Group, with the Deputy Chair nominated as substitute.

### 5.0 Appendices

**Appendix 1** Executive Summary of ICE Case for Change report

**Appendix 2** ICE Case for Change consultation findings report

**Appendix 3** Correspondence received regarding the establishment of the RGG

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT ICE PROGRAMME

## The 'Case for Change' - Consultation Paper



## **'CASE FOR CHANGE' EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The ICE Programme has been designed and led by local government, through NILGA and SOLACE, as a voluntary initiative to support the sector as it strives to deliver on citizen expectations of continually improving, value for money services, in an increasingly challenging economic climate.
- 1.2 The Improvement, Collaboration & Efficiency (ICE) Programme was originally conceived by the sector as a response to government proposals for the creation of a Business Services Organisation (BSO). This was unanimously and robustly rejected by the sector, primarily on the basis that it removed decision making from local councils and would be damaging to the vision of 'strong, effective local government'.
- 1.3 In June 2010 the Northern Ireland Executive took a decision that the Review of Public Administration (RPA) would not proceed to the planned May 2011 timetable and, instead, elections to the existing 26 councils would take place in May 2011. Since then, the ICE Programme has taken on greater significance in terms of delivering citizen focused transformation and change.
- 1.4 Local government has grasped the opportunity to lead and progress reform based on an approach which is complementary to the objectives of the RPA agenda yet can be progressed independently. Both programmes can be aligned once the new RPA timeframe has been agreed.

### **2. PURPOSE OF 'CASE FOR CHANGE' REPORT**

- 2.1 This 'Case for Change' report endeavours to engage the sector in a discussion on the potential improvement opportunities. A range of illustrative estimated long term benefits, both quantitative and qualitative, has been set out in the report. These demonstrate that the ICE Programme presents an opportunity for the local government sector to make significant improvements in both the quality and efficiency of delivery of services. In some cases, it should be noted that indicative outcomes have been heavily caveated due to recognised limitations in the available data and a key recommendation from this report is the development of an appropriate baseline and initial key performance indicators to support future performance improvement.
- 2.2 Following consultation and endorsement by the sector, the prioritised improvement opportunities identified will be subject to more detailed evaluation and comparison through development of robust business cases progressed through the longer term ICE Programme.
- 2.3 The extent to which the estimated improvement potential can be achieved will be dependent on a number of factors including the availability of funding, resources and capacity but, of



primary importance will be the level of engagement across the sector and the commitment of strong professional and political leadership.

### 3. ICE PROPOSALS

- 3.1 Based on recognised good practice and corporate and business planning processes already in operation in many councils, an ICE Framework has been developed which will support continuous improvement at a local level and collaborative improvement initiatives at both sub-regional and regional levels. Some of the key strengths of the ICE Framework are that it recognises, firstly, that councils will have different starting positions on the improvement journey and, secondly, the importance of upholding local accountability and local decision making so that programmes can be tailored to local needs and circumstances.
- 3.2 The opportunity areas analysed for the purposes of this Case for Change relate to the following business and service areas:
- **Customer Facing Services** - covering approximately 70% of front line services, ie, leisure, parks and recreation, waste collection, waste disposal, environmental health and building control
  - **Support Services** - focused on finance, legal, insurance and asset management
  - **Human Resources** - focused on occupational health services; recruitment issues; capacity building/e-learning; HR systems; delivery models; performance approaches and systems; and pay and grading systems
  - **Procurement** - focused on improvement and collaborative opportunities across a baseline of approximately 50% of total procurement spend
  - **Information and Communication Technology (ICT)** – identifying the creation of a common network platform as a critical enabler for the transfer of functions and collaborative improvement opportunities across all business and service areas. In relation to ICT, such opportunities include shared data centres, shared internet connectivity, shared email and web protection/filtering, shared processing systems eg finance, payroll, HR, and moving to a centralised tiered IT support model.

### 4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS

- 4.1 The 'Case for Change' report has identified a wide range of improvement benefits flowing from the ICE Programme opportunities, including:
- Improved customer satisfaction due to better targeted services and facilities
  - Improved ratepayer satisfaction due to increased value for money
  - Improved career enhancement opportunities, staff skilling and staff morale
  - Improved performance management

- Improved partnership relationships and greater sharing of knowledge across local government and other sectors
- Increased potential to improve and standardise service provision and to promote new service delivery models.

4.2 In terms of quantitative benefits, it is estimated that the ICE Programme will deliver efficiency net present value (NPV) savings (discount rate of 3.5%) in the range of £257m to £570m over a 25 year period. These represent savings in the range of 2.85% - 6.33% against the baseline cost of £9 billion for the delivery of local government services over a 25 year period. As already stated, the extent to which the ICE Programme delivers along this scale of efficiency savings is dependent on a number of factors including the availability of funding, resources and capacity but, primarily, on the level of engagement across the sector together with the commitment of strong political and managerial leadership.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Above all the ICE Programme presents the local government sector with the opportunity to lead its own change and transformation programme and to work together, with other stakeholders, to put in place the enablers and arrangements to support this process.

5.2 Key recommendations at this stage are:-

- Each council has the opportunity to consider and comment upon the 'Case for Change' report through the consultation process
- The ICE governance arrangements should be established as soon as possible
- The Regional Governance Group once established considers and agrees the initial ICE Work Programme for implementation and a detailed programme plan is developed
- Consideration is given by the sector, in liaison with DOE, to the resource and funding requirements to support the identified work programme at both central and local levels, including potential to account for redundancy costs through capital arrangements. This may entail support from central government and/or participating councils
- Building on the work of Policy Development Panel B, the sector enters into a process, in liaison with the Local Government Auditor and other stakeholders, to develop consistent, robust baseline data across business and service areas and agrees a limited number of key performance indicators for the purposes of performance measurement and continuous improvement.

***"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek" (Barack Obama)***



**IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATION AND EFFICIENCY (ICE) PROGRAMME  
CONSULTATION**

**Dear Consultee,**

As President of the Local Government Association (NILGA) and Chair of SOLACE we are pleased to enclose a copy of the Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency (ICE) Final Report. This details the principal areas of feedback received on the recent ICE 'Case for Change' and Regional Governance Consultation together with recommendations on next steps.

The aim of the ICE programme consultation was to engage the sector in a discussion on potential improvement opportunities, prompting further thinking and debate. There was an excellent response rate to the consultation and we would like to thank all those who submitted comments and suggestions.

The final report recognises that the ICE consultation is only the first step along the road of a longer term improvement journey. There is now a need to build on the momentum generated by the consultation and progress to the next phase in the programme. Work is progressing on finalising an implementation plan to deliver the quick wins identified in the consultation; indeed joint recruitment advertising has already been implemented and we are currently considering joint procurement opportunities.

In the coming weeks consideration will be given to the relationship between the ICE programme and wider local government reform programme, should the outstanding issues in respect to RPA be resolved by the NI Executive. You will note from the recommendations in Section 8 of the report that NILGA and SOLACE will soon be meeting with the Minister of the Environment, Mr Alex Attwood MLA to hear his opinion on proposals for the Local Government Reform Programme. This will be of enormous benefit as we move forward. We will, of course, keep you informed of the outcome of that meeting and continue to provide updates on future developments within the ICE programme.

In the meantime, we commend this report and believe that through strong, dynamic leadership in collaboration, we can make real progress for the benefit of our customers, citizens and ratepayers.

Yours sincerely



**Cllr Evelyne L Robinson  
President**



**Ashley Boreland  
Chair of SOLACE**

**July 2011**







# Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency (ICE) Consultation Final Report

July 2011

## Introduction and Background

### 1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Report provides an analysis of the feedback received on the Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency (ICE) 'Case for Change' and Governance consultation. It also provides clear recommendations for the next steps to implement the ICE Programme.

### 2. Background

- 2.1. The ICE Programme is an initiative designed and led by local government, through the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) and Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), to support local councils as they strive to continue to deliver high quality, efficient services in an increasingly challenging economic environment. Its aim is to identify, share and implement opportunities for improvement, collaboration and efficiency across local government, creating opportunities for councils to engage in a variety of initiatives to deliver services in new and innovative ways on a local, sub-regional and regional basis. It is also an opportunity to define existing collaboration between councils which predated the ICE Programme e.g. through Waste Management Groups, rural Development and EU Co-Operation Programmes, and offers a way to extend, contemporise, and quantify the practices of the sector which have already generated significant returns to local councils.
- 2.2. On 25th Jan 2011, two separate, but interrelated reports were issued for consultation. Consultees included councils, political parties and a limited number of interested groups such as the Waste Management Groups, Unions and Local Government Professional groups.
- 2.3. The first report issued for consultation was entitled 'ICE Programme: The Case for Change'. This report endeavoured to engage the sector in a discussion on potential improvement and collaboration opportunities. It outlined the scope of potential across key areas of the sector and, in conjunction with the ICE governance proposals, presented a pathway to deliver improvements in service delivery and better value for money for ratepayers.
- 2.4. The second report, entitled 'Operational arrangements for the Regional Governance Group and options for officer support' set out draft guidelines on how a Regional Governance Group (RGG) would work and included options on providing the resources to support the RGG.
- 2.5. The main aim of the ICE consultation was to engage the twenty-six councils in a discussion on potential improvement and collaboration opportunities and to assess the future direction of the ICE Programme.
- 2.6. Councils were asked to consider both reports and provide their views on a range of key questions. The closing date for receipt of comments on the papers was 8 March 2011, however, where an extension to the consultation period was required this was accommodated in the interests of ensuring consultees had sufficient time to make an informed response.

### 3. Response Rate

- 3.1. Twenty-five out of 26 councils replied to the consultation. The Department of the Environment (DoE), NIPSA, Local Government Staff Commission, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Voluntary Transition Committee and the Group Chief Building Control Officers' Forum also submitted responses.

- 3.2. Nineteen councils submitted direct responses to the ICE Programme consultation questions, while a further 6 submitted letters.
- 3.3. One council indicated that it did not intend to respond to the consultation at this time, while another indicated it would revisit the proposals when further clarification and information is available.

#### 4. Summary of Council Responses

- 4.1. The following summary information is based on direct responses received from councils to the consultation questions. A detailed breakdown of responses to each question is attached at Appendix A.

##### 4.2. ICE Framework

- 4.2.1. Councils were asked a series of questions regarding the ICE Framework as set out in the 'Case for Change' consultation report.
- 4.2.2. All councils (100% - 19/19) who submitted direct responses to the consultation questions supported the general principles of the ICE Framework as an appropriate mechanism to aid and support improvement, collaboration and efficiency. One council suggested consideration is also given to the development of a broader model addressing integration and alignment of planning at sectoral and cross-sectoral levels.
- 4.2.3. The majority of councils (95% - 18/19) indicated that they would be prepared in principle, to incorporate the ICE Framework (or key elements of it) within their Corporate and Business Planning cycle. The remaining council, while welcoming the principles of improvement and collaboration, felt it was too early in the process to agree to this.

##### 4.3. Baseline Data and KPI's

- 4.3.1. Councils were asked to consider if the local government sector should develop a baseline data set and appropriate key performance indicators that could be used to assist co-operation and collaboration in terms of identifying and supporting good practice.
- 4.3.2. All councils (100% - 17/17) who submitted a direct response to the consultation question agreed that a baseline data set and appropriate performance indicators should be developed by the sector. Several highlighted that the absence of a robust baseline data set had hindered the progress of collaborative initiatives and joined up approaches to service delivery. Others highlighted that the development of this was essential to the success of any sector wide improvement programme.
- 4.3.3. Councils noted that performance indicators should be limited to a 'core set' of robust, high level indicators which are consistently measured, reported and audited. It was also noted that as part of the process to develop a central/local government partnership approach, consideration should also be given to the introduction of limited agreed KPI's for central government departments.



#### **4.4. ICE Work Programme**

- 4.4.1. Councils were asked for their views on the proposed ICE Work Programme set out in the 'Case for Change' consultation report.
- 4.4.2. As a starting point, the proposed ICE work programme was broadly supported. One council felt it was too early in the process to agree until more independent evidence is produced on the veracity of indicative savings.

#### **4.5. Invest to Save Business Model**

- 4.5.1. Councils were asked if they agreed with the principles of the 'Invest to Save' Business Model as outlined within the 'Case for Change' consultation report.
- 4.5.2. All councils (100% - 19/19) who submitted a direct response to the consultation question agreed with the principles of the 'Invest to Save' Business model, with the majority (89%) reiterating that the utilisation of efficiencies should be a matter for individual councils. One council indicated that it would be important to recognise and reconcile the tensions that exist between use of efficiencies to fund local priorities and the funding of local government reform.

#### **4.6. Funding Reform**

- 4.6.1. Councils were asked under what circumstances would their council be prepared to agree to use efficiency savings to deliver aspects of the reform programme.
- 4.6.2. Out of the 19 councils who submitted a direct response to the consultation question, 47% (9 councils) indicated that while the ICE programme itself is a part of reform, it would not be appropriate to use efficiencies delivered through the ICE programme to fund central government proposed RPA initiatives. Several of these highlighted that if there were any indications that the benefits of the ICE programme would be used to fund the reform process rather than being used at a local level, that this would lead to a lack of support, adversely affecting the commitment and participation of councils.
- 4.6.3. A further 32% (6 councils) reiterated their support for the principles agreed by Local Government in February 2010, while one outlined a set of their own high level principles which it proposed should be applied to funding reform (see Appendix B).

#### **4.7. Participation in Regional Governance Group (RGG)**

- 4.7.1. Councils were asked if they would give a commitment to nominate a representative to a regional governance group. All councils (100% - 17/17) who submitted a response to the consultation question indicated that they would be prepared in principle, to consider nominating a representative.
- 4.7.2. While accepting in principle the establishment of the RGG and the associated operational principles, it was noted that it should not diminish the role of NILGA and SOLACE. In addition, a number of councils asked for further clarification on how the RGG will be resourced, the costs attached to its establishment and operation, how these will be apportioned and its operational arrangements.

## 5. Other Issues Raised by Councils

5.1. In addition to the information presented, a number of other common issues were raised by councils. These issues were reflected both within councils responses to the consultation questions and in individual letters and additional information submitted by councils.

### 5.2. Alignment with Wider Local Government Reform Programme

5.2.1. In their response to the consultation, several councils raised the need for further clarity on how the ICE programme and proposed RGG would be aligned and integrated with the wider local government reform programme should the outstanding issues in respect to RPA be resolved by the NI Executive. It was noted that consideration should be given to alignment and integration with:

- Future model/structure for local government reform
- DOE's Service Delivery and Performance Improvement proposition
- Future timelines for local government reform; and
- Utilising mechanisms offered by organisations including SOLACE and NILGA.

### 5.3. Business Case Development

5.3.1. The importance of moving to the next phase to develop detailed and robust business cases, setting out upfront investment cost and the potential benefit for participating in any collaborative projects was noted.

5.3.2. Several councils also highlighted the need for more clarity and detail on the upfront investment costs attached to the development and implementation of collaborative initiatives across participating councils as well as the costs attached to the establishment and operation of the RGG.

### 5.4. Resources

5.4.1. Continued resources to support the ICE Programme were highlighted as a key issue for most consultees. The ICE programme was developed and supported using resources previously tasked with progressing transition and transformation under RPA. This primarily related to Change Managers and key, dedicated seconded staff within NILGA, including a small Performance Improvement Team.

5.4.2. DOE funding ended for a number of these posts in March 2011 although a degree of momentum has been sustained through the retention of core elements of the NILGA improvement team and ongoing voluntary input from a number of Chief Executives, SOLACE and other council officers. Sustainability beyond June 2011 in the form of a foundation for further reform and improvement work has been agreed for NILGA with DOE, however, consideration needs to be given to the identification and alignment of resources to support the ICE Programme particularly in the early stages.



## 6. Other Responses

- 6.1. The Department of the Environment (DoE), NIPSA, Local Government Staff Commission and the Group Chief Building Control Officers' Forum submitted responses to the ICE consultation. A summary of each of these responses is attached at Appendix C. While most of the points raised have been addressed in the ICE Programme 'Case for Change' report, all outstanding issues will be given careful consideration as the ICE Programme progresses.

## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1. The aim of the ICE programme consultation was to engage the sector in a discussion on potential improvement opportunities, prompting further thinking and debate. There was an excellent response rate, with the majority of councils indicating their general support for the principles set out in the consultation reports.
- 7.2. For too long the development of the sector has been hindered by uncertainty, a focus by many on processes and structures rather than outputs, and inadequate opportunities and mechanisms for knowledge sharing. The ICE Programme provides a clear direction, the opportunity for strong leadership for the sector as well as good governance and engagement at a regional level with flexibility to drive collaborative improvement projects at regional, sub-regional and local levels dependent on the most appropriate business model.
- 7.3. There is a need to build on the momentum generated by the ICE Programme. The responses acknowledge that the ICE programme can be used to facilitate local government to achieve significant improvements quickly, demonstrate efficiencies and deliver improved services for customers. Indeed joint recruitment advertising has already been implemented and work is proceeding on joint procurement opportunities.
- 7.4. Councils recognise too that this is only the first step along the road of a longer term improvement journey, that there is now a need to progress to the next phase in the programme, to develop robust business cases and deliver quick wins to help build credibility in the short term and lay the foundations for the achievement of longer term goals. This must be achieved without the need for costly (in terms of time and money) structures. Council responses have underlined the associated resource implications for the establishment of an RGG by emphasising the requirement to keep costs to a minimum.
- 7.5. There is also recognition that further consideration and clarity is required on how the ICE programme and wider local government reform programme will be aligned and integrated should the outstanding issues in respect to RPA be resolved by the NI Executive. Within this, if the context for the ICE programme changes, it would be appropriate to consider whether the ICE governance arrangements and structures require change to align with the new direction. It will also be important to ensure that the work, which has been progressed to date, is not lost.
- 7.6. Based on the consultation responses, three options have been identified for moving forward:-
- **Option 1**- Do Nothing: the ICE Programme and the establishment of an RGG are not progressed at this stage.
  - **Option 2** - Immediate consideration should be given to alignment of the ICE Programme and structures with the wider Reform Programme
  - **Option 3** – Proceed to establish an RGG and Implement ICE programme (with alignment to the Reform Programme when direction agreed)

**7.7. Option 1 - Do Nothing: the ICE Programme and the establishment of an RGG are not progressed at this stage.**

- 7.7.1. The excellent response rate and results of the ICE Consultation indicate a level of support for moving forward to the next phase in the development and implementation of the ICE Programme. Based on the consultation responses received, this would not be a strongly supported option.

**7.8. Option 2 – Immediate Alignment of ICE Programme and structures to the wider Reform Agenda.**

- 7.8.1. The immediate resumption of a wider reform programme could provide an opportunity to progress the ICE proposals through the engagement and involvement of the sector in influencing the development of a fit for purpose framework to implement an improvement and/or reform programme and deliver strong local government, which can stand as “a partner of equals” with central government. However, consideration will need to be given to the practicalities associated with alignment as there are some concerns about progressing transition at the same time as a wider transformation programme.
- 7.8.2. The ICE Programme was originally conceived and developed by the sector as an alternative to the PWC Option 5 ‘Transformation with Regional Collaboration’ proposal, which included the BSO, to demonstrate the potential for increased multi-sector working, to deliver comparable improvements and efficiencies.
- 7.8.3. Although reform was subsequently suspended the ICE programme is complementary to it and could be aligned and assimilated within a wider reform agenda.
- 7.8.4. With the appointment of a new Environment Minister and the commencement of the new Assembly and local government terms we are presented with an opportunity for the sector to take stock of where we are now and to shape the implementation of a future reform programme by building upon the previous reform policy work developed and agreed by the Sector including the funding principles, referred to in the consultation responses by a number of councils. It should also be noted that, in the context of the earlier reform programme, transition arrangements were only introduced due to time constraints around the introduction of shadow councils.
- 7.8.5. A key criticism of the previous reform process was that it focussed too much on structures and process rather than outcomes and there was a lack of clarity and definition of roles. Alignment provides an opportunity to use past experience while taking account of current situations to influence the future wider governance framework.
- 7.8.6. The ICE governance proposals, as supported in the ICE consultation responses, recognise the importance of political members leading and driving any improvement/reform process and the validity of having a regional mechanism to deliver this while at the same time clearly delineating the role and responsibility of senior officers to deliver outcomes. Alignment of this model within a wider reform programme will address the identified short comings of the previous reform process.



**7.9. Option 3 - Establish an RGG and Implement ICE programme** (with alignment to the Reform Programme when direction and implementation plan agreed).

- 7.9.1. The results of the ICE Consultation indicate a high level of support and mandate for moving forward when a governance structure, up front resources and the foundations for an effective improvement framework are in place.
- 7.9.2. Under this option, a Regional Governance Group could be established relatively quickly and work could continue on finalising the work plan and on the development of robust business cases.
- 7.9.3. While this approach maintains authority for delivery of collaborative projects within the remit of local government, consideration will have to be given by the sector and its partners including DOE to the appropriate support arrangements to progress collaborative projects at regional, sub-regional and local levels. As emphasised in the consultation responses, consideration is required on ensuring costs are kept to a minimum, best use is made of scarce resources and the focus remains on outputs rather than processes and structures.
- 7.9.4. Under this options ICE and the reform programme can be assimilated at a later stage. Discussions are however needed with DOE as to the direction of the reform proposals, as there is a risk that when the reform programme is re-established that the ICE Programme will be superseded by the Department in favour of a central government initiative such as a statutory BSO or proposals within the Local Government Reform Bill. The previous Minister and his Departmental officials have consistently argued that ICE should be formulated on the 11 council model – most recently evidenced by their response to the ICE Case for Change consultation.
- 7.9.5. Although NILGA has secured the continuation of funding, pending Ministerial and NILGA Executive approval of the offer, this is on the basis that the reform programme rather than exclusively ICE will be its focus. Careful and further consideration will have to be given as to how the sector creates further structures convergent with or wholly separate from the reform programme referred to above.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1.1. Immediate discussions are sought with the Minister to:
  - Outline the outcomes of the ICE Consultation
  - Seek an update on the Department's proposals for the Local Government Reform Programme
  - Commence a process of engagement between the Local Government sector and the Minister as to the most appropriate options for moving forward with reform and ICE



## Council Responses

The following analysis is based on the submissions from 19 councils who provided direct responses to the ICE programme consultation questions. The balances of responses cover correspondence and detail which did not link directly with the question template.

### ICE PRINCIPLES AND DEVELOPMENT OF AN APPROPRIATE FRAMEWORK

**Q1** Do you agree that the definitions provided in Section 3 of the 'Case for Change' report (Page 11) for Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency are appropriate and that these form a suitable basis on which to develop the ICE Programme?

All councils (19 out of 19) who submitted a direct response to the consultation question agreed that the definitions for Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency are appropriate, with several commenting that these are reflective of good practice principles. The following additional points were also raised:

- Consideration should also be given to defining ICE at three levels i.e. organisational, sectoral and cross-sectoral.
- Definition of 'improvement' should be broadened to reflect the commitment to sustainability – "sustainable improvements".
- Definition of 'efficiency' should refer to cash savings.
- Definition of 'collaboration' should refer to the legality and governance of the processes and partnerships that will form through ICE. The definition should also include a commitment to build capacity within the sector to promote innovation.

**Q2** Do you agree that the ICE Framework as outlined in Section 11 of the Case for Change report (Page 23) and Appendix B is an appropriate mechanism to aid and support improvement, collaboration and efficiency within individual councils?

All councils (19 out of 19) who submitted a direct response to the consultation question broadly agreed that the ICE Framework is an appropriate mechanism to aid and support improvement, collaboration and efficiency. The flexible, non-prescriptive nature of the framework and guidance, along with the ICE Self-Assessment Excellence Model were also welcomed.

A number of additional points were raised, these are summarised below:

- The diagrammatic illustration of the ICE Framework should be reviewed with the aim of producing a diagram, which suggests less of a top-down approach.
- A 'Plan' stage should be included in the Assess, Design, Operate and Review cycle.
- Consideration should be given to a broader model, which addresses issues of integration and alignment of planning at sectoral and cross-sectoral levels.
- Reporting should not preclude flexible and innovative approaches being developed, individual councils should decide on the content and form of reports and how often they should be published.
- Framework is process driven and may lack flexibility – concern that it could lose its focus as a communication tool and become a bureaucratic process that will result in an audit driven framework.

- Further clarity required on how the ICE programme will be aligned and integrated with other local government propositions:
  - DOE's Service Delivery and Performance Improvement proposition ;
  - Future model for local government reform (with associated Council clusters); and
  - Future timelines for local government reform
- More work required in terms of training, gaining buy in and creating a sense of ownership of the framework.

**Q3 Is your council prepared to incorporate the ICE Framework within its Corporate and Business Planning Cycle?**

Eighteen out of 19 councils (95%) who submitted a direct response to the consultation question indicated that they would be prepared in principle to incorporate the ICE Framework (or key elements of it) within their Corporate and Business Planning cycle. The remaining council, while welcoming the principles of improvement and collaboration, felt it was too early in the process to agree to this.

A number of additional issues were raised, these are summarised below:

- DOE Service Delivery and Performance Improvement Framework and ICE Framework are not currently aligned and there is a need for a single vision. The alignment between the ICE approach (driven by/for Local Government) with Local Government as the key driver of improvement and the suggested DOE approach (significant oversight by DOE) needs to be addressed in a final framework.
- The combined ICE Framework & separate DOE recommendations could become overly prescriptive & regulatory.
- Important that the ICE Programme does not seek to create a prescriptive process but rather be flexible enough for Council's to adopt to best fit their circumstances.

**Q4 What are the main challenges relevant to the ICE Programme that will be faced by your council during the next election term (2011-2015)?**

A number of key challenges relevant to the ICE Programme were raised by councils. These are summarised below:

- **Economic climate, budgetary constraints and increasing citizen expectations**
  - Increasing citizen expectations of quality, value for money services during a period of budgetary constraint and dwindling income.
  - Lower customer disposable income and pressures on local businesses potentially affecting Non Domestic rate revenue.
  - Growing economic pressures for local government to find more efficient and effective ways of delivering integrated services.
- **Local Government Reform**
  - Uncertainties over RPA and new council structures.
  - Potential imposition of statutory performance targets and scrutiny role of central departments.
  - Difficulty in redesigning local services due to lack of information regarding the transfer of functions, including associated timings, staff and cost.
  - HR issues, including harmonisation of terms and conditions of employment.
  - Community Planning – including providing effective leadership, achieving a step change in the degree of collaboration between key players in the public and community sectors and creating a mechanism for deeper engagement between local people and councils.



- **Funding Reform / ICE Programme**

- Financing of up-front costs.
- Funding for resources.

- **Managing Change**

- Availability of / impact on resources
- Managing change at the local level – translating recommendations from the RGG into action when there is no mandatory requirement to do so.
- Managing the potential conflicts between the drive for efficiency and having enough money to deliver Members' ambitions.
- Potential resistance to change - a fragmented approach to ICE across the sector will impact on the potential outcomes and benefits for participating councils

- **Other**

- Retaining front line services whilst realising genuine and sustainable efficiency savings.
- Relative scale of opportunity and benefit for some councils.
- Meeting capacity building needs of members and officers.
- The legality of any proposed collaborative ventures, including human resource and contractual and indemnity issues.
- Reducing bureaucracy and delivering results.

**Q5** Do you agree that the local government sector should develop a baseline data set and appropriate key performance indicators that can be used to assist co-operation and collaboration in terms of identifying and supporting good practice?

All councils (17 out of 17) who submitted a direct response to the consultation question broadly agreed that a baseline data set and appropriate performance indicators should be developed by the sector. Several councils either highlighted that the absence of a robust baseline data set had hindered the progress of collaborative initiatives and joined up approaches to service delivery or highlighted that this was essential to the success of any sector wide improvement programme,

A number of additional points were raised, these are summarised below:

- Performance indicators should be limited to a 'core set' of robust high level indicators, which are balanced (not just financial in nature). These should be set within the wider context of community planning and in developing integrated solutions to local needs.
- Performance indicators should be developed and agreed by the sector as opposed to being imposed by external agencies. The process should not be overly bureaucratic and individual councils should have the flexibility to put in place additional local indicators if required.
- Formulae for performance measures should be consistent across local government and resultant performance figures should be validated by audit. One council suggested that Internal Audit could be provided on a regional collaborative basis and this could be used as a mechanism for verifying PI data.
- Local and central government should work together to develop and implement a progressive approach to performance and service improvement including, for example, the creation of performance tools such as peer review, self assessment and benchmarking.
- As part of the process to develop a central/local government partnership approach, consideration should be given to the introduction of limited agreed KPIs for central government departments.

- Further consideration of the potential linkage with the new local government performance framework proposed by DOE required.
- One Council stressed that any performance framework should be based on the following principles:
  - Councils are ultimately accountable to their ratepayers for their performance.
  - Councils are responsible for their own performance and for leading on the delivery of services and improving outcomes for the people they serve.
  - A range of assessment methods including self-assessment, peer review and performance indicators should be used.
  - The burden of inspection, data collection and reporting to be kept to a minimum.
  - The framework should provide value for money, be affordable, transparent and fair, easily understood and capable of implementation.

## WORK PROGRAMME

**Q6** What are your views on the proposed ICE Work Programme detailed at Section 13 of the 'Case for Change' report (Page 41)? Is it an appropriate starting point for consideration by the Regional Governance Group?

Nineteen councils submitted a direct response to the consultation question. As a starting point for the Regional Governance Group, the proposed ICE work programme was broadly supported. One council felt it was too early in the process to agree until more independent evidence is produced on the veracity of indicative savings.

A number of points were raised by councils, these are summarised below:

- Given the forthcoming election, consideration should be given to the inclusion of a back-up position whereby the interim governance arrangements will continue to make progress in the event of a delay to the establishment of the Regional Governance Group.
- A detailed work programme should be developed prioritising projects, identifying timescales and incorporating benefits management.
- The programme must identify and deliver quick wins to motivate and encourage participation.
- The work programme should not negate the possibility of other viable projects being put forward by individual councils.

In addition to the points above, one council made a number of specific comments against key elements of the proposed work programme. These will need to be taken into consideration in the development of a more detailed work programme.

Two councils highlighted a number of specific issues. These are listed below:

- Business cases need to clearly indicate associated costs.
- Detail is required regarding the method of developing the various business cases.
- There is a need to clarify how projects will be managed from inception to delivery.
- More detail on staff resources to undertake the project work is required.



#### Q7. Are there other projects you would like to see included?

Other projects noted by councils include:

- More emphasis on exploring frontline services, using the proposed Service Delivery and Improvement process. Recognition should be given to the different needs, priorities and levels of service provision throughout this work i.e. a one-size-fits-all model is unlikely to apply.
- Redesign of customer facing services in conjunction with transferring functions to ensure maximum benefit to customer and realisation of potential efficiencies.
- All councils are delivering community services and good relations projects on behalf of DSD – potential to look at a collaborative approach.
- Review potential opportunities across service areas which are already delivered on a cluster basis, e.g. economic development, group systems.
- Introduction of common systems across professional services, e.g. environmental health departments.
- Internal Audit and Vehicle Maintenance, especially in collaboration with other public bodies.
- Further consideration of joint management teams.

#### Q8. What are your views on the enablers listed at Section 5.2 of the 'Case for Change' report (Page 18)? Are they all appropriate for the ICE Programme? Are there others that have not been included?

15 out of 17 councils who submitted a direct response to the consultation question agreed that the enablers listed in the 'Case for Change' report are appropriate for the ICE Programme. The remaining two councils agreed with the exception of vacancy control.

One council, while supporting the enablers set out in the 'Case for Change' report, sought further clarification as to the anticipated sources for necessary up-front seed funding and resource to take forward the next phase of work to develop detailed business cases.

One council also noted concerns about the viability of the ICE Programme if it is dependent upon the active participation of all 26 councils. The council commented that while this may be desirable, it might be difficult to achieve in the shorter term. The council queried whether there had been any thought given to the minimum participation required to give validity to the programme.

Additional enablers suggested by councils include:

- Establishment of an appropriate regional body to manage the ICE programme, build consensus, promote accountability and provide strategic and political leadership.
- Active participation of all 26 councils at political and managerial level.
- Establishment of quantitative and qualitative benchmarks against which achievements and progress can be measured.
- Clarity on future direction and timeframe for RPA or reform agenda.
- Introduction of pilot opportunities.
- Legislative changes.

- Strong leadership from senior management teams and political leaders - some difficult decisions on delivery models will have to be taken. People are the key enablers in any change process; they must be motivated and take ownership of the programme. A significant focus on driving cultural change is required to enable this process to succeed.
- Detailed and specific 'Legal Advice' on contractual financial and HR implications.
- Common approaches to HR issues with particular reference to areas such as staff severance.

Q9 What are your views on submission of a case to DOE for a further extension of existing resources to maintain continuity of the ICE Programme until such times as the initial ICE Work Programme has been finalised and resource requirements more accurately determined?

18 out of 19 councils (95%) who submitted a response to the consultation question indicated their general support for a case to be made to the Department of Environment for further extension of resources to maintain continuity of the ICE programme. Several councils stress that this should be followed up as a matter of urgency. The remaining council indicated that it was too early in the process to comment.

In response to the question, several councils highlighted the importance for DOE to consider up-front support for councils at an early stage, both to build support within the sector and to demonstrate a genuine central/local government partnership approach. This support would reduce as efficiency savings are delivered.

Several councils also referred to the fact that Change Management Officers and a number of seconded staff within NILGA, including the Improvement Team have been heavily involved in developing the ICE programme, bringing the programme to its current position. They highlighted that the programme needs to be made operational, integrated into councils business cycles and, in the longer term, sustained and aligned with other programme and reform elements. They raised concerns that if the existing resources are no longer available, the programme could fail before it is properly started. This point can be cross referenced to 4.7.2, 4.8.1, 4.10.1 and 4.10.2 above.

One council highlighted that any long-term decisions on staffing must be contingent upon levels of participation in the programme. In keeping with the concept of sustainability, the programme should also aim to become self-financing within an agreed timeframe. Another council commented that given the financial and budgetary constraints facing DOE, it would be important that any interim case put forward clearly set out the scope and purpose of any resources required. They suggested that due consideration is also given to the mobilisation of resources from within the local government sector to take this work forward with existing mechanisms providing a central co-ordinating opportunity.



## GOVERNANCE

**Q10** What are your views on the proposed operational principles for the Regional Governance Group? Are there alternative proposals that you consider would be more appropriate?

All councils (17 out of 17) who submitted a direct response to the consultation question were broadly supportive of the operational principles outlined in the consultation. There were a number of additional issues highlighted. These are set out below.

- Although the principle of equal representation is supported it is recognised that one representative from each council may result in minority parties not being represented. While any greater than one representative per council could make numbers unmanageable consideration should be given to methods of providing political balance for example thorough council nominations being made based on D'Hondt within each council.
- While initially meetings should be held once every six weeks, in the longer-term, meetings should be held in response to critical points in the delivery programme, rather than at regular intervals.
- There is a requirement for ongoing review of the ICE governance arrangements in terms of the outworking of a 26 model arrangement and the transition to an 11 model should a date be agreed for the implementation of the reform programme.

**Q11** Please indicate which method of management of regional resource you prefer.

There was no clear preference identified between the six options illustrated in the governance consultation although 7 Councils suggested NILGA as a host organisation for staff support with 8 more making the point that the central administrative resource should be re-established but limited at the outset and reviewed on an ongoing basis. Two councils were unable to choose an option without knowing costs involved indeed three councils who did submit an option also asked that further information.

**Q12** What are your views on the proposal that there should be a limited number of methods for ensuring sharing of positions of Chair and Deputy Chair similar to the proposals in the DOE Local Government Reform Consultation?

Thirteen out of fifteen councils who answered this question agreed that there should be a limited number of methods for ensuring sharing of positions of Chair and Deputy Chair. Other points highlighted include:

- The default mechanism should be D'Hondt.
- Political Parties should respond to this issue.

**Q13 Will your council give a commitment to nominate a representative to the Regional Governance Group?**

All councils (17 out of 17) who submitted a direct response to the consultation question committed, in principle, to nominate a representative to the Regional Governance Group. Other issues highlighted include:

- Nominations should be postponed until the establishment of the new Council term.
- Further clarification is required on potential resource implications for councils of participation.
- Additional information is needed on the Regional Chief Executives / Regional Elected Members Group.

### **INVEST TO SAVE BUSINESS MODEL**

**Q14 Do you agree that efficiencies delivered should be used by councils to either reduce the rates bill or reinvest for further improvements in service delivery as advocated by the 'Invest to Save' Business Model Section 2.3 of the Case for Change report (Page 10)?**

All councils (19 out of 19) who submitted a direct response to the consultation question agreed with the principles of the 'Invest to Save' Business model, with the majority (89%) reiterating that the utilisation of efficiencies should be a matter for individual councils. Several also commented that it would be important for councils to have the opportunity to use efficiencies to lever/draw down additional funding to take forward improvement projects.

One council outlined that efficiencies need to be clearly defined, captured and used in the context of the financial planning of each local authority to meet locally determined priorities. They indicated that it would be important to recognise and reconcile the tensions that exist between use of efficiencies to fund local priorities and the funding of local government reform.

**Q15 Under what circumstance would your council be prepared to agree to using efficiency savings to deliver aspects of the reform programme?**

Out of the 19 councils who submitted a direct response to the consultation question, 9 (47%) indicated that while the ICE programme itself is a part of reform, it would not be appropriate to use efficiencies delivered through the ICE programme to fund central government proposed RPA initiatives.

Several highlighted that if there are any indications that the benefits of the ICE programme will be used to fund the reform process rather than being used at a local level, that this will lead to a lack of support, adversely affecting the commitment and participation of councils.

One council outlined a set of high level principles which it proposed should be applied to funding reform, while a further 6 councils (32%) reiterated their support for the principles agreed by Local Government in February 2010 (see Appendix B).

Of the 3 remaining councils who submitted a response, 1 indicated that it would be dependant on a business case, 1 on the payback period, while the remaining council indicated it was too early to say but suggested that monies could possibly be used to pilot the community planning proposals for each council area.



**LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM**

Q16: What part do you consider the ICE Programme can play in developing improved partnership relationships between local and central government and agreeing the transfer of functions from central government?

The importance of a partnership approach between central and local government in which the role and responsibilities of both levels of government is clearly set out and mutually respected was highlighted by several councils. Several also commented that it is important that the ICE programme is aligned to the wider reform programme and that consideration is given to a new and constructive relationship in which real progress on transfer of functions and the associated implementation issues can take place.

It was suggested that the Regional Governance Group (RGG) could act as a forum and conduit for the transfer of functions (inc related funding, resources etc) and more generally aid collaboration with and between local and central government with a focus on place and improved outcomes for citizens.

It was noted that the proposed partnership panels also have an important role in improving relationships and that NILGA's role should not be diminished by the ICE Programme. To avoid duplication, the need for clear definitions of responsibility was highlighted.

Five councils did not comment or considered the question to be premature at this stage without further clarify and detail.

### **Funding principles agreed by Local Government in February 2010**

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

### **Funding principles agreed by Belfast City Council Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in March 2010**

In response to the consultation question, Belfast City Council noted that given the current financial and budgetary constraints facing the NI Executive, the Council accepts that it is likely that local government will be expected to bear some of the costs of the local government reform programme.

The Council Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 19th March 2010, endorsed the following high level principles which it proposed should be applied to funding reform.

- any financial contribution made by the Council would be proportionate to the costs incurred by the Council in implementing the reform programme;
- any financial commitment to the efficiency programme for local government will only be made on the basis of VFM being demonstrated for Belfast ratepayers;
- the Belfast ratepayer should not be asked to subsidise the convergence costs of other council areas; and
- transferring functions should be rates neutral at point of transfer to councils.

## Other Consultation Responses

### Building Control NI

Building Control NI (BCNI) provided a response to the ICE Programme consultation questions. Key points in their response are summarised below:

#### ICE Principles and Development of Appropriate Framework

- BCNI agree with the definitions for Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency.
- ICE Framework: While welcoming the 'Case for Change', BCNI have serious reservations about some of the frameworks and council model referred to. They believe that other NI council models demonstrate better collaborative efficiencies and should be worthy of consideration.
- As one of a number of services provided by district councils and groups, if they are to be reviewed, it should be done as an integrated service appraisal across all 26 councils and five groups.
- BCNI agree that local government should develop a baseline data set and appropriate key performance indicators. They state that there should only be a core set of indicators, enabling councils to put in place local indicators if required. There must also be consistency and agreement across local government in formulating baseline data and performance indicators.

#### ICE Work Programme

- BCNI state that ICE should not take away from existing models that are working well.
- BCNI believe that an agreed business model which is visionary and ambitious will deliver all of the benefits of the ICE document for a citizen centred service and would welcome the opportunity to discuss such a proposal at the earliest convenience based on the current developments within BCNI.
- BCNI state that funding is essential to the success of the programme in order to move forward to the next stage otherwise the programme could fail before it is properly started.

#### Governance

- BCNI comment that the regional governance framework looks well on paper but that it will depend upon buy in from councils. They state that the structure will only work if everyone supports it. The ICE framework is, at present, aspiration, not based on wide evidence of Councils willingly collaborating across a range of services unless there is some imperative for the individual Councils to do so. They state that as the ICE Programme implementation proceeds it may be found that the PwC BSO model may need to be re-visited as it appears more robust.

#### 'Invest to Save' Business Model

- BCNI state that this area requires a lot more consideration and clarification. In relation to Building Control, they state that consideration should be given to evaluating the lessons from England and Wales in terms of quality of service etc. [or lack of]. This could be further explored by BCNI and presented to NILGA/ SOLACE as an alternative point of view, taking into account the private/public service model.

**Local Government Reform**

- BCNI currently believe that the democratic / accountable system of service delivery within Northern Ireland quite clearly demonstrates key prime examples of first class collaboration, improvement and efficiency measures which are required to deliver value for money services and further believe that these frameworks can be enhanced to accelerate the needs of any new ICE requirements. They state that BCNI model outcomes could be classified as:
  - supporting the evolution of new forms of service delivery and joint working between central and local government which deliver value for money
  - the provision of an integrated, efficient and responsive public service which meets the needs of the citizen
  - coordination that delivered consistency of local decision making within political governance
  - it has maximised the potential benefits and synergies of collaboration
  - and has clearly demonstrated joined up government in action



## NIPSA

NIPSA submitted a consultation response structured around key sections of the 'Case for Change' report. The key points and issues raised by NIPSA are summarised below:

- Concerned about the consultation process, in particular the timeline.
- Considers ICE to be inextricably linked to the RPA process and hence all negotiations should fall within the remit of the LGRJF.
- Considers there is a need for full engagement, negotiation and consultation with trade unions on every aspect of the ICE programme. In this regard, NIPSA state that the LGRJF must be central to the engagement process between councils and trade unions.
- Rejects the concept of 'efficiency' as this is predicated on the ethos of cost cutting alone. It is NIPSA's view that the correct approach to public service delivery should be based on 'effectiveness of delivery'.
- In considering 'local needs' there is a need to factor in the M3 local economic multiplier effect, which demonstrates for every £1 spent by local government, it has a growth impact of 1.6.
- Concerned about the reference to partnership working with the voluntary sector as they feel there is a clear move to pass public service work to the voluntary sector and hence provide public services on the cheap.
- In respect of 'spend to save' NIPSA commented that this is often the euphemism for severance costs. NIPSA has concerns on this. In particular, NIPSA highlight that if there is to be a voluntary scheme there will need to be a common scheme with agreed standard application provisions.
- In relation to performance indicators, NIPSA state that this raises numerous issues of concern. They commented that it was unhelpful that the ICE Programme 'Case for Change' makes no reference to the interface with the DOE policy proposals consultation, which also raises considerable matters of detail as to performance indicators.
- Require full information as to the current debt levels of all 26 councils.
- Highlighted the need to provide a revised up-to-date HR Strategy for local government, especially given the need to accommodate the merging of cultures between local government and the mainly civil service transferees. They commented that some of the proposals can be welcomed such as the move to joint recruitment and return to trawls. Of all of the issues, NIPSA stated that this is the most fundamental issue for negotiations.

**Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland (LGSC)**

In response to the consultation, the LGSC and the Local Government Training Group (LGTG) stated that they look forward to continuing to support councils to deliver on the necessary changes highlighted in the ICE 'Case for Change'.

A small number of general comments were made, these are highlighted below:

- The LGSC highlighted that a number of the opportunities detailed in section 11.2.3 and Appendix F – Human Resources will require changes to procedures and policies which are currently the subject of either specific statutory recommendations of the Commission (i.e. provisions of the Commission's Code of Procedures on Recruitment & Selection) or are within the Commission's statutory remit and can therefore only be changed with the agreement and input of the Commission.
- A number of the opportunities identified in the 'Case for Change' will be best delivered on a regional basis and will require a central point for co-ordination of information and activity. LGSC stated that it is their belief that the Commission and LGTG already represent well established and respected shared, professional resources where needs are established and met in partnership with client/customers in the local government family on a professional and value for money basis.

DOE

The Department of Environment (DOE) provided an assessment of the ICE consultation report's compatibility with the wider local government reform programme. They identified the following key issues regarding the overall trajectory of the ICE programme:

- It is not the anticipated overarching business case the Minister was expecting (see the ICE Working Group TOR, Annex C);
- It is not an alternative to the PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Business Services Organisation as the majority of proposed savings are from customer-facing services;
- It is not comparable to the PwC economic appraisal as it does not cover local government service delivery in its entirety;
- It does not take into account the guidance previously given by the Minister and restated in a letter dated 14 December 2010 *"that the thrust has consistently been towards local government taking forward its efficiency and collaboration agenda but in the context of the Executive's local government reform programme"*; and
- There is no indication of the total upfront cost of the programme.





19<sup>th</sup> September 2011**IMPROVEMENT COLLABORATION AND EFFICIENCY (ICE) PROGRAMME****Dear Council Mayors, Chairs and Chief Executives,**

As President of the Local Government Association (NILGA) and Chair of SOLACE we are writing to update you on the progress of the ICE Programme and to seek your council's nominations for the Regional Governance Group (RGG – see Appendix A).

As you may recall, we recently wrote to you enclosing a copy of the Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency (ICE) Consultation Final Report. This detailed the principal areas of feedback received on the recent ICE 'Case for Change' and Regional Governance Consultation together with options for moving forward.

In that letter we informed you that NILGA and SOLACE would soon be meeting with the Minister of the Environment, Mr Alex Attwood MLA, to hear his opinion on proposals for the wider local government reform programme. We would then be in a position to consider the relationship between the ICE programme and wider local government reform programme, should the outstanding issues in respect to RPA be resolved by the NI Executive.

We confirm that a delegation from NILGA and SOLACE held an inaugural meeting with Minister Attwood on Thursday 21st July 2011 to discuss the future of Local Government Reform. A presentation was also delivered on the ICE programme.

This was a positive and productive first meeting, yet it is clear that the Minister is unable to provide the necessary clarity sought on the wider local government reform programme. He is however supportive of the ICE programme and is keen that we progress to the **next phase** in its development and implementation.

Based on the ICE programme consultation responses, it is clear that local government believes that 'Do Nothing' is not an option. We are therefore recommending that we proceed with **option 3** outlined in the ICE Consultation Final Report, to proceed with the establishment of the Regional Governance Group (RGG) and implement the ICE Programme (with alignment to the reform programme when direction is agreed). This will ensure that the momentum and knowledge generated to date is not lost.

ICE represents a distinct programme of work and any determination to develop further action relating to wider modernisation and reform issues affecting local government will require new thinking and distinct delivery models. Councils should note that the RGG will not be a decision making body – all decisions will be taken by Councils themselves.

**What are you being asked to do?**

**Nomination to Regional Governance Group and its Operation**

You are asked to nominate **one** elected representative and **one** substitute member from your council to the Regional Governance Group.

It will be for each individual council to decide the best method for nominating its representative, with the understanding that each member shall be representing his or her council on the development of strategic policy in relation to the ICE programme. Councils are responsible for selecting those nominees who will best serve the knowledge, enthusiasm and capacity required to represent council and to support the RGG's determination of the strategic policy objectives and priorities for the ICE Programme.

Attached in Appendix A is an overview of the RGG, its membership and operation. It also incorporates comments and suggestions made by consultees during the recent ICE programme regional governance consultation.

We would welcome your council's nominations in writing. Please send this by **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011** via email to [ICE@nilga.org](mailto:ICE@nilga.org). Alternatively, you can write to us at the address below.

ICE Programme  
NILGA  
Unit 5b Castlereagh Business Park  
478 Castlereagh Road  
Belfast  
BT5 6BQ

The first meeting of the RGG is expected to be held during November 2011 and notification will follow.

We believe that amidst the ongoing uncertainty around the Local Government Reform Programme and an increasingly challenging economic climate, the ICE Programme provides the sector with a viable opportunity to deliver better outcomes for citizens and ratepayers. It provides a clear direction, the opportunity for strong leadership for the sector as well as good governance and engagement at a regional level with flexibility to drive collaborative improvement projects at regional, sub-regional and local levels.

We look forward to receiving your nominations and working with you as we lead the journey towards excellence.

Yours sincerely



**Cllr Evelyne L Robinson  
President**



**Ashley Boreland  
Chair of SOLACE**

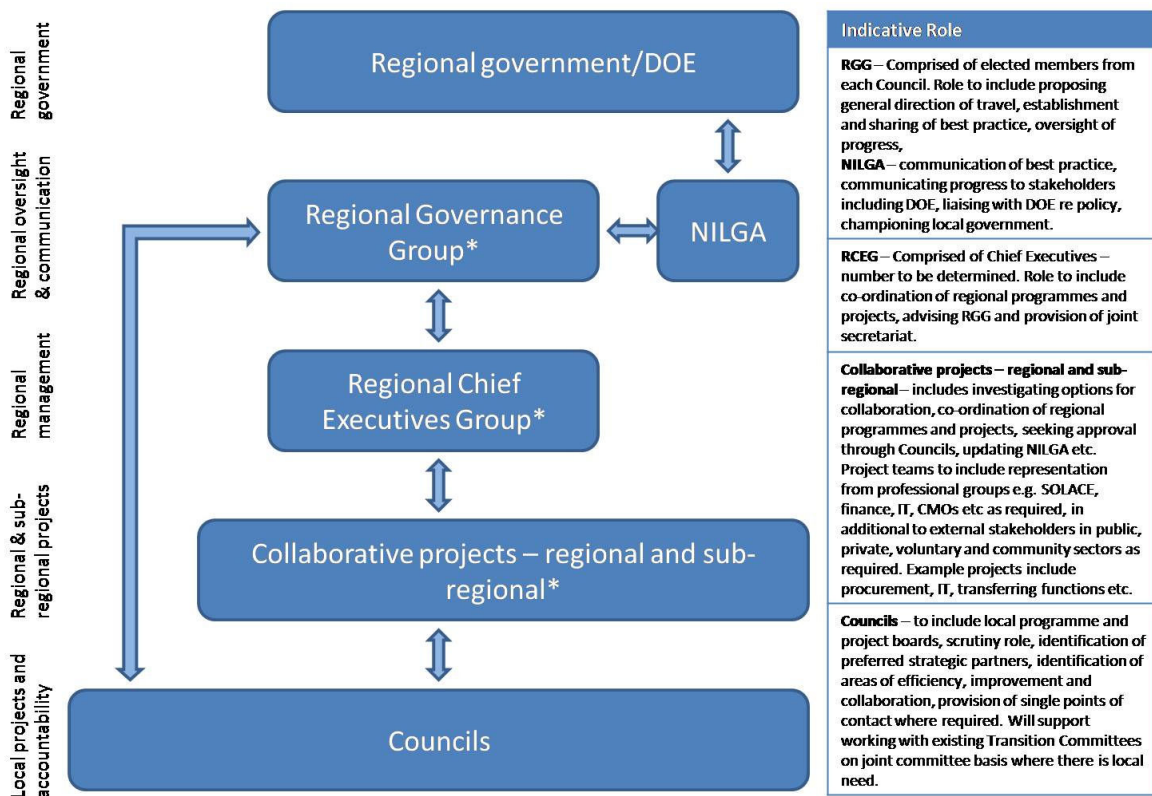
**September 2011**

**Regional Governance Group (RGG)**

Councils were first consulted on proposals for regional governance arrangements to support the ICE programme back in August 2010. Council views were also sought on high-level operational principles.

The majority of councils chose, as their preferred governance model, the inclusive regional option, which included representation from each of the 26 councils. This became known as the Regional Governance Group (RGG) although it is referred to in the diagram below as the Regional Collaboration Group.

An illustrative diagram of the RGG is attached below. This preferred model recognises that the 26 councils are the only bodies with statutory powers to effect decisions related to ICE.





## **Role of the RGG**

Members of the RGG shall determine the strategic policy objectives and priorities for the ICE Programme and will focus on guiding and enabling the programme. RGG members will not have a role in the operational delivery of projects, as this will be for participating councils to provide.

### **The role of the RGG is to:**

- Support the local government sector in identifying and delivering opportunities for improvement, collaboration and efficiency.
- Agree and maintain a shared vision and strategy for the development of improvement and collaboration.
- Consider opportunities for collaboration and make recommendations as appropriate to councils.
- Co-ordinate the effective scrutiny and monitoring of the specified collaborative projects.
- Ensure progress reports are provided to the participating councils at intervals specified by them.
- Provide feedback to and from participant councils.
- Develop and share best practice.

***When the RGG is established, there shall be no delegation of functions from councils to the group. While the RGG may make recommendations on collaborative opportunities, as the bodies with statutory responsibility, it shall be for individual councils to decide whether they wish to participate. If required in the future, other limited functions may be delegated from participating councils to the RGG to achieve economies of scale, promote savings and minimise costs. This shall be subject to the agreement of all participant councils.***

### **Membership of the RGG**

***While membership is voluntary, it is assumed that all 26 councils will be part of the RGG.***

***Membership of the RGG will be for one named member from each of the participating councils (with each council also asked to nominate a substitute member).***

***The importance of political reputation / balance is recognised, as is the need for a ‘fit for purpose’ and manageable governance structure. In order to maximise representation on the RGG, the five NILGA office bearers will also be members.***

### **Chair/Deputy**

***The RGG shall annually elect a Chair and Deputy Chair from within existing membership. The method of allocating these positions will be agreed by the RGG.***

## **Membership of the RCEG (Regional Chief Executives' Group)**

In the short to medium term it is proposed that the SOLACE Executive, working through the ICE Programme Management Group, shall undertake this role. Meetings will also be attended by the NILGA Chief Executive. Progress reports will be presented to SOLACE Branch and NILGA Executive/ working group meetings and feedback from these meetings will be fed back to the RGG for further development.

## **Resources to support the ICE Programme and RGG**

During the ICE consultation, continued resources to support the ICE Programme were highlighted as a key issue for most consultees. The ICE programme was developed and supported using resources previously tasked with progressing transition and transformation under RPA. This primarily related to Change Managers and key, dedicated seconded staff within NILGA, including a small Performance Improvement Team.

DOE funding ended for a number of these posts in March 2011 and while a degree of momentum has been sustained and non council investment is being sought by NILGA<sup>1</sup>, future sustainability of resource remains a key issue. The RGG once operational, will need to give consideration to the longer term issue of resources to support the programme.

At the outset it is proposed that meetings of the RGG will be hosted on a rotational basis by member councils.

## **Secretariat support for RGG**

Pending consideration and agreement of the arrangements for support resources, it has been agreed that, in the short term, NILGA will provide secretariat support from within its existing resources and through non Council investment supplementing this to enable the RGG to operate<sup>1</sup>. This will include:

- a) Arranging meetings
- b) Taking minutes
- c) Administrative support
- d) Venue hire
- e) Coordination with external stakeholders
- f) Communication of decisions

It has been suggested that this arrangement is supported through liaison with the host council for each meeting of the RGG.

*1 - We are informed by DoE that such funding is available to NILGA subject to finalisation of clear business and performance objectives.*

## **Cost**

In the immediate future, it is anticipated that the only costs to be met by member councils will be expenses relating to their RGG member and, if appropriate, RCEG member and costs associated with hosting meetings (to be rotated across member councils). Following consideration of the issue of resources by the RGG, member councils will be consulted on any potential additional costs which shall be recovered from councils and / or external sources and shall be estimated in advance where possible by reference to a business case.<sup>2</sup>

*2 – Councils are reminded that the secretariat role by NILGA is covered by Council subscriptions.*

## **Expenses**

Relevant expenses shall be paid to members by their sponsoring councils.

## **Operating Principles for the RGG**

### **Standards and Conduct**

All members and officers of the RGG shall exercise leadership by behaving in ways that exemplify high standards of conduct and effective governance.

### **Capacity Building**

The RGG will commit itself to developing its member's skills, so they can carry out their roles effectively.

### **Location of Meetings**

Initially the RGG will be hosted by each of the participating councils on a rotational basis.

### **Attending Meetings**

Members shall attend as many meetings as practicable and be actively involved in decision making so the RGG can work effectively and consistently. This includes informing oneself, preparing for discussions, engaging, and maintaining links with the members of the parent council. It may also include engaging willingly and actively with the public, service users and staff, within an agreed communication framework.

### **Length of Service**

Participating Councils are responsible for the period of time which representatives may be nominated for, and it should be understood that this may be up to four years.

### **Appointing Substitutes**

It is recommended that Councils formally appoint a substitute member. In the event that the council's nominated member of the RGG is unable to attend a meeting, the substitute member should attend on his/her behalf.

The substitute member shall have the duties of any nominated member of the committee. If the absent member is the Chair of the RGG, the Deputy Chair shall chair the meeting. If both the Chair and the Deputy Chair of the council are absent from a meeting of the RGG, such councillor as the councillors present may choose, shall preside.

The nominated member is responsible for ensuring that their substitute is briefed in the business of the meeting.

### **Resignations**

Resignation from the RGG should be effected by delivery of at least one-month's notice in writing to the Chair of the RGG. The relevant council will be asked to appoint a replacement.

In the event the Chair resigns from the RGG or from the position of Chair during the term of office, the Chair shall be replaced for the remaining term by a member of the RGG from the same Party.



## **Quorum**

The RGG will be considered quorate for the purpose of decision-making when a minimum of one-quarter of the participating membership is present.

## **Count out**

Upon the attention of the Chair being called by a Member or duly appointed officer to the fact that there is not a quorum present, the Chair shall declare the meeting of the RGG at an end, and the names of those who are present shall be recorded on the minutes of the RGG.

## **Decision-making and Accountability**

All members shall have equal status and collective responsibility for decisions. Normally decisions will be determined by consensus. Though having people with different points of view may lead to some conflict this is natural and may lead to more creative thinking. If issues cannot be resolved there will be a show of hands. If there is a tie the Chair may have a second or casting vote.

The RGG working within a framework of collaboration, mutual trust and co-operation, shall always operate inclusively of its participant councils. It is not the responsibility of members to decide whether their council will participate in any collaborative or other opportunity. Individual councils will decide whether they wish to avail of collaborative opportunities.

## **Transparency & Reporting**

The work of the RGG shall be open and transparent to member councils and interested parties. Decisions, recommendations, declarations of interest, and reservations will be recorded in the minutes of meetings.

Where practicable, meetings will be open to interested parties. Councillors who are not members shall have the right to attend meetings but will not have voting rights. Speaking rights will be determined by the Chair of the RGG. Issues such as cost of overheads, etc. shall be determined by the sponsoring council. A copy of the operational principles shall be circulated to every member of the constituent councils in the group.

## **Work Programme**

A work programme shall be agreed by members of the RGG, working in collaboration with the Chief Executives on the RGG. The aim will be for the RGG to reach a consensus on issues for inclusion in its work programme. The RGG work programme shall be made available to councils.

## **Agendas**

The Chair and Deputy Chair of the RGG in conjunction with the Secretariat shall determine the agenda for meetings.

Documents relating to the business shall normally be made available to members at least five working days before the meeting to which they relate.

## **Minutes**

In conjunction with the host council, the NILGA secretariat will co-ordinate the collation and distribution of minutes of each meeting of the RGG, or where appropriate sub-committee. The RGG shall agree the nature and style of the minutes to be recorded. In the absence of agreement on the nature of the minutes, the minutes shall as a minimum record the significant aspects of the discussion on the relevant agenda item, and any decision(s) taken by the RGG or sub-committee together with the names of proposers and seconders.

## Reports

Reports shall be prepared in a way that enables effective decision-making. Reports shall be circulated with the relevant notice or at least five working days prior to meetings.

## Frequency of meetings

The RGG shall determine how often it should meet. It is anticipated that the group shall meet at least once every six weeks initially but in the longer-term; meetings may be held in response to critical points in the delivery of the programme, rather than at regular intervals.

## Sub Groups and Working groups

The RGG can appoint sub-groups or working groups, if necessary. These bodies shall be required to make recommendations to the RGG. Sub groups and working groups shall have written terms of reference approved by the RGG that cover:-

- Its objectives
- Its circle of competence
- Reporting requirements
- Membership

The RGG shall review subgroups and working groups once a year to decide whether they are still required.

## Evaluation and Review

The RGG structure, membership and terms of reference will be reviewed after the first year of operation and every two years thereafter. This process will be led jointly by NILGA and SOLACE. The results will be circulated for consideration by participating councils.

## Terminating the Group

The RGG may be terminated at any time by agreement of all the participant councils.



### Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Appointments to Belfast Education &amp; Library Board</b>
<b>Date:</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> October, 2011
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext 6314)

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	At the meeting on 19 <sup>th</sup> August, the Committee agreed to employ a one-off d'Hondt process for the nomination of eight Members to fill the four places on the Belfast Education and Library Board. This resulted in three Sinn Fein nominations, three DUP nominations and one nomination each from the SDLP and Alliance.
1.2	The Committee agreed also to advise the Department of Education that the application of the Council's system of proportionality would provide for the first four of those eight choices being two Sinn Fein representatives (choices 1 and 3), one DUP representative (choice 2) and one SDLP representative (choice 4).

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	The names of the Members to be nominated have been sought through the Party Leaders on the Council and, to date, six names have been received. However, the Democratic Unionist Party, which was entitled to nominate three of its Members, has indicated that it is prepared to nominate only one Member as it maintains that the Minister should appoint that Member in line with the Council's system of proportionality on the appointment of Members to Outside Bodies.
2.2	This position is consistent with the one adopted by the Democratic Unionist Party in November, 2010 when the Council was considering the nomination of Members for consideration for appointment to the Interim Belfast Education and Library Board. At that time, the Department of Education insisted that the Council submit the names of eight candidates in order for it to meet its obligations under the process agreed with the Commissioner for Public

2.3	<p>Appointments and the Committee agreed in November to allocate the remaining two places to the Parties who had the next two choices under the d'Hondt table.</p> <p>If the same process is applied in these circumstances, then the remaining two choices would fall to Sinn Fein (choice 9) and SDLP (choice 10).</p>
-----	--

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	None.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Implications</b>
4.1	None. The identification of those Parties entitled to nominate Members for consideration for appointment is based upon the Council's accepted system of proportionality.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	Given that the Democratic Unionist Party has decided to nominate only one Member for consideration for appointment to the Board, the Committee is recommended to allocate the remaining two nominations to the Parties holding the next two places on the d'Hondt table. That is, Sinn Fein (choice 9) and SDLP (choice 10).
5.2	In order to be consistent with the approach taken when considering appointments to the Interim Belfast Education and Library Board in 2009 and those to the Belfast Harbour Commissioners in June, 2011, the Committee is recommended to advise the Department of Education that the application of the Council's system of proportionality would provide for the first four of the eight choices being two Sinn Fein representatives (choices 1 and 3), one DUP representative (choice 2) and one SDLP representative (choice 4).

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
<p>Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager</p> <p>2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2011</p>	



By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of the Council's Policy on the  
Publication of Committee Reports on the Internet.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank



### Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Standing Order 55 – Employment of Relatives
<b>Date:</b>	7 October 2011
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ronan Cregan, (Director of Finance and Resources, ext 6083)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Jill Minne, Head of Human Resources, ext 3220

#### Relevant Background Information

To inform the Committee of delegated authority exercised by the Director of Finance and Resources to the employment of individuals who are related to existing officers of the Council.

The Director of Finance and Resources has authorised the appointment of the following individuals who are related to existing officers of the Council in accordance with the authority delegated to him by the Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub-Committee on 27 June, 2005. The Committee is asked to note the appointment is authorised by the Director under Standing Order 55.

NAME OF NEW EMPLOYEE	POST APPOINTED TO	RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING OFFICER	NAME OF EXISTING OFFICER	DEPARTMENT
Rufina McCormick	P/T Cleaner	Wife	Thomas McCormick	Property & Projects
		Mother	Wayne McCormick	Development
Jacqueline O'Neill	P/T Cleaner	Partner	Nathan Phillips	Development

<b>Resource Implications</b>
------------------------------

<u>Financial</u>
------------------

Provision for this post exists within the revenue budgets of the relevant departments.
--

<u>Human Resources</u>
------------------------

There are no Human Resource considerations. All appointments have been made on the basis of merit in accordance with the Council's Recruitment Policies.
--

<u>Asset and Other Implications</u>
-------------------------------------

There are no other implications.
----------------------------------

<b>Recommendations</b>
------------------------

Committee is asked to note the appointments authorised by the Director of Finance and Resources in accordance with Standing Order 55.
---

<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
-----------------------------

<b>Documents Attached</b>
---------------------------