

# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 18th November, 2011

## MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairman);  
Aldermen Browne, M. Campbell, R. Newton;  
Councillors Attwood, Convery, Haire, Hanna, Hendron,  
Jones, Lavery, Mallon, Maskey, McKee, McVeigh,  
Mac Giolla Mhín, Ó Muilleoir, A. Newton and Reynolds.

In attendance: Mr. P. McNaney, Chief Executive;  
Mr. C. Quigley, Assistant Chief Executive;  
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;  
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;  
Mrs. S. Wylie, Director of Health and  
Environmental Services;  
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### Apology

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor Garrett.

### Performance Management and Corporate Plan

#### Corporate Plan Update

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

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

**1.1 As agreed previously by Members, work has been ongoing to develop the new corporate plan for the period 2012-2015. Members have played a central and constructive role in this planning process and have helped bring focus and attention to the key priorities for the city and areas for action for the Council.**

- 1.2 Members will recall that there have been a number of key engagement events in recent months in support of the corporate planning process, including Committee discussions, Party briefings, workshop sessions and area-based briefings. As part of this overall process, work has also taken place on the development of a draft 'stimulus package' which seeks to communicate the Council's commitment to tackling the effects of the economic downturn in the city. The draft stimulus package had been discussed in detail by the Committee at its meeting on 21 October 2011
- 1.3 This report seeks to update Members on the current status of the development of the new Corporate Plan; setting out a clear timetable scheduling when key strands of interlinked work such as the stimulus package and Belfast Masterplan will be brought forward and the role of Members in supporting this process.
- 1.4 The Party Leaders met as the Party Leaders' Forum facilitated by Jon Huish on 4 November 2011.
- 2.0 Key Issues
- 2.1 Corporate Plan
- 2.1.1 The development of the priorities and projects which will be the content of new Corporate Plan has been ongoing for several months facilitated and supported through a series of Party Group and Member briefings. An initial discussion with Party Group Leaders took place at the end of June to begin to identify and explore potential priorities for the Council and to shape Members input.
- 2.1.2 To facilitate wider engagement, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed, at its meeting in June, that a series of thematic workshops would be arranged to enable all Members to set out and discuss their views on the important issues and for the city and to give direction on the key objectives and priorities for the new Council term.
- 2.1.3 There have already been two productive workshop sessions focusing on the corporate themes of leadership (Place-Shaping) and the economy. The third and final workshop 'People, Communities and Neighbourhoods' is scheduled for 29 November 2011. This workshop will explore with Members potential local neighbourhood interventions and community support initiatives. Members will be aware that Jon Huish, a peer Elected Member, has also been working with Party Leaders and Party Groups over recent months in regards the corporate planning process and exploring potential future priorities for the Council.

2.1.4 In moving forward, there will be continued engagement over coming weeks with Members through established mechanisms including the Party Leaders Forum and the Budget and Transformation Panel. It would be the intention that a first draft of the new Corporate Plan will be submitted for the consideration of the Committee in January 2012. This would ensure that the discussion on the emerging Council priorities and projects is integrated with the setting of the rate for 2012/2013 and consideration of capital programme and city investment.

## 2.2 Stimulus Package

2.2.1 As instructed by Members at the meeting on 21 October, officers have been further investigating the feasibility/deliverability of project proposals for inclusion in the draft stimulus package and establishing the potential resource implications for the Council. Following completion of this necessary baseline work, joint Member and officer teams will be established in late November 2011 to progress developmental work around key projects and establish firm project proposals. Composite reports on the outcomes of this work will be brought to Budget and Transformation Panel and SP&R Committee in December 2011. This will ensure that a city-wide perspective is taken and any decision in respects to prioritisation and resourcing investment is considered within the context of affordability thresholds.

2.2.2 It would be the intention that a final draft stimulus package would be submitted for the consideration of the Committee in January 2012 in line with the corporate planning and rate setting process. Members will be asked to assess affordability limits and give direction as to the level of investment which they would wish to make set against a number of rate options.

2.2.3 The January 2012 timescale would also enable appropriate consideration to be given to the outcomes from the 'People and Communities' workshop on 29 November and other important strands of work being developed including, for example, the role of the Council in supporting the local economy, tackling poverty and inequality, supporting employment and skills development, supporting local suppliers across the city etc. Developmental work is ongoing to scope and identify how the Council can support and bring maximum effect to these important issues through both direct and indirect (i.e. working in partnership or lobbying) interventions.

- 2.2.4 With respects to supporting employment and skills development within the City, Members will note that at the Council meeting on 3 October, the undernoted Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor McCarthy and seconded by Councillor Attwood.

*'The Council recognises the importance of both local and central Government taking a lead on programmes to mitigate the impacts of recession.'*

*Within our own range of functions and economic spend, there are significant opportunities to employ the long-term unemployed, offer placements for graduate trainees, create Steps to Work training opportunities and provide an enhanced Community Outreach Scheme, to include placements across the Council services to those serving Community Service Orders.*

*The Council requests the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to consider how new work, training or placement opportunities could be integrated into all Council spend – both internally and externally'.*

Members will be aware of the ongoing work to explore what opportunities exist for the Council in this regard and how these could be resourced through, for example, potential savings in overtime and agency costs. A further report will be submitted for the consideration of the Committee as part of the Stimulus Package.

## 2.3 Belfast Masterplan

- 2.3.1 Members have previously stressed the need to create a long-term vision for Belfast, using mechanisms such as the emerging Belfast Masterplan. The Masterplan will set out a high level physical vision for the city over the next 10 years and the 'place shaping' projects which Members are continuing to identify as part of the stimulus package discussions will form a key component of that plan.
- 2.3.2 A draft Masterplan is due to be completed and considered by Members in December 2011 and will form the basis for consultation with key stakeholders in the City including Government Departments, key delivery agents, Partnership Boards, the Voluntary and Community sectors and the Private Sector.

## **2.4 External Relations**

**2.4.1** Members asked that the Stimulus Package include a commitment to develop an External Relations Strategy which would seek to strengthen the Council's strategic relationships with key partner bodies, including Government Departments and the NI Executive, to ensure that priorities for city success and competitiveness happen through greater alignment of resources and plans. A further report scoping out the proposed approach and timescale for delivery for this project will be brought back to Committee in January 2012 in line with the emerging priorities within the revised Stimulus Package and Corporate Plan.

## **2.4.2 International Relations and Marketing Plan**

As agreed by Members, work has been ongoing to scope out the proposed approach to the development of an International Relations and Marketing Plan for the city which will seek to consolidate strategic international relationships to support economic growth and competitiveness. An update report will be submitted to Committee in December.

## **2.5 Consultative Conference Launch**

**2.5.1** Members have requested that a range of stakeholder engagement events be undertaken in the coming months linked to the emerging Corporate Plan, Belfast Masterplan and Stimulus Package. This would culminate in a joint launch conference in February 2012 which would provide an opportunity for the Council to set out its vision and priorities for the city and outline what it seeks to achieve within this council term in terms of its new Corporate Plan and Stimulus Package. A further detailed paper setting out firm proposals for the consultative conference launch will be worked up in liaison with Party Group Leaders and Corporate Communications and submitted to the next meeting of the Committee in December 2011.

## **2.6 Timetable for Moving Forward**

**2.6.1** A proposed timetable for taking forward the development of the new Corporate Plan, Stimulus Package and Belfast Masterplan; as well as the supporting work streams has been circulated for Members consideration. This is set within the Council's established planning and rates setting process.

**3.0 Resource Implications**

**3.1 The resource implications of taking forward the Council's commitments as set out in the "Stimulus Package" will be discussed further with Members in line with the budget setting process for 2012-15.**

**4.0 Equality Implications**

**4.1 It is proposed that the launch in February 2012 is used as part of the consultation process that is carried out on the Corporate Plan and Stimulus Package in line with the Council's Equality Scheme.**

**5.0 Recommendations**

**5.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report and the proposed timetable, as set out at Appendix 1, when reports will be submitted to Committee on key strands of work."**

**Appendix 1 Timetable can be viewed on Mod.gov Item 2a**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Democratic Services and Governance**

**Use of City Hall and Provision of Hospitality**

The Committee considered the undernoted requests which had been received for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality:

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/ Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Irish Congress of Trade Unions	Conference Dinner  29th February, 2012  Approximately 120 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre- dinner drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair, together' and Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks  Approximate cost £500
Hampton Medical Conferences	British Geriatrics Society Conference  18th April, 2013  Approximately 180 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre- dinner drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair, together' and Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks  Approximate cost £500
WAVE Trauma Centre	'Trauma Training Pathway Awards Evening'  10th January, 2012  Approximately 150 attending	The use of the City Hall and provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits	This event seeks to promote the success of people who due to their experiences during the troubles have returned to education and training through the support of WAVE Trauma Centre.  Accredited certificates will be awarded on the night to over 100 individuals who have successfully completed Open College Network courses through WAVE.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'Better opportunities for success across the city', 'Better support for people and communities' and 'Better services – listening and delivering'.	The use of City Hall and provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits  Approximate cost £375



Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/ Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Centre for Competitiveness	2011 Northern Ireland Quality Awards  26th January, 2012  Approximately 300 attending	The use of the City Hall	<p>This award ceremony seeks to bring together a broad section of people from the private, public and voluntary sectors who have sought to improve their performance and achieve excellence in service delivery and strategic business leadership excellence. Awards presented will include the 'Gold-Star for Service Excellence Standard' which has been developed in partnership with the consumer Council and the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and industry.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair, together' and Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	The use of the City Hall
Law Society of Northern Ireland	Admissions Ceremony 2012  13th February, 2012  Approximately 500 attending	The use of the City Hall	<p>This event seeks to showcase to communities across Northern Ireland the wealth of talents and abilities of the graduating class of 2011.</p> <p>By having a single Admissions Ceremony instead of five separate smaller ceremonies, the Law Society wishes this event to provide an opportunity to promote collegiality within the legal profession and to emphasise the values of professionalism, leadership and commitment to the community. The event also aims to provide a 'shared' venue for all newly qualified solicitors encapsulating all traditions which emphasises a strong and vibrant legal quarter based in Belfast.</p> <p>This event does not satisfy criteria as although the Law Society does play a vital role to the city of Belfast, as acknowledged by the Committee when it has previously granted the use of the City Hall for the Law Society of Northern Ireland Council Dinner, it is deemed that this event would not contribute <b>substantially</b> to the achievement of one or more of the Council's key themes.</p>	Not recommended

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Conflicts of Interest Policy**

The Committee agreed to defer until its meeting in December consideration of a report in relation to the Conflicts of Interest Policy.

### **Terms of Reference for Governance Working Group**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 4th November, as part of its consideration of the development of a Council Constitution, it had agreed to the establishment of an All-Party Working Group comprising Members of the Committee where appropriate to take forward the discussions on the Constitution. The Committee had agreed also that, in the first instance, the Working Group could consider the revision of Standing Orders and the development of associated protocols.

The Democratic Services Manager advised the Committee that, in order for the Working Group to be established and commence work, it was necessary for the Committee to agree the Terms of Reference for the Group. Accordingly, he submitted for the Committee's approval the undernoted suggested Terms of Reference:

1. The revision of the Council's Standing Orders to make them relevant to the current modern governance arrangements.
2. The development of Member-Officer Protocols to provide for a clear understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of each and to establish clear guidelines in relation to, for example, how issues are included on Committee agendas, how Member and Officer meetings outside of the formal decision-making structures should be facilitated etc.
3. The development of the second part of the Conflicts of Interest policy in relation to the roles and responsibilities of Members on outside bodies.
4. Initial consideration of the overall governance arrangements for the Council including the current Committee system and the issue of the scrutiny function.
5. Any other part of the overall Council Constitution which is referred to it specifically by the Committee

He pointed out that the Working Group would not have any decision-making powers but would only be able to recommend any proposed changes to the Committee for its decision.

The Committee approved the Terms of Reference for the Governance Working Group as set out.

**Reporting of Working Group Minutes  
in the Minute Book**

The Democratic Services Manager reminded the Committee that, at the Council meeting on 1st November, a number of Members had made mention of the fact that the minutes of several Working Groups were only mentioned in passing in the minutes of the controlling Standing Committee. In particular, attention had been drawn to the adoption of the minutes of the meetings of the Budget and Transformation Panel and the Historic Centenaries Working Group by the Committee on 21st October. The Chief Executive had undertaken to have a report presented to the Committee setting out options with regard to how the minutes of Working Groups should be dealt with both at the Standing Committees and, subsequently, within the Council minute book.

The Democratic Services Manager explained that all Members of Council had access to the Modern.gov system without restriction and could already view both the agenda papers and minutes of all Committees and Working Groups whether or not they were a Member of that Committee or Working Group. All Committee reports and associated appendices were therefore already available to all Members.

However, at present, only the minutes of the meetings of the Council's Standing Committees were included in the minute book presented at the monthly Council meeting. The reason for that was that it was only those Committees which could make decisions subject to Council ratification. Working Groups had no standing under the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972. The decision to establish a number of Working Groups in 2008 had been taken in order to allow the preliminary work on a range of issues to be discussed by All-Party Groups and for those Working Groups to make recommendations to the controlling Standing Committees. If the minutes of a Working Group were adopted by the controlling Standing Committee then, normally, that was all that the minute would show. If, however, the recommendations of a Working Group were amended or rejected by the controlling Committee it was recorded separately within the minute of the controlling Committee.

The Democratic Services Manager pointed out that if the minutes of a controlling Committee only recorded that the minutes of a Working Group which were submitted to it were "adopted" then it was accepted that this did not reflect fully the discussions undertaken and recommendations agreed at the Working Group meeting. Although the full minutes of those Working Groups were available to all Members through the Modern.gov system, they were not readily available to Members at the monthly meeting.

One way in which that could be resolved would be to include a more comprehensive record within the Standing Committee minute of the recommendations of the Working Groups which reported to it. For example, when the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee was considering the minutes of the Good Relations Partnership, the minute of the meeting would record the important individual decisions which were taken by the adoption of the Partnership's minute. That would highlight the individual issues which the Working Groups considered and allow the full Council meeting to discuss them in more detail.

The Committee agreed that, in future, the important individual recommendations which were made by Working Groups be included within the minutes of the appropriate Standing Committee.

**Live Streaming and Archiving of  
Council Proceedings on the Internet**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 21st October, it had been advised that the tendering process had been completed for a system to live stream and archive Council proceedings on the internet. The system had now been installed and had been tested during the Council meeting on 1st November. The live webcasting would begin at the Council meeting on 1st December.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that Members had previously indicated that thought should be given as to how the conduct of the Council meetings might be impacted upon when the live broadcasts commenced. In particular, Members were keen to ensure that the reputation of the Council would not be adversely affected. Therefore, a Protocol for the live streaming and archiving of Council proceedings on the internet had been developed. More detailed discussion on the conduct of Council meetings would take place as part of the forthcoming review of Council Standing Orders. Once the system had been in operation for a period of three months, the Protocol, a copy of which is set out hereunder, would be reviewed to ensure its relevance:

**“Draft - Protocol for the live webstreaming of Council Meetings**

**1. Background**

**The Members will recall that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 22 October 2010, agreed to the invitation of tenders for a system which would facilitate the live streaming and archiving of Council meetings on the internet. Subsequently, the Assistant Chief Executive/Town Solicitor approved the successful tender for the provision and installation of the necessary equipment provided by Public-i. A webcast is a transmission of audio and video content over the internet. It is a permanent medium which is either viewed live, or from an archive. This protocol has been produced to assist the conduct of webcast meetings and to remind Members of the importance of the maintenance of order during meetings.**

**2. Current position**

**The equipment is now in place and consists of 4 fixed cameras, which will focus on the speaker at any given time, or give an overall view of the Chamber if appropriate. The proceedings of each Council meeting will be webcast live on the internet and recordings will be archived for 2 years and will be available to view within 48 hours of the meeting. Concurrently, during each Council meeting, a live screening from the internet with audio will be on display in the Robing Room.**

**3. Protocol to be followed**

In order to ensure the maximum openness and transparency of Council business the following Protocol has been developed to assist Members to make the best possible use of the system.

- a. The Lord Mayor will make an announcement at the start of each meeting reminding Members that the meeting is being broadcast live to the internet and will be capable of repeated viewing. The Lord Mayor will also advise that the webcasting of the meeting may be terminated or suspended at his/her discretion. (Further information below.)
- b. Specific seats have been assigned and Members must speak only from their allotted seat. This is important as, during the live streaming, the speaker's name will be indexed onto the webcast.
- c. Members are asked to speak directly towards the microphone.
- d. Members should speak only when directed to do so by the Lord Mayor resulting in only one person speaking at a time. It is also important to ensure that Members switch on their microphone before speaking and to switch it off again once finished.
- e. It is important to note that whilst other people near you are speaking you may still be on camera. Bear in mind that people may be watching live on the internet. Members should try to avoid moving unduly whilst speaking.
- f. It is recommended that bright colours and/or striped materials should not be worn as these may distort the images which are streamed live.
- g. In the event of a vote, the live webcast will revert to a wide angle view of the Lord Mayor's podium to allow for the voting to take place.

**4. Termination or suspension of live webcast**

- a. Council's Standing Orders should be adhered to during meetings to ensure the reputation of the Council is not adversely affected.
- b. The live webcasting may be terminated or suspended only by the Lord Mayor (or the Deputy Lord Mayor in the absence of the Lord Mayor) if, in their opinion, continuing to webcast would prejudice the integrity of the meeting.

- c. **Instances of inappropriate behaviour, such as prolonged use of offensive language; violence towards one another or to equipment/furniture may result in the termination of the live webcast.**

**5. Review of protocol**

**Once the system has been in operation for a period of 3 months, the above protocol will be reviewed to ensure its relevance.**

**6. Officer responsible for overseeing the Protocol**

**Responsibility for the above Protocol will ultimately lie with the Chief Executive through the Assistant Chief Executive and Democratic Services Manager.”**

The Committee approved the draft Protocol.

**Documentary on Lord Mayor –  
Request to Film Council Meeting**

The Committee was advised that a film company, Waddell Media, was producing currently a documentary on behalf of the British Broadcasting Company on the Lord Mayor's year in office. The company had been filming a number of Mayoral engagements and, in order to give a rounded picture of the duties of a Lord Mayor, had requested to film the entirety of the Council meeting to be held on 1st December, 2011. It was understood that the company would require two personnel to be in attendance to carry out the filming. One camera would be used, operating from both a fixed and non-fixed position.

The Democratic Services Manager explained that the Council had agreed to similar requests in the past, most recently in 2003 when a documentary had been produced on the year in office of the then Lord Mayor, Councillor Alex Maskey, and again in 2006 when the British Broadcasting Corporation had been producing a documentary on the City. The filming of the Council meeting would not cause any disruptions to the proceedings and staff from the Corporate Communications section would liaise directly with the production team to make them aware of the rules and protocols to be observed.

During discussion, a Member pointed out that the British Broadcasting Corporation had commissioned three documentaries about the year in office of Lord Mayors and all had been on Nationalist Lord Mayors and requested that the Committee forward a letter requesting information on the reasons behind the company's commissioning of such programmes.

After further discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,  
Seconded by Councillor McKee,

That a letter be forwarded to the British Broadcasting Corporation seeking clarification on the commissioning process for such documentaries and pointing out that the three programmes which had been commissioned to date all involved Nationalist Lord Mayors.

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

The Committee accordingly agreed to accede to the request for the filming of the Council meeting on 1st December, 2011.

#### **Minutes of Meeting of the Member Development Steering Group**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Member Development Steering Group of 2nd November.

#### **Finance**

#### **Financial Reporting - Quarter 2 2011/12**

The Committee noted the contents of the Financial Report for Quarter 2 2011/12 and the associated Financial Reporting Pack.

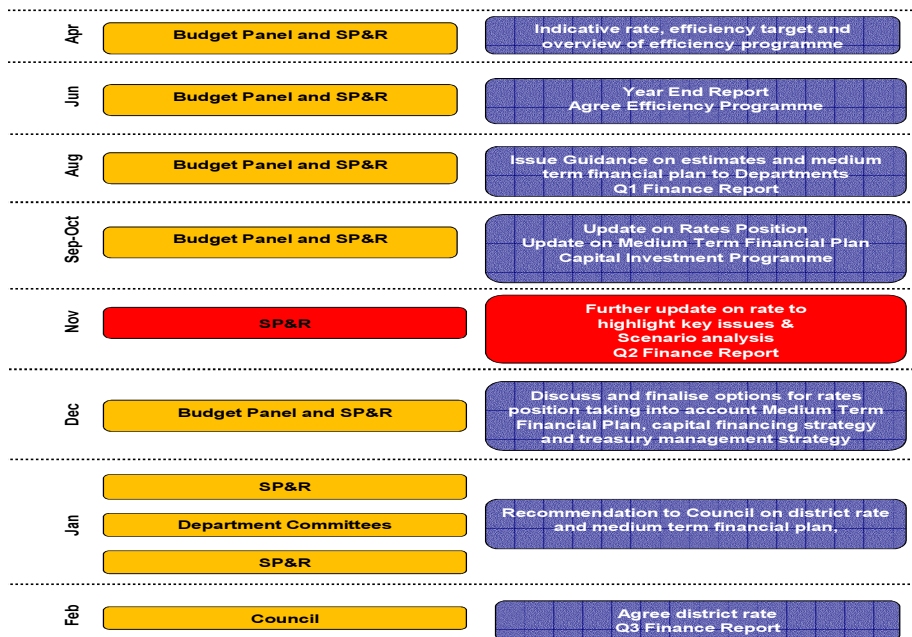
#### **Rate Setting 2012/13**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **"1 Relevant Background Information**

**1.1 Members will recall that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in April agreed the process for setting the rate as outlined in the chart below. The purpose of this report is to outline progress made against the agreed timetable and to discuss the key issues which will need to be considered as of the rate setting process.**

Agreed rate setting process for 2012/13



## 2 Key Issues

2.1 Departmental Estimates – This is the money required by departments to deliver services and typically covers expenditure on headings such as salaries, supplies and services. The departments have all completed their estimates for 2012/13 and the outcome is that £630,000 less will be required than for 2011/12. This reduction is due to 2 factors:

- £2.3m efficiencies have been taken out of the budgets as agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 4 November 2011.
- A pay rise has not been factored into the budgets for the third year running.

2.2 Waste Plan – waste management costs are due to increase by some £3.7m in 2014/15 when the arc21 Residual Waste Contract commences. The council has been planning for this increase in cost through a gradual increase in the rate so to avoid a spike in the rate in 2014/14. For 2012/13, a stepped increase of £1m will be required.

2.3 The net impact of the department estimates and the waste plan is that an additional £360,000 is required to cover revenue costs in 2012/13. This is the equivalent of a 0.29% increase in the rate. This means that this provides Members with a one-off opportunity to dedicate the bulk of any rate increase to capital investment, if they so choose.



## **2.4 Capital Investment**

- **Capital Programme – used to pay for enhancements or new assets owned by the council. The current capital programme is financed through an annual budget of £10m .This budget is sufficient to meet the current capital spending plans of the council which will peak in 2015/16.**
  - **City Investment Fund – used to finance investment package schemes for non-council assets. Currently, £3m from rates go into the fund every year. By 2014/15 there will be £11m in the fund net of current commitments. The fund will require additional finance to be built up if schemes included in the investment package are to be delivered.**
  - **Local Investment Fund – used to fund neighbourhood capital projects for non-council assets. There is £2.5m in the fund. There is an opportunity to add £2.5m to the fund over the next two years without increasing the rate.**
- 2.5 Reserves – are forecast to be at least £10.3m by the end of 2011/12. This is line with the council’s reserve strategy which requires general reserves to be at a minimum of £10m.**
- 2.6 Rate Base – council officers are currently working with the LPS on the rates forecast (EPP) for 2012/13. At this stage we are not in a position to provide an accurate figure but it is likely that the rate base will not be showing growth. Members should note that the Budget and Transformation Panel met with LPS officials on 8 November. A note of the meeting is provided as part of the Budget and Transformation Panel minutes.**
- 2.7 Regional Rate – the latest information we have is that the regional rate will be increased by 2.2% for 2012/13. This means that ratepayers will face a 1.21% increase in their rates bill even if the council agreed a 0% rate settlement. This is because the regional rate represents 55% of the rates bill.**
- 2.8 Inflation – the latest Consumer Price Index shows inflation to be 5.2%.**

## 2.9 Scenarios

The table below provides 4 rate setting scenarios ranging from 0.29 to 3% rate increases. The calculations are based on no change to the rate base and a 2.2% increase in the regional rate. From the table, Members can assess the impact on the ratepayer and the benefit in terms of additional city investment.

<u>Scenarios</u>	<u>Average Annual Increase in Rates Bill</u>	<u>Average Weekly Increase in Rates Bill</u>	<u>Additional Revenue</u>	<u>Additional City Investment per annum,</u>	<u>City Investment</u>
0.29%	£10.08	19p	£370k	£0	£11m
1%	£12.50	24p	£370k	£1m	£14m
2%	£17.80	34p	£370k	£2m	£17m
3%	£21.90	42p	£370k	£3m	£20m

## 2.10 Next Steps

SP&R 9 December – Report on rate base position and impact on scenarios.

SP&R 6 January – Set department cash limits and capital investment options.

SP&R 20 January – Propose rate settlement for consideration by full council.

## 3 Recommendations

### 3.1 Members are requested to:

- Note the contents of the report.

## 4 Decision Tracker

Responsible Officers: Director of Finance and Resources.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

## Minutes of Meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel of 8th November and noted the details contained therein in relation to the discussion which had been held with representatives of the Land and Property Service regarding the accuracy and volatility of the Estimated Penny Product and the Actual Penny Product.

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

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

<u>Annual Supplies</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Indicative Costs per Annum</u>
Minibus/Coach Service	1st April, 2012 till 31st March, 2013, with the option to renew for a further two years	£96,000
Broken stones and screenings	1st April, 2012 till 31st March, 2013, with the option to renew for a further one year	£65,000
Taxi Services	1st April, 2012 till 31st March, 2013, with the option to renew for a further two years	£35,000

**Asset Management**

**Stimulus Package –  
Physical Investment Programme(s)**

The Director of Property and Projects submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

**"1 Purpose**

- 1.1 To provide Committee with details of the projects BCC are currently delivering, facilitating, consulting, lobbying or considering. Members are asked to consider the detail of the report and the recommendations in relation to moving the Programme(s) forward in line with financial and other resource limitations.**

## **2 Background**

- 2.1** At SP&R on 21st October Members agreed to the establishment of Member/officer working groups to progress projects identified by Members at the Place-shaping workshops and recent Party Briefings. In addition Members have agreed that officers convene a workshop on People and Communities which will also explore Neighbourhood funding and the projects that could be part of this strand. These projects can then be added to the programme(s) when known.
- 2.2** Given the number and range of projects under consideration, the various stages they are at and the different parts of the organisation involved at different times it is important to group all these physical projects within a single document that enables overall management to be simplified and ensure members are regularly engaged and updated. Once agreed the projects will be organised into separate programmes to reflect the different financing routes ie Capital Programme, City Investment Fund, Local Investment Fund.
- 2.3** The tables below detail those projects identified by Members at various workshops; the City Investment fund projects (active and potential) and capital projects committed and not committed. For this exercise we have excluded smaller capital projects such as IT projects and as noted above further neighbourhood projects may be added.
- 2.4** Outline costs have been identified for the majority of projects however a number of caveats need to be applied to the financial information. Several projects remain ill defined and estimates are little more than a guess at this stage, others are contingent upon various funding streams that again are not fully worked up. However it is important to have at least a ballpark figure to inform discussion and establish the potential rate impact.
- 2.5** We have affordability ranges for capital of around £10m pa for financing. We have a £3m annual contribution to CIF and there is a £2.5m lump sum for the LIF. Affordability limits will include this money together with further efficiency gains, rate income and external funding.

The projects have been grouped into 4 categories:

- Group A – basically committed
- Group B – officers authorised to work up more detail
- Group C – potential projects to be considered by Member/Officer working groups to define scope of potential projects
- Group D – Projects at a very early conceptual stage

- 2.7 The total number of projects identified to date is 70 around half of which are newly identified by Members. The total BCC funding potentially required for these where known, is over £100m. Obviously this amount needs to be informed by what is affordable and an agreed expenditure profile for the coming years. At present Group A contains the only projects which are presently agreed by Council, financed and profiled.
- 2.8 Further parameters for prioritising projects in groups B, C and D include alignment with organisation objectives, the masterplan and deliverability. Regardless of what is finally agreed some projects will be delayed or indeed not go ahead at all due to other circumstances and new projects will emerge. The overall portfolio will shift and change as the projects meet the reality of delivery on the ground. Members need to be kept informed of progress and delay and options available.
- 2.9 It is important for Members to recognise the scale of this programme(s) of work and bear in mind the capacity of the organisation to deliver. Once a programme is agreed and financed through the rate a further detailed report on delivery and organisational capacity will be brought.

### **3 Key Issues**

#### **3.1 Group A – 21 Projects**

Contains the current Capital Programme and City Investment Fund projects which Council has already authorised. There are also some emerging capital projects which are being worked up by officers, as authorised by standing committees, for Member's consideration in the future. For this exercise we have not included smaller capital projects such as IT projects.

Group A

Project	Reason	Finance	
		BCC	Other
Arterial Routes	Committed (Revenue funded)	£600k	
Mary Peter's	Committed CP	£3m	
Dunville Park	Committed CP	£1m	£1m (DSD)
Woodvale Park	Committed CP	£1m	£1m (DSD)
Alleygates	Committed CP	£900k	
Titanic Memorial Gardens	Committed /CP	£150k	
Cemetery/ Crematorium	Future Committed/CP	£12.5m	
Burial Space	Committed/CP	£500k	
Duncrue Fuel Station	Committed/CP	£630k	
Mercury Abatement	Committed/CP	£1.8m	
Duncrue Industrial Estate – Waste Heat Utilisation	Committed/CP	£235k	£15k
Clement Wilson Bridge	Committed/CP	£200k	
Upper Waterworks MUGA	Committed/CP		£150k
Pitches (NSEW)	Committed/CP	£10m	
Maysfield Demolition and Site Development	Committed/CP	£500k	
NFS 3 (Waste Transfer Station)	Funding secured	£1.25m (Waste Fund)	
Loop River	Committed/CP		£900k (CR)
Loughside	Committed/CP		£5.5m (CR)
TSP	Committed CIF	£10m	
CCG	Committed CIF	£4.2m	
MAC	Committed CIF	£550k	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£48.5m</b>	<b>£8.5m</b>

3.2 Group B – 12 Projects

Consists of those projects which need funding decisions or further work such as economic appraisals to allow defined proposals to be submitted to Members for decisions on the next steps. Officers have been authorised to work the projects up and bring further report to committees.

**Group B**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Old Grove demolition	Project being developed by officers – approved by SP&R but referred back at Council
Tropical Ravine	Project awaiting funding decision from HLF
Springfield Recycling Centre	Economic appraisal being prepared before submission to Members for consideration including access issues
Council accommodation	Being developed by the Asset Management Board for submission to Members for consideration.
BVCB/Belfast Welcome Centre	Location to be agreed and Economic appraisal to be finalised before submission to Members for consideration.
Conference Centre/Exhibition Centre	Economic appraisal to be finalised before submission to Members for consideration
Mountain Bike Trail	Economic appraisal to be finalised before submission to Members for consideration,
City Hall East Gardens refurbishment	Concept plans developed.
NFS 2 (Development Brief)	Uncommitted pending receipt of brief
NFS 1 (ERDF)	Funding application being developed
Girdwood	Funding application approved to next stage
Springvale Forthriver Business Park	Uncertainties about the nature of the scheme, delivery and operation. Further detail needed.

**3.3 Group C – 17 Projects**

Consists of those projects which are the suggested list for the Member/officer working groups. For most of these projects, the information already available should provide enough detail to develop to the next stage. Further information is needed particularly in regard to cost and financing and various other issues dependent on the project. Financing information provided is therefore only indicative. It should be noted there are no council decisions to fund these projects at the moment only to work them up to a stage which enables the funding and delivery consequences to be established.

Group C

Project	Reason
Gasworks Northern Fringe	Master Plan in place and Remediation Strategy developed suitable for further consideration
North Belfast Cultural Corridor	Concept Plan developed. Project suitable for progression to initiation stage with DSD
Windsor Stadium	Funding committed from Central Government
Lagan Canal	Economic appraisal complete suitable for further consideration.
Lanyon Tunnels	Economic appraisal complete suitable for further consideration
East Belfast Land Use Programme	Member support for programme, early engagement with DSD, DETI and EBPB. Suitable for further consideration.
Sirocco Quay	Possible opportunity for land purchase. Suitable for further consideration.
Casement Stadium	Business case being developed, Council working with partners. Suitable for further consideration.
St Comgall's	Concept plan in place, suitable for further consideration.
Gaeltacht Quarter	Early projects identified on the basis of MOU between Gaeltacht Board and BCC for a new cultural quarter. Suitable for further consideration.
Blackmountain	BCC Engagement with politicians, community. Suitable for further consideration.
Rapid Transit	Council has joined with Civitas to explore EU funding. Suitable for further considerations.
Argyle Business Park	Proposals being developed.
Hammer Complex	Boxing club and site revamp
Royal Exchange	Potential management role for BCC with DSD
Public Bike Hire	Outline business case complete, grant applied for
University of Ulster	Council policy paper being developed

3.4 Group D – 20 Projects

Consists of projects which are at a very early conceptual stage. In order to move on these projects substantial further information and stakeholder engagement is needed to make informed decisions on the next steps. Decisions will have to be made by Council on prioritisation of which projects should be further worked up in the context of the organisational capacity, already committed to delivering the projects listed in Group A and further working up the projects in Groups B and C.



Group D

Project	Reason
An Droichead	Detail not available need further work on viability
Changing Places (Disabled WC)	No site identified, Economic appraisal to be completed before submission to Members for consideration
Shaftsbury Square	DSD led project further detail required.
Vocational College	Clarification required.
Belfast Hills	Issues with concept no funding secured.
Glen 10	Early stage – concept being consulted with community,
Glencolin	No firm proposals.
Andersonstown Gateway	DSD led – Masterplan being developed
Divis Street Narrowing	FAB planning application will seek Council support for approval.
Springfield Dam	Proposals being developed by DSD.
Falls Women's Centre	Proposals to be developed.
Shankill Piazza	Further development required.
Leisure Estate	Further detail required.
Meanwhile Projects	Workshop to be held with officers and external agencies to develop further
Six Links	Further detail needed on development opportunities
Andersonstown Barracks	Being developed by DSD
Public Convenience Strategy	Strategy to be developed to identify options.
Queens Quay	Further detail needed
Bank Square	Further detailed needed
Integrated Transport Hub	Further detail needed

3.5 Members are asked to note the information in the report and approve in principle the projects identified for the Member/officer working groups, to further work up to ascertain the potential funding consequences and identify the delivery issues.

4 **Resources**

4.1 The organisation will be required to realign existing resources to move the programme(s) forward taking into account the full range of priorities emerging from the corporate planning process and investment package. A further report will be brought on the resourcing consequence of delivery.

**5 Equality**

- 5.1 Equality and good relations consideration will be taken forward in the context of the corporate plan and associated pieces.**

**6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 Note report and approve projects identified for Member Officers working groups.**

**In terms of governance for this work, officer input to the working teams will be overseen by designated Chief Officers. A composite report on the outcomes of the working groups will be brought to the Budget and Transformation Panel and SP&R to ensure that a city-wide perspective is taken and to ensure the balance that Members have asked for before any major investment decisions are taken.”**

Prior to discussion in the matter, the Director of Property and Projects pointed out that a further project, that is, the Digital Hub, should have been included within Group C. He explained that the projects had now been grouped into four categories in order to allow the Members to focus, prioritise and move forward the projects. He pointed out that this would be a rolling programme, with Members being engaged continuously throughout. He indicated that there would be fluidity and movement between the groups, with further parameters to be developed for prioritising projects within Groups B, C and D to include alignment with the Council’s objectives, the Masterplan and deliverability.

During discussion, a Member pointed out that the package should include a proposal within the Sandy Row area.

In response, the Director of Development indicated that he had met with representatives of the Department for Social Development to discuss the Masterplan for Shaftesbury Square, which included Sandy Row, and a report thereon would be submitted to the Development Committee in due course.

The Chief highlighted that at present only projects listed in Group A had funding agreed by the Council and that in working up further projects the Council would need to make decisions on affordability and prioritisation for delivery.

**Girdwood Community Hub**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 Members will recall that the Council’s bid for a community hub located at Girdwood was deferred in May 2010, under the European Union Peace III Priority 2.1, total value £9.6m. The Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB) undertook an economic appraisal of the project in mid-2010 and deferred their decision to allow the Council to address a number of issues related to the implementation of the project.**

**2.0 Key Issues**

**2.1** As per Committee's recommendations in June 2010 and in June 2011, Council officers continued to develop the proposal for final submission to SEUPB. This included a series of community meetings, briefings for the relevant Ministers and meetings with relevant departmental officials. It also included the distribution of a news letter to households in North and parts of West Belfast in September and a number of other community engagement activities.

**2.2** At a meeting at the end of October, SEUPB's Priority 2.1 Committee considered the additional information that the Council had submitted in relation to the Girdwood Community Hub. The Committee commended the Council and its partners for the significant work which had been undertaken to address the issues highlighted in the economic appraisal.

**2.3** The Council has now received a letter from SEUPB stating that the Steering Committee has recommended the project for funding and they have forwarded it to the two governments' accountable departments for approval.

Only once this process has been satisfactorily completed, which can take a couple of months, will a letter of offer be issued outlining the conditions.

**2.4** SEUPB in their letter highlight 2 key issues:

- Until the formal letter of offer is issued, the Council and its partners incur any expenditure at risk;
- They also ask we refrain from making any public announcements or communications with the press about the project without the prior approval of SEUPB.

**2.5** The Director of Property and Projects is seeking an urgent meeting with SEUPB to determine the likely nature of the conditions of the offer. He will give a verbal update to Committee on discussions with SEUPB and what the likely implications of the conditions of offer might be for the Council.

**3.0 Resource Implications**

**Human**

Officers from the relevant Council departments will work with the Department for Social Development to implement a realistic project plan and community engagement process.

### **Financial**

All expenditure for the project, as outlined in the application, must be claimed from SEUPB by mid-2015.

### **Asset**

Property and Projects Department, in liaison with other departments, will oversee the land acquisition issues and construction programme and seek the appropriate approvals from Committee in due course.

#### **4.0 Equality Implications**

The Committee previously approved the Equality Strategy for the Girdwood Community Hub. It outlines how the Council will fulfil its equality obligations during the development of the Girdwood Community Hub and the Hub's likely impact and outcomes in terms of equality and good relations. This details the points at which the programme of work will be screened for equality impacts.

Phase III of the equality screening is timetabled to complete by end December 11, although this is dependent on the issue of a letter of offer from SEUPB. In this phase, we will screen the final location and building design (including Disability Discrimination Act obligations), the Community Opportunities and Benefits Plan and the 'shared space' programme.

#### **5.0 Recommendations**

**The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is asked to note the contents of this report."**

The Director of Property and Projects indicated that he had met with representatives from the Special European Union Programmes Body and they had raised a number of risks which they thought that the Council needed to mitigate before moving the process forward. In addition, he had discussed with the representatives the use of the Central Procurement Directive Northern Ireland during which he had indicated that given the nature of the project and the need for community involvement, he did not believe that this would be the best course and the Council should act in this role. The Committee endorsed this approach.

A Member pointed out that he would be keen to receive up-to-date information in relation to the community buy-in for the project and a timetable for decisions.

The Director of Property and Projects indicated that he would be producing for the Special European Union Programmes Body a critical path programme which would include a timeframe and he would submit it to the Members in due course.

After further discussion, the Committee noted the information which had been provided and endorsed the position of the Director of Property and Projects in relation to the use of the Central Procurement Directive Northern Ireland.

### **North Foreshore**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 **Relevant Background Information**

1.1 ***North Foreshore - Grant of a Licence to Lisburn Envirocare Ltd***

The council's Health and Environmental Services Department, Waste Management Unit, has entered into contract with Lisburn Envirocare Ltd to transport Belfast's black bin waste from the Waste Transfer Station (WTS) at the North Foreshore to a private landfill. Lisburn Envirocare Ltd has sought a licence to occupy a small plot of land within the WTS complex on which to place a 10' x 40' metal container to be used for storage and as a staff rest area.

1.2 ***North Foreshore – Developers Brief for Disposal of Site for Commercial Anaerobic Digester***

Members will recall their approval on the 18 February 2011 to advertise for Expression of Interest inviting private sector operators to submit proposals for an anaerobic digestion (A.D) facility on a site at the North Foreshore Giants Park.

1.3 **A potential joint venture arrangement was proposed whereby the private operator would design, fund, build and operate an anaerobic digestion biogas production facility to provide fuel for a redundant generator in the landfill gas electricity generating facility operated by our joint venture partner, Renewable Power Systems (RPS) Ltd.**

1.4 **The private operator would be prohibited from generating electricity. Rather, they would sell biogas to the Council and derive a further income from the sale of digestate, a residual product used as a fertiliser. All income from the sale of electricity together with Government subsidies would accrue to the Council.**

1.5 **This would have involved a tripartite contract between the Council, the A.D operator and Renewable Power Systems Ltd, and the A.D operator would enter into a Development Agreement with the Council.**

2 **Key Issues**

2.1 ***North Foreshore - Grant of a Licence to Lisburn Envirocare Ltd***

The contract between Belfast City Council and Lisburn Envirocare Ltd commenced on 1st November 2010 for a term of 17 months with the possibility of further monthly extensions up to a maximum of 12 months. The licence will be backdated to 1st November 2010 and run concurrently with the contract. A container has been placed on site by Lisburn Envirocare Ltd and this licence will regularise their occupation. The council has installed a mains electricity supply to provide lighting and heating. The council will retain liability for rates (if any) and utility costs

2.2 ***North Foreshore – Developers Brief for Disposal of Site for Commercial Anaerobic Digester***

The council publicly advertised for expressions of interest from the private sector and had over 50 requests for documentation. This enabled the council to test the market and to formalise the enquiries concerning the availability of sites at the North Foreshore for a potential AD Facility. At the closing date the council received 8 Expressions of Interest from Local and European Commercial Companies interested in developing an Anaerobic Digester at the North Foreshore. The assessment revealed that there was a variety of technical specification for the anaerobic digester and different types of feedstock proposed, which would generate different levels and quality of methane gas.

2.3 The landfill gas powered generators currently operating on site are owned, operated and maintained by RPS Ltd, our joint venture partner under contract with Belfast City Council. The use of A.D generator biogas to fuel a generator would require RPS Ltd consent and inclusion in a tripartite agreement. RPS Ltd has examined the expressions of interest received, and raised concerns over technical issues surrounding the different proposals and the potential quality of methane gas due to the variety of feedstock. There is a concern of legal liability in the event of damage to the machinery in the event of a defective A.D process. RPS Ltd have advised that a tripartite agreement would be high risk and inherently litigious.

2.4 In the circumstances, RPS Ltd is reluctant to pursue this approach and have withdrawn their consent to fuel the redundant generator with A.D produced biogas. This necessitates a revision of the Councils approach to the project.

- 2.5 The NI Executive is promoting the development of AD Facilities to generate renewable energy. There is considerable interest from Private Companies to acquire a site at the North Foreshore for a commercial A.D. Facility that would produce up to 1 mw of renewable electricity sufficient to power up to 1,000 homes. To capture the potential private sector investment opportunity an alternative approach is proposed to minimise risk and provide an acceptable return to the Council. Following a Development Brief being publicly advertised and subsequently evaluated it is proposed to grant site lease to a preferred operator subject to an estimate current market ground rent of £30,000 per acre per annum reviewable every 5 years. The lease would permit the operator to develop an A.D biogas production facility, install generators and generate electricity on site for export to the local grid via the sub station adjoining the landfill gas compound. All income from the sale of electricity together with Government NIROC Subsidies would accrue to the operator. In addition to the site rent, the Council would receive a royalty for connection to the sub station awarded on the amount of electricity generated. This approach minimises the risk to the Council and places all onus on the operator to maximise electricity production and enhance the royalty return to the Council.

### 3 Resource Implications

#### Finance

#### 3.1 *Grant of a Licence to Lisburn Envirocare Ltd*

A licence fee has been assessed at £250pa inclusive of rates (if any) and utility costs. This has been paid in full by Lisburn Envirocare Ltd up to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011.

#### 3.2 *Developers Brief for Disposal of Site for Commercial Anaerobic Digester*

The Council will receive a ground rent in accordance with the site lease. In addition it will receive a royalty payment in relation to the amount of electricity generated by the operator.

#### 3.3 Asset and Other Implications

This is a low risk option to the Council.

**3.4 Environmental**

Members should be aware that an A.D process is in-vessel i.e. the process takes place in sealed containers in the absence of oxygen. There is no external storage of waste and the process does not produce offensive odours.

**4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

None

**5 Recommendations**

- 1) The Committee approves the grant of a licence to Lisburn Envirocare Ltd on a site on the North Foreshore on the above terms and conditions.
- 2) That the Committee agrees to publicly issue a Development Brief seeking detailed proposals from Commercial Companies interested in acquiring a site for an Anaerobic Digestion and electricity generator facility on the North Foreshore Giants Park in accordance with the above terms and conditions.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Good Relations and Equality**

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

**Minutes of Meetings of the  
Historic Centenaries Working Group**

**26th October, 2011**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Historic Centenaries Working Group of 26th October and adopted the recommendations in respect of the following:

**Request for the Use of the Ormeau Park**

The decision of the Working Group to recommend to the Parks and Leisure Committee that it accede to the request from the Joint Unionist Centenary Committee to permit the Ormeau Park to be used for the holding of a demonstration to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Balmoral Review and noting that any further requests of this nature should be considered within the context of an agreed Council policy on diversity which would be developed.



During discussion, a Member pointed out that it was the view of his Party that the Parades Commission would need to deal not only with the proposed routes but also the location for the event. He indicated that he had requested further information and detail from the Joint Unionist Centenary Committee on the routes but had not been provided with the information at present. Therefore, at this stage, his Group was not content with the proposal to use the Ormeau Park and he that suggested a more sensible proposal had been received from the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland to use the Strangford Playing Fields, which was better located for the dispersal of participants after the event.

It was pointed out that the decision of the Working Group to recommend the use of the Ormeau Park had been adopted by the Parks and Leisure Committee at its meeting on 10th November.

#### **Re-enactment of the Signing of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant**

The decision of the Working Group to defer consideration of a request for the use of the City Hall to re-enact the signing of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant on Saturday, 29th September, 2012 to enable representatives from the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland to attend its meeting on 14th November to apprise the Members of its plans for its demonstration on the same date.

#### **Minutes of 14th November, 2011**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Historic Centenaries Working Group of Monday, 14th November and specifically the recommendations in respect of the following:

#### **Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland – Request to Use Strangford Avenue Playing Fields**

The decision of the Working Group to defer consideration of the request by the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland for the use of the Strangford Avenue Playing Fields to enable further information to be obtained regarding its plans for Saturday, 29th September, 2012 and to permit work on the development of the Council's Diversity Policy to be completed. In addition, the Group had agreed the following:

- that the Director of Parks and Leisure investigate the feasibility of Strangford Avenue Playing Fields to host an event comprising upwards of 40,000 participants; and
- that a request be made to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that any decisions taken or recommendations made by the Working Group should not be impacted upon adversely by the establishment of a Council Diversity Policy and that work to develop the Policy be completed as soon as possible.

**Historic Centenaries Working Group –  
Current Position**

An extract of the minutes of the Working Group in relation to the current position is set out hereunder:

*“The Working Group considered the undernoted report:*

**‘1.0 Relevant Background Information**

***Members will be aware that there was confusion at the last meeting regarding what had been agreed.***

***This report aims to set out and clarify what has been agreed to date by the Centenaries Working Group in relation to the Decade of Centenaries 2012-2022 and to clarify what decisions have yet to be agreed.***

**2.0 Set of Principles**

***At its meeting on 17th October 2011 the Working Group agreed that the following set of principles should be used in the selection of events to be marked. These principles were agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 21st October 2011 and adopted by the Council on 1st November 2011.***

***‘The decade in question marks a number of particularly significant dates that have shaped the history of Northern Ireland and Ireland and therefore our own identities and cultures – see list previously circulated.***

***The marking of these events provides the Council with an excellent opportunity to broaden our understanding of the past and our respect for the complexity of our shared history.***

***As a shared city in the twenty-first century, we should be able to deal with difference in a positive and constructive manner, demonstrating openness on the basis of shared civic values within a democracy and a mature respect for cultural diversity within our heritage.’***

- *'Events supported by the Council should provide opportunities to include a range of different perspectives and ideologies, rather than a single viewpoint, aiming to increase understanding and appreciation of other perspectives and identities*
- *They should be based on historic accuracy, robust academic expertise and critical analysis – engagement with universities, museums, libraries, PRONI etc is essential to ensure this evidence base*
- *The interpretation of events should be in a broad historical context and understanding of the national and European setting of the time*
- *The Council should develop strong links with other institutions – i.e. museums, libraries, PRONI and other relevant organisations, to ensure that there is no duplication and that events and programmes are complementary*
- *We will provide/support a range of different types of events – from lectures, discussions, debates to films, drama, activities that attract schools and children/families etc – so that events can not only be educational but participative, creative and enjoyable*
- *We will provide/support events and activities that are not exclusive but are welcoming to all sections of our increasingly diverse community in Belfast.*
- *The Council, committed both to the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations in the City, will not support events or activities that could be deemed to be triumphalist, to deepen or harden existing divisions, or belittle or demonise other groups\*.'*

*(\*Adapted from the Irish School of Ecumenics, Moving Beyond Sectarianism research)*

*The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed that these principles should apply to any key anniversaries being marked by the Council – in other words, they will be applied corporately, across the Council.*

*The Working Group will be aware that the terms 'provide and/or support' include the provision of direct funding, or the use of facilities, premises or public spaces owned or run by the Council, so similarly, will apply across the Council.*

### **3.0 Programme of events**

*At its meeting on 17th October 2011 the Working Group agreed that the following programme of key events should be adopted. This programme was agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 21st October 2011 and adopted by the Council on 1st November 2011.*

*The programme should be divided into 3 strands in chronological order:*

*1912 – 1914; 1914 – 1918; and 1918 – 1922.*

- 1. The first period, 1912-1914, would be entitled 'Shared History, Differing Allegiances' and would include the following events:*
  - the rise of the women's suffrage movement*
  - the rise of the labour movement*
  - the emergence of the Gaelic revival*
  - the signing of the Ulster Covenant*
  - the formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)*
  - the ITGWU strike (lockout) in Dublin*
  - the formation of the Irish Citizen Army*
  - the formation of the Irish Volunteers (IVF)*
  - gun-running by both the UVF and IVF.*
- 2. The second period, 1914-1918, would cover the period of World War I, including the Somme and the Easter Rising.*
- 3. The third period, 1918-1922, would cover the establishment of both governments in Northern Ireland and the Irish Free State.*

#### **4.0 Exhibitions**

*Major exhibitions would be commissioned for the following 3 key events:*

- *The Signing of the Ulster Covenant and the Home Rule Crisis and covering all the individual events for that period listed above. The East Entrance area has already been booked from August – December 2012 for this purpose.*
- *The Battle of the Somme*
- *The Easter Rising.*

#### **5.0 Civic hospitality**

*The Council has agreed with the recommendation from the Working Group that it should take the lead in hosting a civic dinner to mark each of the three key historical events in the programme round which major exhibitions would be commissioned – i.e. as above:*

- *the Signing of the Ulster Covenant and the Home Rule Crisis*
- *the Battle of the Somme and*
- *the Easter Rising.*

*In each case, the Council would be responsible for the invitation list and would ensure that this was broadly based and as inclusive as possible. Appropriate civic hospitality would be provided as appropriate for supplementary events in the programme, such as lectures, drama productions and so on.*

*The Council has also agreed that external organisations that wish to apply for the use of the City Hall for the holding of events or provision of hospitality associated with keynote anniversaries would be encouraged to do so in accordance with the Council's own guidelines for the use of the building and subject to approval in the normal way by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. (The Working Group is reminded that all of this is currently under review).*

## 6.0 Additional events

*The Council has also agreed that in the period 2012-2014, in addition to the exhibition for the period and the civic dinner, there should be additional events to mark:*

- *the signing of the Ulster Covenant*
- *the rise of the women's suffrage movement and*
- *the rise of the labour movement in Belfast.*

### a The signing of the Ulster Covenant

*The Working Group agreed that in view of the important role played by both the City Hall and Ulster Hall in the Covenant signing, that lectures e.g. on the life of Edward Carson or Joe Devlin be arranged. The text of the Ulster Covenant could be compared with that of the Irish Proclamation of 1916 and the parallels between the two examined.*

### b The rise of the women's suffrage movement

*The Working Group had agreed that this theme could be linked to the wider work of the Council, and in particular to the current imbalance within City Hall of memorabilia or items relating specifically to women. A drama production and archive photographs could be displayed, supplemented by details on women in the Council and in broader political and civic life over the period 1971-2011.*

### c The rise of the labour movement in Belfast

*This theme could also be linked to the wider work of the Council within the promotion of the concept of shared history.*

*In fact, both of the themes b) and c) have been proposed within the broader context of City Hall memorabilia and have received broad political agreement and support.*

*Without wishing to prejudge the results of the Equality Impact Assessment currently underway on City Hall memorabilia, it is proposed therefore that further work on both themes – of women and the labour movement - be undertaken with a more detailed report and proposals to be submitted to the Working Group early in the New Year.*

**7.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications**

*The Working Group has agreed that the Decade provides an opportunity for the Council to contribute to a better understanding of the past and to promote respect for the complexity of our shared history.*

*If the programme is undertaken on accordance with the principles adopted it should have positive implications in terms of the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations.*

**8.0 Financial Implications**

*An estimated budget for the period 2012- 2014 is attached as Appendix A.*

*I have discussed this with the Director of Finance and Resaources and he has agreed that an appropriate budget stream of approximately £50,000 per year for the period 2012-2014 should be developed to support this work.*

**9.0 Diversity strategy**

*I understand that there has been some discussion about the possibility of the principles agreed by this Working Group being extended across the Council in the context of the development of a broader diversity strategy. The party group leaders may attend future meetings of the Centenaries Working Group for discussion on this issue.*

**10.0 Recommendations**

*To note the contents of this report*

- To agree that an officer based Working Group, consisting of Council officers and representatives from appropriate external partner agencies, be set up to prepare an appropriate specification and invite submissions for the commissioning of an exhibition on the period 1912-1914 – the Signing of the Ulster Covenant and Home Rule Crisis as agreed*
- To agree that a report outlining additional events to be held in the period 2012-2014 be submitted to the next meeting of the Working Group in January 2012.*

**Appendix A**

**Budget required for Centenaries Working Group –  
Decade of Centenaries 2012-2014 period –  
anticipated expenditure (over 2 year period):**

	<b><u>Estimated cost</u></b>
£:	
<b><u>Exhibition</u> covering period, including:</b>	
the rise of the women's suffrage movement	25,000
the rise of the labour movement	
the emergence of the Gaelic revival	
the signing of the Ulster Covenant	
the formation of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)	
the ITGWU strike (lockout) in Dublin	
the formation of the Irish Citizen Army	
the formation of the Irish Volunteers (IVF)	
gun-running by both the UVF and IVF	
<b>Artwork/drama/lectures to mark key events:</b>	
the rise of the women's suffrage movement	10,000
the rise of the labour movement	10,000
<b>Community outreach/educational programme</b>	<b>6,000</b>
<b>DVD, including copyright and production costs</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b>Publications</b>	<b>6,000</b>
<b><u>Hospitality</u></b>	
<b>Civic Dinner to mark occasion of Signing of Covenant</b>	<b>20,000</b>
<b>Hospitality to mark other key events/launches</b>	<b>12,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>99,000"</b>

*During discussion, a Member made the point that the three significant anniversaries which the Working Group had agreed to acknowledge through the hosting of civic dinners and the mounting of prominent exhibitions viz., the Signing of the Solemn League and Covenant/Home Rule Crisis; the Battle of the Somme; and the 1916 Easter Rising might be interpreted as being somewhat imbalanced. He suggested that the Working Group might consider enhancing the list of significant anniversaries to incorporate a further event which would allay such a perception. In response, Members pointed out that the Council, at its meeting on 1st November, had endorsed the Working Group's principles and its selection of events to be marked and that it would be inappropriate at this stage to seek to amend it.*

*The Working Group adopted the recommendations as set out in the report."*



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

The Committee adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Good Relations Partnership of 7th November and adopted the recommendations in respect of the following:

#### **Tender for the Delivery of Peace III Phase II Programmes** **“Promoting the Positive Expression of Cultural Heritage” and** **“Migrant and Minority Ethnic Project”**

The Committee agreed:

- (i) to grant authority to invite tenders for the delivery of the “Promoting the Positive Expression of Cultural Heritage” and “Migrant and Minority Ethnic Project” initiatives; and
- (ii) to delegate authority to the Assistant Chief Executive to award the tenders on the basis of the most economically advantageous submissions which fulfilled the criteria of both projects.

#### **Proposals for the Development of a Strategy and** **Action Plan focused on Interface Areas**

The Committee adopted the recommendation of the Working Group in relation to the proposals for the development of a Strategy and Action Plan focused on Interface Areas. An extract of the minutes of the Good Relations Partnership in this regard is set out hereunder:

*The Partnership considered the undernoted report:*

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

- 1.1 ***Members will be aware of the recent Notice of Motion brought to the September meeting of Council by Alderman Tom Ekin: ‘Removal of Peace Walls’, detailed as follows:***

***“This Council can demonstrate true civic leadership by agreeing to tackle one of the biggest problems which affects all of the citizens of the City, that is, the continued existence of the so called ‘Peace Walls’. These walls performed a necessary security purpose in the past in the several interface areas of the City but now serve to increase alienation and to inhibit regeneration and development of those very same areas and the time has now come to seek to move towards their removal.***

*The Council agrees to take the lead in devising a strategy which seeks to move towards the removal of a number of these walls within the current Council term. This strategy should be inclusive and include the direct involvement of all appropriate organisations from the business, public and voluntary and community sectors, with the wishes and needs of those people who live in the interface areas being paramount."*

*Accordingly, the motion was referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration on how to proceed. That Committee received a report on the development of a strategy and framework for action for incorporation into the corporate planning process and agreed that this should be taken forward by the Good Relations Partnership in conjunction with the Safer City Thematic Group, chaired by the Director of Health and Environmental Services.*

- 1.2** *Previously, at the monthly meeting of the Council on the 3rd March 2008, Councillor Alban Maginness had proposed:*

*"Belfast City Council resolves that it is now time to begin to work towards the reduction and the ultimate removal of the so called 'peace walls' and barriers that presently divide our City. To this end, the Council therefore agrees to establish a working group to explore ways and means to initiate such a process and to report back with proposals by September, 2008."*

*This proposal was seconded by Councillor Long and the matter was referred to the Good Relations Steering Panel without debate. At that time, the Good Relations Steering Panel integrated a series of actions related to working in interface areas into its Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan (Peace III) 2009-2011 as well as the Good Relations Plan.*

- 1.3** *Under the Safer City Thematic Group within the Council, an internal interface officers group has recently been established with representation from officers across relevant services in the Council. The purpose of this group was to look at council service provision in interface areas and this group has now prepared a discussion document on the way forward is contained within Appendix 1, a copy of which has been circulated to the Partnership.*

*By way of general background, the report notes some important areas for consideration, along with some general observations and these are listed below:*

- *There are 88 interface barriers in Belfast according the CRC report 'Towards sustainable security – barriers and legacy of separation in Belfast'*
- *All bar one of these barriers are in the 10% most deprived areas in the City*
- *Those living at interface areas are faced with issues such as poor mobility, poor access to services, community safety issues, poor community relations, poor environment, poor health etc. In particular, health tends to decline in communities where levels of interaction are low, tensions are high and where people feel insecure*
- *People who live in interface areas generally have good proximity to services within their general geographical area. The issue in relation to services is access – not proximity. In addition to the presence of the physical barrier, people are not accessing services due to community safety concerns and a feeling that the facility is not 'theirs'. This has in some instances led to a duplication in service provision. For example, Woodvale Community centre is roughly 10 minutes walk from Ardoyne Community Centre.*
- *Funding provision is more often than not short-term or reactive in nature which does not allow for long term planning or interventions that are needed to address systemic challenges. There is a need to move beyond a conflict management mode.*
- *The Minister for the Department of Justice is also building momentum to enable barriers to be removed and has asked his staff to work set up a group of relevant statutory agencies to take this forward, alongside some of the other groups mentioned below.*
- *There was considerable publicity about the opening up of a barrier in Alexander Park Avenue. This is seen as a model to be built on.*

- *That the Good Relations Partnership and Unit have been focused on building capacity within communities through its Peace and Reconciliation Action Plan (Peace III) to develop a situation where in time barriers could be removed under the theme of Transforming Contested Space.*

**1.4 Current Council involvement in interface issues:**

- *Since 2008, the Council has provided significant investment in developing community capacity and a series of local Action Plans under the theme of Transforming Space within Phase I of the Belfast Peace Plan, funded by the European Regional Development Fund.*
- *The Renewing the Routes programmes and various other externally funded projects within Phase I of Peace III have contributed to dialogue and progress at interface areas*
- *Good Relations and Community Safety actions are ongoing in interface areas through programme delivery, core grant aid and other engagement and practical support.*
- *Community Services area development across the City connects strongly within areas in and around interfaces*
- *The Community Relations Council (CRC) coordinates an interagency Interface Working Group (IWG) to look at this issue across Northern Ireland and includes a linked interface community partners group. The Council is represented on these bodies by representatives from the Good Relations and Community safety Units.*
- *The IWG is working towards understanding issues at interfaces and engaging with communities and statutory partners to promote regeneration and assess the feasibility of removing barriers.*
- *The IWG involves Belfast City Council, DOJ, DSD, DRD, NIHE, BELB, PSNI, OFM/DFM as well as community representatives, all looking at issues related to interfaces.*

- *A barrier removal sub-group has been developed and a barrier removal template has also been produced to assist with this process. This is contained within Appendix 2, a copy of which has been circulated to Members.*

*It should be noted that the main principle contained within the IWG process is that:*

*'In all responses to the legacy of physical segregation, the safety and security of the people living near to interfaces and interface barriers will be the priority. At the same time it is the responsibility of government to develop responses to the real challenges of fear and threat which do not rely on permanent barriers or patterns of exclusion and violence. With this in mind, Departments should create the conditions for the removal of all interface barriers across the region. The process of removing interface barriers should be part of an inclusive, community approach towards building a shared society. New barriers will only be built if all other avenues of intervention have been tried and failed; rather priority must be given to other forms of investment in communities to ensure their safety and security without the need for physical structures.'*

*The barrier removal template identifies a 19 staged process for engagement around the removal of barriers and contains separate processes to deliver statutory led initiatives as well as community led initiatives.*

- 1.5 It is clear that segregation in the city inhibits regeneration, adds to costs of service delivery, distortion of labour markets, urban blight, etc. at a time when Belfast needs to be promoting itself as an outward looking location for living, investment and tourism.*

*Therefore, the Council needs to now have a clear defined role in addressing these issues.*

## *2 Key Issues*

- 2.1 The Council is not directly responsible for the erection or removal of interface barriers. However, given its Civic Leadership responsibilities it should have a key role in addressing segregation so that barrier removal may become possible. The Safer Cities sub group on interfaces discussion document identifies three key roles for Belfast City Council in relation to interfaces:*

1. ***A civic leadership role – setting the vision of a City with improved cohesion, less segregation and fewer physical barriers. The Council should make an explicit commitment in its plans and in its work with partners and communities to promote cohesion with a long term vision of barrier removal.***
2. ***An influencing role – seeking to use the influence of the Council to ensure that all master plans, capital projects and developments and regeneration projects seek to contribute to a City with improved cohesion and less segregation.***
3. ***A practical role – using the resources of the Council (assets, facilities, funding) to complement and support wider initiatives aimed at promoting and ultimately achieving a more cohesive City with fewer physical barriers. Examples of this practical work could include:***
  - ***creating funding criteria across funding streams that could support less segregation and the long-term vision of barrier removal.***
  - ***Identifying opportunities to direct resources to dealing with underlying problems at interface areas, for example the Peace III Youth Engagement Project (YEP) and Tension Monitoring Project (which will draw in over £1m)***
  - ***Integrating good relations and community cohesion outcomes within the themes of the corporate plan, via the place shaping agenda by transforming contested space through capital projects and regeneration, tailoring our approach to local area working, cultural tourism, better employment mobility or improved transport connections.***
  - ***Providing leadership in joined up thinking and collaboration with regard to regeneration in interface areas with other organisations***
  - ***Working with DoJ and others to support the Collaborative Working in Disadvantaged Areas work and the barrier removal agenda***
  - ***Identifying immediate projects that can be developed and delivered***

## 2.2 Proposals

*The Safer Cities discussion paper also suggests that the following could be included in the framework for action:*

1. *The Council should identify high level opportunities to promote cohesion through the corporate planning process, under each of the corporate plan strategic themes. Promoting cohesion should be a responsibility of each of the relevant Project Boards and should feature in the project briefs and high level performance reviews. These opportunities should include:*
  - *The implementation of Phase II of the Peace III plan*
  - *Promoting the city centre and any new public space as a shared space*
  - *Ensuring that iconic projects and major developments where the Council is leading, including Connswater Community Greenway, Titanic, cultural quarters, North Foreshore, etc.*
  - *Integrating this approach into our plans for neighbourhood working – a particular emphasis should be placed on cohesion within each of the pilot areas chosen.*
  - *Promoting cohesion through our Neighbourhood Investment Funded projects as well as cultural, art, tourism and night time economy projects, whilst also recognising multiple cultural identities*
  - *Developing outcomes to reduce segregation within our Active Belfast strategy and community development strategy*
2. *All relevant Council departments should incorporate actions which support less segregation within neighbourhoods located at interfaces within the business planning process.*
3. *The Council should, through the Safer Cities interface officers group, work with others, such as the DoJ, to identify neighbourhoods seeking to reduce barriers and provide support to the communities and also identify additional projects to help regenerate the area. This work should be overseen by the Neighbourhood working Board. This should be done in conjunction with the DOJ and others and may be linked to the Neighbourhood Investment Fund.*

4. *The Council's response to the consultation on the Social Investment Fund should include the need to invest in areas where there is a will to move towards barrier removal.*
5. *Relevant community funding streams should be adjusted to make explicit support for less segregation and greater cohesion so as to support communities to develop a long-term positive vision for their community and the city as a whole. Summer intervention funding in particular is being reviewed to ensure that it can be used more effectively in the future. The Council is also reviewing its summer activity programmes aimed particularly at young people.*
6. *For each interface area, a detailed profile should be produced by the SNAP team to identify underlying problems in the area. This could enable identification of key initiatives to help reduce segregation.*
7. *The dedicated internal officer working group on interfaces should continue to act as a key internal point of contact in order to drive forward work around interfaces in the areas of regeneration, grant aid funding and barrier removal issues. This group will ensure that this work will link with that being taken forward by the barrier removal sub-group of the Interface Working Group and the DoJ led statutory agencies group. It will also identify immediate projects that could be supported by the Council, in partnership with these agencies. The partnership will recall that a proposal to address the interfaces issue was submitted as part of the original bid for funding to SEUPB as part of Phase II of the Belfast PEACE III Plan. The economic appraisal recognised that the proposal had the potential to address the aims and objectives of the Peace III Operational Programme and recommended that the Council is provided with an opportunity to strengthen the case for this project specifically to allow for assessment of value for money, additionality and identified need. In line with the development the new Council strategy on interfaces it is proposed that the proposal outlined at Appendix 4 is presented to SEUPB for their consideration.*
8. *The Council should identify a mechanism to influence the inclusion of a long-term goal reducing segregation within major infrastructural, transport, regeneration and other major developments within the City. This should include rapid transit, Girdwood, University of Ulster, etc.*
9. *Lobbying for changes in housing and planning policy and controls to promote social cohesion.*



- 2.3 *The above proposals and the Safer Cities discussion document should form the basis of the strategy and action plan to be recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee as a response to the aforementioned Notices of Motion that have been brought to Council. It is recognised that the Good Relations Partnership will have a vital role to play in driving this process forward. Elected Representatives will need have a key role and in addition to reporting to Committee it is suggested that the Party Group Leaders will be invited to influence and inform the strategy, plan and framework for action. A proposed timetable on the development of these proposals is attached as Appendix 3.*

### **Resource Implications**

#### **Financial**

*There is no requirement for any additional resources at this stage. The proposals seek to build on what the Council already provides within its services through developing actions within the business planning process to support a positive agenda around interfaces. A specific proposal on identifying immediate projects is attached as appendix 4 for resubmission to SEUPB under the Phase II plan and will be 100% recoupable from EU funding.*

#### **Equality and Good Relations Implications**

*This report seeks to ultimately build better relations amongst the most deprived communities within the City with the goal of improvement in the quality of life at these areas, leading better cohesion and fewer physical barriers.*

#### **Recommendations**

*The Partnership is requested to:*

- (i) note the information contained within this report and the discussion document*
- (ii) recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee the proposals within the report for the development of a strategy and plan as outlined*
- (iii) note the proposal that the Party Group Leaders participate in a 6 month process to oversee and contribute to the development of these proposals*

- (iv) *authorise the submission of a specific proposal to SEUPB as part of Phase II of the Belfast Peace Plan, as attached, to identify immediate projects that could be supported by the Council in partnership with other agencies.*

**Decision Tracking**

*Hazel Francey, Good Relations Manager, Suzanne Wylie, Director of Health and Environmental Services, Isaac May, Peace III Programme Manager, David Robinson, Senior Good Relations Officer and Richard McLernon, Community Safety Co-ordinator, will be responsible for tasks arising out of this report.*

**Documents Attached**

*Appendix 3: Proposed timetable for development of actions*

*Appendix 4: Project Proposal for submission to SEUPB for inclusion in the Belfast Peace Plan to support immediate projects.*

**Appendix 3**

*Proposed timetable for the development of the strategy, plan and framework on the proposals to improve cohesion, reduce segregation and contribute to the removal of physical barriers*

<b><u>Area of work</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility</u></b>	<b><u>Timeframe</u></b>
<i>Identify high level opportunities to promote cohesion through the corporate planning process, under each of the corporate plan strategic themes</i>	<i>Chief Officers and Heads of Service</i>	<i>By March 2012</i>
<i>All relevant Council departments should incorporate actions which support less segregation within neighbourhoods located at interfaces within the business planning process</i>	<i>Chief Officers and Heads of Service</i>	<i>By March 2012</i>

<b><u>Area of work</u></b>	<b><u>Responsibility</u></b>	<b><u>Timeframe</u></b>
<b><i>Identify neighbourhoods seeking to reduce barriers and provide support to the communities and also identify additional projects to help regenerate the area</i></b>	<b><i>Internal interface officers group</i></b>	<b><i>Immediate</i></b>
<b><i>Respond to the consultation on the Social Investment Fund to include the need to invest in areas where there is a will to move towards barrier removal</i></b>	<b><i>Policy Officers</i></b>	<b><i>By close of consultation Dec 2011</i></b>
<b><i>Relevant community funding streams should be adjusted to make explicit support for less segregation and greater cohesion so as to support communities to develop a long-term positive vision for their community and the city as a whole</i></b>	<b><i>Chief Officers and Heads of Service, delegated to the funding review</i></b>	<b><i>By March 2012</i></b>
<b><i>A detailed profile should be produced by the SNAP team to identify underlying problems in the 88 defined interface areas</i></b>	<b><i>SNAP team</i></b>	<b><i>By March 2012</i></b>
<b><i>A dedicated internal officer working group on interfaces should continue to act as a key internal point of contact in order to drive forward work around interfaces in the areas of regeneration, grant aid funding and barrier removal issues</i></b>	<b><i>Current interface officers group, reporting to the Safer Cities group</i></b>	<b><i>Immediate</i></b>

<u>Area of work</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Timeframe</u>
<i>The officers working group will ensure that this work will link with that being taken forward by the barrier removal sub-group of the Interface Working Group and the DoJ led statutory agencies group</i>	<i>BCC representatives on the Interface Working Group</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
<i>It will also identify immediate projects that could be supported by the Council, in partnership with the Interface Working Group, with support from Peace III Phase I slippage monies</i>	<i>BCC representatives on the Interface Working Group plus Peace III team</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
<i>The Council should identify a mechanism to influence the inclusion of a long-term goal reducing segregation within major infrastructural, transport, regeneration and other major developments within the City</i>	<i>Elected Members and the internal interface officers group</i>	<i>Immediate</i>
<i>Lobbying for changes in housing and planning policy and controls to promote social cohesion</i>	<i>Elected Members and Chief Officers</i>	<i>Immediate</i>

Appendix 4

Interfaces Programme – PEACE III Proposal

1. Background

*Under Phase I of Peace III, Belfast City Council delivered a number of projects under the theme of Transforming Contested Space. These included:*

- *Developing capacity within individuals and communities operating in and around interface areas*
- *Providing a mediation resource for a number of communities at interface areas*
- *Developing 4 specific action plans in north, south, east and west of the City to identify regeneration projects at interface areas*
- *A Youth Intervention Programme*

*A Notice of Motion brought to the September meeting of Council on 'Removal of Peace Walls', stated the following:*

*'This Council can demonstrate true civic leadership by agreeing to tackle one of the biggest problems which affects all of the citizens of the City, that is, the continued existence of the so called 'Peace Walls'. These walls performed a necessary security purpose in the past in the several interface areas of the City but now serve to increase alienation and to inhibit regeneration and development of those very same areas and the time has now come to seek to move towards their removal.*

*The Council agrees to take the lead in devising a strategy which seeks to move towards the removal of a number of these walls within the current Council term. This strategy should be inclusive and include the direct involvement of all appropriate organisations from the business, public and voluntary and community sectors, with the wishes and needs of those people who live in the interface areas being paramount.'*

*In addition to the work of the Council under Phase I of Peace III, the Council has been working with the city-wide interface working group (IWG) which seeks to develop a coordinated response to interface issues. This group has now developed a process to assist in the transformation and removal of barriers. It identifies a staged process for both community led initiatives as well as statutory led initiatives. Already, some progress has been made, with the addition of the new gate at the interface wall in Alexandra Park and the progress on the Newington Street barrier, both in North Belfast.*

*As part of the work of the IWG, the Department of Justice is conducting an exercise to identify those barriers across Belfast that currently do not pose any significant security issue. This proposal seeks to develop a plan in partnership with the Department of Justice and the Interface Working Group which will focus on these areas, working towards the agreed outcome of removal of these physical barriers over a two-year period.*

2. **Aim of Proposal**

*The proposal aims to reduce inter-community tensions and conflict and to support the integrated regeneration of those communities at the interface, having dealt with the legacies of conflict. This will be achieved through a programme to remove physical barriers and support the regeneration of a number of interface areas of the city.*

3. **Objectives**

1. *To identify potential areas in partnership with the Department of Justice, where a statutory led initiative could be instigated to address the continuing presence of specific physical barriers.*
2. *To carry out a full and comprehensive consultation exercise within the areas identified.*
3. *To devise regeneration plans which are aligned to broader regeneration priorities that would be specific to the barrier issue, through identifying what would replace it/how it might be transformed, and providing the resources to fund this.*
4. *Identify what other resources are required to build confidence in the community following removal of the barrier, such as some community safety or good relations initiatives.*

4. **Activities**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timing (est.)</b>
<b>Development of Project Steering Group</b>	<b>January 2012</b>
<b>Initial consultation</b>	<b>Jan - Feb 2012</b>
<b>Initial scoping of areas</b>	<b>Jan - Feb 2012</b>
<b>Procurement of managing agent</b>	<b>By April 2012</b>
<b>Local Consultation</b>	<b>May - Oct 2012</b>
<b>Development of removal and regeneration plan</b>	<b>Oct – Nov 2012</b>
<b>Permissions and consents</b>	<b>December 2012</b>
<b>Works</b>	<b>Jan - March 2013</b>
<b>Shared Space Programming</b>	<b>April - Sep 2013</b>
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>Project Closure</b>	<b>December 2013</b>

5. **Delivery approach**

*The proposal will develop an interagency approach to work towards the removal of physical interface barriers with the agreement and support of local residents. This will be in line with best practice in conflict resolution and mediation and seek to build upon work done in Phase I of the Belfast PEACE III Plan and support multi-agency working and decision making, aligned to the work of the Interface Working Group. The work will be in line with the recommended phases for development of locally based regeneration strategies outlined in Towards Sustainable Security, published by the Community Relations Council and the ongoing work of the Interface Working Group and the Department for Justice. The project will require an inter agency approach involving current and new partner organisations working alongside the Council for oversight and project delivery. Goods and services will be procured in line with public procurement guidelines. Engagement and consultation will ensure that no activity is undertaken that does not have the support of local residents.*

6. **Timescales**

*January 2012 – December 2013. A detailed programme plan will be developed by the partners at the outset of the project. Members of the proposed steering group for the project will be asked to attend preparatory meetings to develop a detailed time-table of work in anticipation of support from SEUPB.*

7. **Outputs**

*A series of detailed measures and targets will be established for the project. These will include both qualitative and quantitative information which will permit benchmarking over time and with different locations.*

*Basic outputs would include an expectation of a reduction in offences and antisocial behaviour committed by scheme participants; and an overall reduction of antisocial behaviour in the areas where the projects operate.*

8. **Outcomes & Impacts**

*Desired outcomes for this proposal include:*

- *Local residents feel safe and protected following the removal of interface barriers*
- *Increase in community interaction and diminution of suspicion and mistrust*
- *Increased access to shared spaces and high quality services*

*The proposal will leave a lasting impact in that the removal of interface barriers can be considered critical to the future success and prosperity and quality of life of its residents.*

9. **Indicative Costs**

*There are a number of key activities required within this proposal, which would be in line with the process that has been set out through the barrier removal template of the Interface Working Group:*

- *Consultation with communities*
- *Assessment of risk and impact of removing/transforming the barrier*
- *Exploration with communities of the possibilities for what happens with the space following the removal/transformation of the barrier*
- *Visioning process with communities on the possibilities for the regeneration of their area*
- *Design of alternatives to the physical barrier*
- *Communication within communities on these designs*
- *Delivery of the project – works, landscaping, traffic calming etc.*
- *Removal of the barrier*
- *Monitoring of the area following the removal*



*An outline budget with Indicative costs, excluding costs of removal/ landscaping etc has been prepared. The overall projects costs would reflect the number of initial areas and following consultation with project partners and Special EU Programmes Body.*

*Stages 1 - 6: 11 days @ £300 per day = £3,300*

*Stage 7: £24,000*

*Stage 8: Department of Justice responsibility.*

*Stage 9: 3 days per mth for 3 months = £300 per day = £2,700*

*Total indicative cost per area = £30,000. This could be scaled appropriately depending on the number of initial areas to be included with the identification of economies of scale, more cost efficient consultation etc.*

10. **Strategic Fit with PEACE III Plan and additionality**

*The proposal is considered to demonstrate a high level of strategic fit with the objectives of the Peace III programme and may lever complementary resources from participating agencies.*

**Key target groups**

*The project targets deprived interface areas where investment and development opportunities have been negatively affected by historical and underlying sectarian conflict.*

**Promoting reconciliation:**

*The project aims to promote cohesion and agreed solutions in interface areas built on the learning from previous Peace programmes and by applying lessons observed from successful interventions both locally and abroad.*

**Fit with Belfast PEACE III Plan**

*The project displays an excellent fit with the Belfast Peace III plan, particularly the theme of Transforming Contested Space. The proposal contributes strongly to transforming contested space by assisting the development of collective responsibility within communities and working towards physical transformation and regeneration of those areas. The focussed approach advocated will provide synergy with other projects and will result in enhanced mutual benefits. The method to be applied in this project is clearly aligned to a creating a strong, inclusive community base.*

***Projects within the Belfast PEACE III Plan which will be complemented by the proposal include:***

- ***Community Cohesion Networks – the proposal will support a longer term approach to re-imagining whole communities.***
- ***City of Neighbourhoods through health and well-being – by creating further opportunities and support for the engagement and participation of young people within their communities.***
- ***Belfast Sectarianism/Racism Tension Monitoring and Response Project – by providing targeted support and positive engagement for families and communities around interfaces.***
- ***Youth Engagement Programme – to support the package of interventions provided through this programme to engage with young people and their families previously involved in youth led violence at interface areas and reducing their involvement in these activities.***

#### **Added Value**

***The proposal is based around new thinking on policy and practice as to how the Council and other agencies best address problems in interface areas to create shared space. The proposal provides as basis for focused engagement work within local communities to deal with difficult issues, often considered intractable, to support integrated regeneration. This proposal provides a timely opportunity to test the effectiveness and practicalities of new thinking on interfaces. Cooperation anticipated from other partners involved may, of itself, lever resources towards a shared approach which benefits all parties.***

#### **Addressing Need**

***The experience of communities across the city is that whilst significant improvements have been made in tackling antisocial behaviour and violence at interfaces, the continued existence of physical barriers impairs the future prosperity of Belfast and quality of life of its citizens.***

11. **Option and priority analysis**

*A full appraisal and analysis of delivery options and priorities will be conducted in advance of final proposals. This will be in line with best practice in economic appraisal and will consider the options around the scale, quality, techniques, location, timing and funding of the proposed project which may offer either a better fit with the identified need and/or an increase in the quality of the outputs and outcomes, ensuring better value for money.*

12. **Rationale for Partner to deliver**

*The Council is the democratically elected leader charged with improving the city. Its ambitions to effect change in Belfast are clearly outlined in its Corporate Plan. The Peace III programme continues to provide an essential supplement and means of direction where public investment is used to maximum effect. The rationale for the project assumes that EU funds are placed alongside Council and other public sector resources to address sectarianism and racist attitudes, focussing on conflict resolution and mediation at the local community level. In fulfilling the Council's ambition to progress a Community Planning approach to local issues, we will use our influence to bring together statutory and non statutory partners, combined with local community involvement to address issues related to a city emerging from conflict.*

13. **Evidence of capacity to deliver**

*Belfast City Council has an excellent track record in the delivery of projects and proven ability to secure co-operation of partners necessary for the completion of this project. The Council's commitment and ability to deliver have been evidenced through its partnership working and its response to managing crisis situations within the city, for example, the impact of flooding, issues around hate crime and interface violence. The Council has successful partnerships which already involve many of the partners referenced in this proposal, notably through the Good Relations Partnership which has overseen the implementation of Phase 1 of the Belfast PEACE III Plan 2009-2011 and the Community Safety Partnership which has successfully delivered projects and programmes within the Safer Belfast Plan 2009-2011.*

14. ***Cross-cutting themes: - Impact on poverty, Partnership, Sustainable Development and Equality of opportunity***

**Impact on poverty**

***There is a strong correlation between areas with physical interface barriers and areas of multiple deprivation. Removal of interfaces should lead to increased investor confidence in the city generally and in making local areas more attractive places in which to live and work. The proposal complements the Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Strategy and current proposals for neighbourhood renewal. Threat and fear are major deterrents to attracting highly skilled and mobile investment and labour as are any impediments to mobility, free movement and environmental degradation/ urban blight in the city. Labour mobility is critical in reinforcing peace in the city and the wider region as is promoting Belfast as an attractive global city where its resident talent pool is able to move freely and safely, as well as attracting the best international employers to the city and increased numbers of visitors with a corresponding beneficial impact upon local communities through increased investment and visitor spend.***

**Partnership**

***The proposal is aligned principally to the Council's core objective of supporting people and communities. An overriding ambition for the project will be to demonstrate the Council's leadership role in delivering what is an inter agency, community planning based approach which contributes to the resolution of shared problems. Specific Council strategies which will be progressed by the project include Partnership working, Good Relations, Health Development, Regeneration, Community Development and Anti Poverty. This proposed project will be delivered in partnership at a steering level and delivery level; these structures will be brought together at regular points across the life of the project. The project will also link to the Community Safety Partnership at a strategic level and with the tackling antisocial behaviour thematic group and Belfast City Council's Safer City Group. Council is committed to partnership working and the proposal will focus on collaborative interagency working and continuous community consultation and engagement.***

### **Sustainability**

*Sustainability is about balancing social and economic needs, with the need to protect the environment and its resources. It involves meeting the demands of today's population, without compromising the quality of life of future generations. This proposal will be designed, developed and delivered within this context and in accordance with council's Sustainable Development Action Plan. This will include adherence to environmental purchasing policies; energy and carbon management within offices; efforts to ensure waste reduction and recycling and promotion of the sustainability message. With regard to sustainability the Good Relations Partnership has already identified the issue of identifying and mainstreaming good practice wherever possible. This is reflected through the actions which will be partner led but will be developed through inter-sectoral participation and representation. Utilisation of the Aid for Peace Framework should deliver outcomes which are more sustainable as a result of the intervention. Removal of physical interfaces will be a long lasting legacy of the PEACE III intervention.*

### **Equality of opportunity**

*Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the Council, in carrying out all its functions, powers and duties, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; between men and women generally; between persons with a disability and persons without; and between persons with dependants and persons without.*

*The Act also requires the Council, in carrying out its functions, to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.*

*The Council's Equality Scheme, which details how the Council will fulfil its duties, was approved in April 2001. A part of that Equality Scheme was the production of a Good Relations Strategy. The Council's Good Relations Strategy was prepared and adopted in February 2003; it was commended as a model of good practice in the Shared Future document by the Office of the First Minister/Deputy First Minister.*

***As these recommendations are based on Section 75(2), this proposal, as all projects in the Belfast PEACE III Plan will be focused on the three dimensions associated with section 75(2) and, since it aims to promote good relations positively between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group, is likely to have a differential but positive impact in terms of all three dimensions.***

***Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 2006) (DDO), from 1 January 2007, public authorities, when carrying out their functions must have due regard to the need to:***

- ***promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and encourage participation by disabled people in public life.***

***These duties are referred to as the 'disability duties'. Council's Equality Toolkit and Reference Guide provide details on accessibility to services through event management, travel and accessibility, amongst others. This proposal will be designed, developed and delivered in accordance with Council policy on equality."***

*During discussion, the following points were made in relation to the Strategy and Action Plan:*

- *the initiative should apply not only to interfaces but should seek to improve relations across all of the City and create a positive vision for all communities in terms of reducing segregation and increasing cohesion;*
- *participation in the Strategy at corporate level and across all Council Departments and support at Northern Ireland Executive level would be crucial to ensure its success;*
- *more emphasis was required on the potential involvement of the private sector, for example, in housing development;*
- *more work was required to enhance the community safety element of the Strategy;*
- *any changes to interface barriers should be undertaken in consultation with the Police Service of Northern Ireland and other relevant agencies;*

- *it was important to ensure that communities were supported throughout the process and a long-term strategy was required to address issues such as health, housing, educational attainment and unemployment;*
- *the Strategy should draw upon the experience of initiatives being undertaken currently by interface organisations across the City, such as the Suffolk Lenadon Interface Group.*

*In response, the Good Relations Manager confirmed that those comments would be reflected within the report being submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 18th November seeking approval for the development of the strategy and plan. She emphasised that any work to be undertaken regarding the transformation of physical barriers would only be conducted with the agreement of local communities.*

*After further discussion, the Partnership adopted the recommendations contained within the report and agreed that the Good Relations Manager investigate the possibility of holding the next meeting of the Partnership at the offices of the Suffolk Lenadon Interface Group.”*

During discussion, the Director of Health and Environmental Services emphasised that the transformation of physical barriers would only happen as a consequence of full community involvement, with the Council providing an advocacy and leadership role.

The Committee agreed that these comments be included within the document.

### **Exploration of the Development of a Council Diversity Strategy**

The Chief Executive submitted for the Committee’s consideration the undernoted report:

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

**1.1 Members may be aware that the Party Group Leaders have considered this issue recently and requested that it be brought to the attention of the Committee.**

#### **2.0 Key Issues**

**2.1 The Centenaries Working Group has been meeting since the spring of 2011 and to date has made recommendations on:**

- **the main periods to be highlighted in the Decade of Centenaries**
- **a set of principles to be adopted**

- a programme of Council activities for the period 2012-2014
- a policy around civic hospitality to be provided in relation to the Centenary events.

All of the recommendations from the Centenaries Working Group have been agreed by the Council. The Council has also agreed that the same set of principles should apply to any key anniversaries being marked by the Council. A copy of the most recent report to the Historic Centenaries Group setting out the agreements reached so far has been circulated.

- 2.2 The Committee will also be aware that two Equality Impact Assessments are under way at present – on the policy of Flying the Union Flag and on City Hall Memorabilia. It is expected that reports on these two Equality Impact Assessments will be presented early in 2012.
- 2.3 In addition, we have received requests for greater recognition of the use of the Irish language in various parts of the Council, including signage within facilities and use of the language within Council.
- 2.4 The Committee will also be requested in due course to consider a report outlining proposals to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012.
- 2.4 These items represent some, but not all, of the wide range of issues relating to cultural diversity on which the Council will have to make decisions in the near future. Committee will be aware that some of these issues have been discussed at the Parks and Leisure Committee (most recently 10 Nov 11) and it was not possible to build a cross-party consensus on the matter.
- 2.5 At recent workshops as part of the corporate planning process, Members have emphasised that they wish to lift their sights from internal, short-term difficulties of city management to the challenges of being a city in a global context, and actively setting out to address those things that have historically weakened Belfast. Good relations and community cohesion therefore are vital ingredients for the city's future development.



- 2.6 It is clear that there is an emerging imperative to ‘upgrade’ the management of diversity, both internally and across the city. The Council’s stated commitment to inclusion, equality and good relations needs to be demonstrated in a manner that celebrates fully all the identities in the city, including our indigenous cultural traditions. This will require leadership and a commitment to dialogue. Without an overarching agreement there is a risk that issues related to the expression of cultural identity may descend into serious division, distracting Members from their ambitious growth agenda contained within the stimulus package.

Members will be aware that a lack of agreement will undermine both the peace-building and economic transformation processes in Belfast; and the impact of this failure will be most acute in the most deprived parts of the city.

2.7 Proposal

There is a need for a broad, commonly-agreed cultural framework rather than a set of ad hoc responses to diversity. It is recommended that the Council should develop and adopt a diversity policy or ‘charter of principles’ which promotes equality and a commitment to the full inclusion and participation of all communities in the city.

This will apply to a range of current issues:

- memorabilia and displays in the City Hall
- Flying of the Union Flag EQIA
- the Decade of Centenaries programme, events, cultural displays in Council public facilities
- use of the Irish language
- Queen’s Diamond Jubilee celebrations
- and expressions of distinctiveness within local areas and neighbourhoods (i.e. including public art, signage and symbolism).

The policy would also have an internal focus. The opportunity should be taken to update any appropriate HR policies, possibly under the overall heading of “dignity at work”, as a framework for dealing with any potential disputes. This would be timely since the HR Department is already committed to developing a workforce diversity strategy.

A diversity strategy would support the Council in addressing issues, such as those outlined above, that have arisen from the expression of local identity. At the conclusion of the process a full report would be presented to the Committee for decision on the overall policy and the individual elements.

- 2.8 It is proposed that the Party Group Leaders meet with the Centenaries Working Group over an intensive and defined period of time, say 6-8 sessions from December till February, possibly with independent external facilitators, to frame a debate and assist in exploring the possibility of developing a Council strategy on managing diversity.

It is suggested that, where the Party Group Leader is also a Member of the Centenaries Working Group, an additional Member from that Party should also participate.

3.0 Resource Implications

Human

Good Relations and Human Resources staff would be involved in the development of any future strategy.

Financial

None at this stage.

Asset

None.

4.0 Equality Implications

Any strategy would have to ensure compliance with existing legal requirements and Equality Commission guidelines but should aim to promote better community relations within both the Council and the city.

5.0 Recommendations

The Committee is requested to agree that the Party Group leaders meet with the Centenaries Working Group over a defined period of time, as set out above, to explore the possibility of developing a Council strategy on diversity and agree that the Chief Executive's office liaise with Members to agree a timetable of meetings to be tabled at the first joint meeting of the Historic Centenaries Group."

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed also that:

- (i) the following be included within the range of current issues:
  - Use of the Ulster-Scots language;
  - Use of minority languages;
  - How the Council deals with homecoming parades; and
  - Memorabilia and displays in **and around** the City Hall
- (ii) the Equality Impact Assessments on the policy of flying the Union flag and City Hall memorabilia be circulated to the Political Parties following receipt of the updated legal from Senior Counsel.

### **Cross-Cutting Issues**

#### **Police and Community Safety Partnership**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

1.1 The Council is required, under Part 3 of the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, to establish the Belfast PCSP and the four DPCSPs. The Council must, under this legislation, make the appointments, so far as is practicable, to reflect the strength of the Parties on the Council.

1.2 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee was made aware of the structures for these new partnerships in a number of previous reports.

##### **2 Key Issues**

###### **Appointment of Political Members to the Principal PCSP**

2.1 Members are reminded that, in 2003 and again in 2007, the Council decided to appoint a 19 Member District Policing Partnership which comprised 10 elected Members appointed by the Council and 9 Independent Members appointed by the Northern Ireland Policing Board. It should be noted that in the new partnership there will also be representatives from statutory bodies and the voluntary and community sector, however there is no formal appointments process for these members. This has the potential to make the citywide partnership very large.

- 2.2 The Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 provides that the Council may decide to appoint either 8, 9 or 10 political Members to the PCSP. The number of Independent Members is to be set at one less than the number of Political Members. The decision which the Committee must make on the number of Political Members to appoint needs to factor in both the size of the partnership, but also its political make up.
- 2.3 Appendix 1, Part A, sets out the allocation of places to the political parties on the Council based upon a PCSP (the citywide partnership) comprising 19 Members, 17 Members and 15 Members (numbers include both Political and Independent Members). This is based on the formula which the Council uses for sharing out of Committee posts and other posts where it is entitled to nominate representatives to outside bodies. This formula works on party strengths and is aimed at providing proportionate representation reflecting party strengths in the Council.
- 2.4 However, this is further complicated as the legislation also provides that the Political Members of the PCSP shall include the persons who hold the Office of Chairman of each of the DPCSPs. This means that 4 of the Political appointments to the PCSP each year will be reserved for the Chairmen of the 4 DPCSPs.

In addition, for any particular DPCSP there is a requirement that, *so far as is practicable*, the Chairmanship will be held in turn by the 4 largest Parties on the Council during the 4-year term (although there is a slight difficulty with this as discussed below in 2.8). Accordingly, when considering the political nominations to the PCSP, it needs to be remembered that some Parties will already have obtained places through the Chairmen of the DPCSPs.

- 2.5 The political make up of PCSP, depending on whether it has 19, 17 or 15 members is summarised in the table below (see Appendix 1 Part A for more detail):

	19 Members	17 Members	15 Members
SF	3	3	3
DUP	3	3	2
SDLP	2	1	1
ALL	1	1	1
UUP	1	1	1
PUP	0	0	0
IND	0	0	0
TOTAL	10	9	8

2.6 The Committee is then firstly required to determine whether it wishes to appoint a PCSP comprising of 19 Members, 17 Members or 15 Members. In making this decision Members should be mindful of the fact that additional multi-sectoral members could add approximately a further 10 people to the partnership.

2.7 *Chairman of the PCSP*

Under the legislation, the position of Chairman of the PCSP is to be rotated, so far as is practicable, amongst the 4 largest Parties represented on the Council. Accordingly, in the 4-year term, the position of Chairman would, in accordance with the spirit of the legislation, be held in turn by the Sinn Féin, Democratic Unionist, Social, Democratic and Labour and Alliance Parties.

Allocation of places and the appointment of the Chairmen on the DPCSP's

2.8 The 4 DPCSPs will have 6 Political Members each (as determined by the legislation), giving a total of 24 Political Members. The legislation requires that, so far as is practicable, the political membership of all 4 DPCSPs taken together reflects the balance of the Parties immediately after the last local election.

2.9 The results when applying the standard formula used by the Council in respect of appointments to the DPCSPs is summarised below:

<u>Party</u>	<u>Total</u>
SF	8
DUP	7
SDLP	4
ALL	3
UUP	1
PUP	1
IND	0
Total	24

**Chairs of the DPCSPs**

- 2.10 Again the legislation states that the chairmanship of each of the 4 DCSPs should, *so far as is practicable*, be held in turn by each of the 4 largest parties on the Council. However, when applying the normal formula used by the Council this would not be possible with the current party strengths on Belfast City Council as the 4<sup>th</sup> largest political party on the Council, the Alliance Party, would only be entitled to 3 places across the four DPCSP's. Accordingly, if this model is applied, there would always be one DPCSP that would not have an Alliance Party representative.
- 2.11 Given that the structures are governed by a new piece of legislation, the Council has sought legal advice on the approach that it would be advised to take in these circumstances. This advice, which was provided by Junior Counsel, and a copy has been circulated. Although the advice does not rule out the possibility of the Council deciding not to apply its normal formula rigidly (i.e. it would be within the powers of the Council to do so), it concludes that on balance the Council would be best to continue to apply the process which the Council has habitually used, i.e. appointments to the DPCSPs should be shared out on the basis of the model used by the Council without adjustment.
- 2.12 This recommendation is also made based on the sequencing of the Council's obligations contained within the legislation. It is when exercising the power to appoint Political Members to the DPCSPs that the Council is required to ensure that membership of the DPCSPs is proportionate to party strengths. The obligation to rotate the DPCSP Chairs arises not when appointing Political Members but when actually appointing the Chairs each year.
- 2.13 The outcome of this approach would also have an impact on the composition of the PCSP as the Chair of each DPCSP is entitled to membership of the PCSP. Furthermore, the vacant Chairmanship would have to be allocated to the largest Party grouping which would result in Sinn Féin holding two Chairmanships of the DPCSPs during the affected year (i.e. in one of the four years of the membership term).
- 2.14 **The Committee is required to determine whether it wishes to appoint Political Members to the 4 DPCSPs based on the legal opinion as outline in Appendix 2, a copy of which has been circulated.**

Once the decisions are made by Committee, a meeting of the relevant Party Leaders will be necessary to allocate places using a d'Hondt based table of choices.

**3 Resource Implications**

**3.1 None**

**4 Recommendations**

**4.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- 1. Determine whether it wishes to appoint a PCSP comprising of 19 Members, 17 Members or 15 Members.**
- 2. Determine whether it wishes to appoint the Political Members to the four DPCSPs based on the legal advice.”**

The Director of Health and Environmental Services advised the Members that it was likely that the recruitment process for Independent Members would be delayed until after Christmas. With regard to the payment of allowances, she indicated that, although there was no specific legislative remit to pay Members of the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership any allowances, the new Joint Committee of the Department of Justice and the Policing Board was re-examining the ability to pay expenses which would include a sum for attendance at meetings up to a maximum number of meetings per year.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to:

- (i) appoint a Policing and Community Safety Partnership consisting of nineteen Members; and
- (ii) appoint the Political Members to the four District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships based on the legal advice which had been provided by Junior Counsel.

**Community Planning (BIG Lottery Project) and the Draft Belfast Framework for Addressing Life Inequalities**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“Relevant Background Information**

**This report provides an update on the BIG Lottery Project Community Planning and presents two key documents for consideration and comment; namely the:**

- **Draft Belfast Community Planning Model; and,**
- **Draft Framework for Addressing Life Inequalities.**

**Members will recall that Belfast City Council along with the 5 Area Partnership Boards and Community Places (The Belfast Community Planning Consortium) was successfully awarded a contract by the BIG Lottery Fund to deliver one of three community planning pilots in Northern Ireland. The contract is to be completed by end of January 2012.**

The main purpose for the BIG lottery funding was to look at how the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) could be better supported to participate in the emerging community planning process in Northern Ireland, with the overall aim of providing a model and a toolkit of good practice in community planning that will help to ensure the genuine engagement of the VCS in the new formal processes. This is in the context of building on the strengths of the sector and building capacity across all sectors.

The Belfast pilot focuses on the single theme of “health” as a manageable way of testing processes and relationships whilst also delivering improvements for local people. One of the project’s key aims was to support the development of a health and wellbeing plan for the City and specifically to test how the VCS could participate most effectively in that process. Based on this learning, it was also intended that a replicable model of community planning could be developed to guide community planning in Belfast.

The two draft documents referred to above represent important milestones for the community planning project; however they are key strategic documents for the city and Council. The Member Reference Group, which was reconstituted after the local council elections, has considered these documents which are now being presented to Committee for consideration.

### Key Issues

#### 1. BIG Lottery Community Planning Pilot – Project Update

The Pilot is overseen by a Steering Group (with membership from Council, BAPs, BHDU, Belfast Trust and Public Health Agency) and is supported by a Project Coordinator. The key elements of the project are:

- Building a shared understanding of community planning in Belfast
- Engaging and involving the VCS in Belfast in community planning
- Building the capacity of all partners to participate effectively in community planning
- Supporting improved planning at a city wide and local level and enhancing collaborative working
- Connecting to the local political process
- Developing a model of community planning
- Review and evaluation



A summary of the Project's key activities / successes to date is provided below:

*Health & Wellbeing Plan – Action Learning*

- i. The Community Planning Pilot used the development of a health and wellbeing plan for the city as an action learning tool, combining learning on engagement, planning and collaborative working with concrete outcomes from a real time planning scenario.
- ii. The new Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP) is responsible for developing and implementing the “Framework for Action” – a 4 year strategy / plan to address life inequalities in Belfast. The Pilot's role focused on developing and supporting the community engagement process to inform the framework and is now largely complete.
- iii. The Pilot hosted a stakeholder workshop on 28 June to ensure relevant partners, including voluntary and community representatives, were involved at the early stages of the Framework design. Attended by 112 cross-sector representatives, the workshop helped refine a set of priorities for the BSP to in developing Framework for Action. Inputs have since been reflected in the draft framework. An evaluation is currently underway to assess the stakeholder engagement which will help build on the community engagement approaches developed through the Pilot.

*Emerging Model of Community Planning*

- iv. Based on the learning to date, a draft, emerging Community Planning model for Belfast is being developed. The model has been considered in detail by the cross party reference group and is currently being shared and consulted upon as part of the Pilot's wider engagement programme. Specific events, workshops and online participatory processes are underway to ensure the model is fit for purpose and reflective of all stakeholder needs.

*Communication, Engaging and Involving*

- v. The Pilot continues to implement its communications and engagement plan including: a range of briefings with partners / stakeholders; two planning workshops the VCS and three seminars to showcase examples of Belfast community planning in action and introduce the model; a seminar to share learning from ILEX (Derry City Council) and a planned information seminar on local statutory planning processes.

- vi. Two half-day workshops were held on 8th and 9th November to explore the emerging model and specifically the role of the community and voluntary sector within it; this included contributions from VCS representatives from Scotland. A similar workshop for statutory organisations will be held on 29th November. These workshops are being used to refine the draft model and to encourage collective ownership.
- vii. A final Conference will be held on January 19th in the City Hall when the refined Belfast Community Planning model and learning from the Pilot will be presented.
- viii. The Council's website now also has a dedicated page on Community Planning and the Pilot. For further information please see [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/communityplanning](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/communityplanning)

#### *Capacity Building*

- ix. In addition to the events outlined above, the Pilot also developed an "Introduction to Community Planning" course - a 3 day accredited course currently being piloted with the University of Ulster with over 50 people participating from across the various sectors. The course, which encouragingly was oversubscribed, will be evaluated as part of the Pilot's learning, with an assessment made as to its efficacy and sustainability.

#### *Review and Evaluation*

- x. An evaluation framework has been developed to enable the Pilot to assess the impact of the project. A final project evaluation and overall Project Report for BIG Lottery must be completed by end of January).

#### *Connecting to the Political Process*

- xi. SP&R Committee was keen to ensure that the role of Elected Members as civic leaders and local advocates was properly reflected within the pilot and any emerging model. Early in the process, the SP&R Committee established a cross Party Reference Group with the dual role of overseeing the Pilot and leading the development of a community planning framework for Council. Two joint workshops have been held with the Pilot Steering Group providing valuable input to the project and emerging Belfast model.

- xii. The Reference Group will continue to champion and develop community planning within Council and across the city and, working and reporting through the SP&R Committee, will look at options for taking forward community planning in Belfast after the Pilot finishes.
- xiii. All Elected Members were invited to the BIG Lottery events and capacity building course. Party Briefings and workshops with the new SP&R Committee have been organised around the key themes in the Council's Corporate Plan which also provides a strategic context for community planning. Members will have an opportunity to consider the potential of community planning and its implications for the Council further at the Council's corporate planning "People, Communities and Neighbourhoods" workshop on 29th November. Party briefings are also offered so that Members can find out more about the pilot, the emerging model and the framework for addressing health inequalities.

## **2. Belfast Strategic Partnership and Framework for Action**

As mentioned above, the BIG Lottery Pilot has been working with Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP) and Belfast Health Development Unit to develop the BSP's Framework for Action to Address Life Inequalities. The Framework aims to:

- Provide the strategic context (and an overarching structure)
- Highlight high level priorities
- Encourage effective collaborative working
- Align and integrate individual plans and actions
- Support key players
- Outline BSP commitment to addressing life inequalities

The Framework focuses on those actions where the BSP can bring added value through collaborative approaches; it seeks to be action orientated, building on strengths and removing barriers to collaboration. A copy of the Framework has been circulated. The key themes within the draft framework are:

- Addressing mental health & emotional wellbeing
- Addressing learning and education issues
- Addressing alcohol and drug related issues
- Focussing on early years and early interventions
- Regenerating living spaces and healthy places

The Framework also identifies the following cross cutting themes:

- Addressing poverty related issues
- Building community capacity
- Organisational development
- Active Belfast
- Health and Health Equity in all Local Policies

The BSP is responsible for taking forward the draft Framework. A representative from each of the political parties sits on the BSP which is chaired by the Chief Executive of Belfast City Council. Working groups are being established to develop the detail of each theme. It is anticipated that a revised Framework supported by annual action plans will be published in March 2012. Comments are currently being sought from key stakeholders including Members of the Partnership.

#### Equality and Good Relations Implications

Will be considered as part of the finalisation of both the model and the framework.

#### Resource Implications

#### Financial and Human Resources

None at present. Support costs for managing and coordinating the project will be met from within the BIG funding.

#### Legislative Developments

We still await clarification from Government on the likely timeframe for the formal introduction of a duty of Community Planning and the power of wellbeing and what this may mean for Council in terms of resource implications. The Council will continue to seek to influence the development of formal community planning guidance. The pilot project and the development of the Belfast community planning model will assist with this process.

#### Decisions required

The Committee is asked to note the progress to date and specifically the emerging model and Draft framework.

Members are also asked to agree attendance through the party leaders for the final conference on 19th January 2012. Further details to follow.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Council Wide Regulation and Enforcement Policy**

The Director of Health and Environmental Services submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

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

**1.1 The Council is responsible for regulating and enforcing a wide range of legislation (including local bye-laws) across its departments and services. These regulatory functions cover:**

- Antisocial behaviour**
- Building control**
- Cleansing and waste management**
- Environmental health**
- Licensing (including entertainment and street trading)**
- Use of parks, playing fields and open spaces**

**1.2 In 2003, the Council committed to the principles of good enforcement through its adoption of the Government's 'Enforcement Concordat'. The concordat established the importance of transparency as a key principle recognising that businesses and individuals should know what to expect in their dealings with the Council as a regulatory body. Agreeing, publishing and complying with an enforcement policy is considered to be an effective way to ensure such transparency.**

**1.3 Over the years a number of Council services have developed individual enforcement policies incorporating the principles of good enforcement and setting out their approach to regulation. Appendix 2 lists those policies that have been adopted by the Council to date. These policies vary in content and style and do not cover all the regulatory areas for which the Council has responsibility.**

**1.4 It is now considered that replacing all the existing enforcement policies with a single Council wide regulation and enforcement policy, would help ensure a consistent approach and would be more easily communicated and understood externally.**

#### **2.0 Key Issues**

**2.1 A corporate Regulatory and Enforcement Policy will help ensure officers take a consistent approach to enforcement and will make it easier for businesses and individuals to understand what they can expect in their dealings with the Council.**

- 2.2 The attached draft policy (Appendix 1) sets out an approach to planning and delivering regulatory services and enforcing the legislation for which the Council has responsibility. It reinforces the Council's adoption of the principles of the Enforcement Concordat and its support of the Government's Better Regulation agenda. The policy makes it clear the Council recognises that its regulatory activities should be proportionate, accountable, consistent, transparent and targeted to situations that need action.
- 2.3 The policy aims to ensure the Council will adopt a positive and proactive approach towards ensuring compliance by:
- helping and encouraging those it regulates to fully understand and fulfil their legal responsibilities more easily; and
  - responding proportionately to non-compliance to avoid imposing unnecessary costs, while taking firm action against those who flout the law.
- 2.4 Members are specifically referred to two particular aspects of the draft Policy:
- The first issue is in relation to situations when an individual fails to carry out works required by a statutory notice served by the Council and the Council carries out the works in default. To date there have only been limited attempts at recouping the costs incurred by the Council in carrying out works in default. The policy now contains a commitment to seek to recover such costs in most cases. Depending on the legislation involved, the costs can be pursued in a number of ways, for example by issuing debt proceedings or registering a charge against a property. This commitment is likely to require additional input from Legal Services.
  - Secondly, the Policy as drafted states that the Council will not normally prosecute minors. Whilst that has always been the Council's practice, it has never been formally adopted.
- 2.5 Section 4 of the policy recognises that additional supporting enforcement guidelines will continue to be required for some functions to assist officers in making decisions and to ensure compliance with statutory codes of practice and official guidelines. Such guidelines may in some cases require Council approval and be subject to external scrutiny.

3.0 **Resource Implications**

3.1 N/A

4.0 **Equality and Good Relations Implications**

4.1 No equality or good relations implications identified

5.0 **Recommendations**

5.1 Members are asked to:

- To adopt the draft Regulation and Enforcement Policy at Appendix 1 (including the clause relating to minors).
- To rescind all pre-existing enforcement policies (listed in Appendix 2).

**Section one**

**Introduction**

The purpose of this policy is to secure an efficient and effective approach to all regulatory and enforcement activities carried out by Belfast City Council.

The policy is consistent with the principles set out in the Government's Better Regulation agenda and with the principles of the Enforcement Concordat and it is also intended to improve compliance with legislation while minimising the burden on businesses, individuals, organisations and the Council.

In preparing this policy, the Council has considered the Regulator's Compliance Code and the "Statement of Intent" between the Local Better Regulation Office, the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment and district councils.

The Council supports the Government's Better Regulation agenda and believes that effective and well targeted enforcement is essential in ensuring public protection, promoting fairness and encouraging economic progress. It also helps the Council to achieve its vision of taking a leading role in improving quality of life now and for future generations for the people of Belfast by making the city a better place to live in, work in, invest in and visit.

Through this policy the Council will adopt a positive and proactive approach towards ensuring compliance by:

- helping and encouraging those it regulates to fully understand and fulfil their legal responsibilities more easily, and
- responding proportionately to non-compliance to avoid imposing unnecessary costs while taking firm action against those who flout the law.

Through the implementation of this policy the Council wants to achieve the following objectives:

- Creating a safe and healthy city
- Protecting the public
- Fulfilling our statutory duties
- Ensuring the safety of Belfast City Council staff
- Ensuring better care for Belfast's environment
- Encouraging economic growth through fair and effective regulation

## Section two

### Scope of the policy

Belfast City Council has statutory responsibility for enforcement of a wide and diverse range of legislation (including local bye-laws). These regulate areas such as:

- Antisocial behaviour
- Building control
- Cleansing and waste management
- Environmental health
- Licensing (including entertainment and street trading)
- Parks, playing fields and open spaces

This policy also anticipates that there will be legislation enacted in the future for which the Council shall become the enforcement authority.

This policy is written as a guide for officers, businesses and the general public, outlining the general principles as to how the Council will carry out our enforcement duties.

It applies to all the Council's dealings, whether formal or informal, with businesses or members of the public and may be supported by specific enforcement guidelines, procedures and documentation to help officers make enforcement decisions.



When applying this policy the Council recognises its duty to act in accordance with its statutory responsibilities including:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000,
- The Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996
- The Police and Criminal Evidence (NI) Order 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1998 and
- All associated Codes of Practice.

In certain circumstances, the Council may derogate from such statutory responsibilities to the extent that this is permitted by law and is proportionate. A breach of the statutory responsibilities referred to above will not necessarily result in a decision not to take enforcement action or prosecute.

Belfast City Council is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. Therefore any decision regarding enforcement will be impartial and shall not be influenced by the religious beliefs, political opinion, racial group, age, gender, marital status or sexual orientation of any alleged offender, complainant or witness.

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through the Council's existing performance management processes.

### Section three

#### Principles of enforcement

The Council believes in effective but fair regulation and has adopted the principles of the Enforcement Concordat. The Council also supports the Government's Better Regulation agenda and recognises that its regulatory activities should be proportionate, accountable, consistent, transparent and targeted to situations that need action.

#### (i) Standards

This Policy sets out the clear standards of service that the public and businesses can expect to receive from the Council. Where appropriate the Council may publish other information relating to the implementation of this policy.

(ii) **Consistent**

The Council will aim to be consistent in our response to all incidents and complaints, in the advice officers give and in using its enforcement powers, including when deciding whether to prosecute. Where appropriate, it will liaise with other enforcement bodies and organisations, including the Local Authority Better Regulation Office, to ensure that its activities are consistent with other enforcers regionally and nationally.

However, the Council recognises that consistency is not a simple matter of uniformity and officers must be able to exercise professional judgement in individual cases.

Whilst the Council try to achieve consistency internally and with other enforcing authorities, it alone will determine whether a prosecution or other enforcement action is appropriate having considered the circumstances of the case and any prevailing legal requirements.

(iii) **Proportionate**

In relation to enforcement actions, proportionate means that where a person or business has failed to comply with a statutory requirement, the Council will take into account the risk posed by the failure and the cost which would be incurred in securing compliance with the law.

Where possible, the Council will minimise the costs of compliance by ensuring that any action it requires is proportionate to the risk detected.

It will take into account the circumstances of each case including:

- risk to the public or the environment,
- seriousness and consequences of the breach,
- attitude and actions of the offenders, and
- history of any previous incidents or breaches of the law.

(iv) **Transparent and open**

The Council will be transparent and open in all its activities.

Transparency means helping people to understand what the Council expect of them and what they should expect from us. It also means explaining the reasons why the Council intend to, or have taken, enforcement action.

The Council will provide clear information and guidance on general compliance issues, individual compliance failures or any difficulties an individual may experience when trying to comply with the law. However the onus remains on individuals, businesses and organisations to ensure that they comply with their legal obligations.

(v) **Targeted**

The Council shall ensure that regulatory efforts are directed primarily towards those whose activities pose or potentially pose the most serious risks to public safety, public health or the environment. No inspection will take place without a reason and by prioritising effort and resource the Council can make sure it inspects the greater risk areas more frequently.

When the Council takes enforcement action it may take account of any national, regional or local priorities that exist at that time.

(vi) **Accountable**

As a Regulator, the Council will be accountable to the public for its actions. If someone is dissatisfied with the level of service provided, the Council welcomes comments on how that can be improved.

(vii) **Helpfulness**

Prevention is better than cure and businesses and individuals are encouraged to contact the Council if they need any help. Advice and support will be given to help people understand and comply with their legal obligations. The Council will also promote and encourage good practice.

Officers will be helpful and courteous and will provide a contact point and telephone number for any further dealings.

The Council may raise awareness of statutory requirements and promote compliance through a range of methods including the provision of compliance tools, direct contact with staff, education programmes, publicity campaigns and online guidance through our website.

#### Section four

##### Arrangements for enforcement

The Council shall make adequate arrangements to provide effective enforcement services by ensuring that:

- sufficient numbers of enforcement officers are employed who are adequately qualified, trained, experienced and competent to carry out their duties.
- all enforcement actions are taken by officers who have been specifically authorised in accordance with the relevant legislation and the Council's Scheme of Delegated Authority
- all investigations are carried out in compliance with the Police and Criminal Evidence (NI) Order 1989, and relevant codes of practice.

Where necessary, specific enforcement guidelines, procedures and documentation has been and will continue to be developed to support officers making enforcement decisions and to ensure compliance with all relevant statutory codes of practice and official guidelines. Such documentation has and shall be developed in line with the principles of enforcement set out in section 3 of this policy.

The Council will, where appropriate, work with other public bodies, individuals and organisations to deliver effective enforcement in line with this policy.

Where the Council and another law enforcement body both have the power to investigate and/or prosecute, the Council will liaise with that other body to make sure that any action taken is co-ordinated so as to ensure that the most effective result is obtained.

#### Section five

##### Types of enforcement actions

Having regard to the Regulators Compliance Code where offences are observed, the actions and sanctions taken by officers should aim to:

- secure compliance;
- change the behaviour of the offender;
- be responsive and consider what is appropriate for the particular offender and issue;
- be proportionate;
- restore any harm caused
- deter further non compliance.

Where an offence has occurred the Council expects that providing advice or guidance will be all that is required in the majority of cases. However, where such methods have been, or are likely to be, unsuccessful or where the breach is of a serious nature then formal enforcement action will be taken.

In addition, formal enforcement action may be taken where offences are not serious in isolation but are likely to have a cumulative effect.

There are a wide range of actions available to Belfast City Council in dealing with offences. The table below describes the main types of actions available.

In determining the most appropriate action to take, officers will consider the circumstances of the incident and this policy.

<u>Action available</u>	<u>Explanation</u>	<u>Circumstances</u>
Informal advice	Verbal or written advice identifying non-compliance and remedial measures. No follow up action.	Where the offence is minor and the risk from non-compliance is low
Informal warnings	Verbal or written warning requiring remedial measures within a defined period of time. Will be followed up to ensure compliance.	Where non-compliance is not posing a serious risk and it is expected, from what is known of the offender, that informal action will achieve compliance.
Enforcement Letters	Warning that a recurrence or continuation of an infringement will result in legal action or service of a statutory Notice.	Where non-compliance is not posing a serious risk and it is expected that the offender will achieve compliance, however, the offence itself is significant, recurring or longstanding.

<u>Action available</u>	<u>Explanation</u>	<u>Circumstances</u>
<b>Statutory notices</b>	Where available under specific legislation, usually requires persons to take action or prohibits certain activities. Serving a notice does not preclude prosecution. Failure to comply is often an offence and prosecution will normally follow. Some notices require emergency action.	Offences are significant or consequences of continued non compliance could be serious.
<b>Fixed penalty notices</b>	Some legislation allows the Council to issue fixed penalty notices where the offender is offered the opportunity to pay the fine and avoid prosecution.	May only be offered where expressly allowed by statute. Should only be used in cases in which there is no previous history and in which the offence did not give rise to serious consequences.
<b>Simple caution</b>	A special form of warning where the offender admits the offence but prosecution is not considered appropriate. The caution must be accepted by the offender and may be brought to the courts attention if convicted of a subsequent offence.	Must be applied in accordance with Home Office Guidance and may only be used where a prosecution could be properly brought and where the offender admits the offence. Should not be used for offences of a serious nature.
<b>Revocation, suspension or variation of permits, approvals and licenses.</b>	Revoking or suspending a licence, approval, or permit is a serious decision that will normally only be taken by councillors, as opposed to officers, in line with the Council's scheme of delegation.	A licence, permit or approval may be revoked or suspended if any condition attached to the licence be breached or where an activity presents a serious risk.

<u>Action available</u>	<u>Explanation</u>	<u>Circumstances</u>
Works in default	Some legislation allows the Council to carry out works in default and to recover the costs.	Usually where urgent action is required to protect public health, public safety or the environment. The Council will normally seek to recover such costs where appropriate.
Injunctive proceedings	May be sought to require a party to either do a specific act or to refrain from doing a specific act or acts.	This will be considered in instances where the use of other enforcement powers would not be a sufficient remedy, for example where a person repeatedly fails to comply with the law or where there is an imminent risk to public health or public safety.
Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO)	The Council can apply to the Magistrates Court for an Antisocial Behaviour Order (ASBO) which will prohibit a person from acting in an anti-social manner or from carrying out an act which contributes to anti-social behaviour.	Where there has been persistent, relatively low level offending or more serious matters that cause harassment, alarm or distress to others. An order is necessary to protect people from that type of behaviour in the future.  An ASBO may be sought upon conviction but may also be sought where a person has not been convicted, or even charged, with an offence, provided there is sufficient evidence that an ASBO is necessary.

### Appeals

If a person wants to appeal against any enforcement action taken it is recommended that legal advice should be sought. However, the following information will be made available by the Council:

- (i) Officers will advise persons against whom any enforcement action has been taken of their right to make representation to the officer's manager.
- (ii) If the Council serve a notice and the legislation used has a statutory appeal provision, details of that right of appeal and how it should be lodged will be served upon the recipient at the same time as the notice.

### Section six

#### Prosecution

The Council recognises that prosecution is a serious matter and should only be taken after full consideration of the evidence, implications and consequences. It is however an important part of any enforcement system and acts as a punishment, a deterrent to others and as a means of avoiding a recurrence.

While the Council will take a graduated approach to enforcement, when circumstances warrant it, prosecution without prior warning or recourse to alternative sanctions will be pursued.

The majority of prosecutions undertaken by the Council are issued in the Magistrates Court. However, some statutory provisions allow the Council to issue proceedings in the Crown Court.

Consideration shall be given to issuing Crown Court proceedings where the gravity of the offence would warrant such a course of action. This includes incidents where:

- serious injury has been sustained or there are other serious consequences of the offence,
- there has been a blatant disregard for the law,
- there is a history of previous convictions, or
- the powers of the Magistrates Court to deal with the offence are inadequate.



All decisions to prosecute will take account of The Public Prosecution Service Code for Prosecutors. Therefore the Council shall consider the following before commencing a prosecution:

- firstly, whether it is satisfied there is sufficient admissible and relevant evidence that an offence has been committed and that there is a reasonable prospect of conviction.
- secondly, if there is sufficient evidence, then whether it is in the public interest to prosecute. This usually depends on the seriousness of the offence and the circumstances of the offender and whether, through the conviction of the offender, others may be deterred from similar failures to comply with the law.

When there is sufficient evidence the Council will normally prosecute unless the public interest factors against prosecution clearly outweigh those in favour of prosecution.

Without prejudice to the generality of the above, the Council will normally prosecute in any of the following circumstances:

- the breaches have serious consequences for public safety or the environment;
- failure to comply with a statutory notice or respond to a request to take remedial action;
- failure to pay a fine after receiving a fixed penalty notice;
- excessive or persistent breaches of legislation;
- obstruction of Council staff in carrying out their statutory duties.

A full copy of the Prosecutors Code of Conduct is available from Public Prosecution Service. Their address is Belfast Chambers, 93 Chichester Street, Belfast, BT1 3JR. The Code is also available on the Public Prosecution Service website (<http://www.ppsni.gov.uk>) or from the Council on request.

### Minors

A person under the age of 18 is deemed a minor by the courts and is normally prosecuted in the Youth Court. The Council does not usually prosecute minors and will instead use one of the other enforcement actions detailed in this policy.

However when considering how to deal with an offence, the Council will take into account all relevant factors, including the consequences of the offence. Therefore there may be circumstances in which the Council determines that it is in the public interest to prosecute a minor. Such a decision will only be taken by the Legal Services Manager, in consultation with the relevant Director.

### Section seven

#### General provisions

This policy, together with relevant enforcement guidelines, will be made freely available to all members of the public on request and will be posted on the Council's website – [www.belfastcity.gov.uk/XXXXXX](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/XXXXXX)

This policy was adopted by Belfast City Council on XXXXXXX. It will be reviewed every two years or as necessary to ensure that it satisfies legal requirements and our customers' expectations of the service.

The Council welcomes comments on this policy and on how it can improve the services it provides.

Comments can be made via the following:

By telephone:

By email:

Or, write to:

#### Complaints

If a person is unhappy with the level of service they have received and wishes to make a formal complaint, the Council has a formal complaints procedure.

Further information on how to make a complaint is available on the Council website ([www.belfastcity.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/complaints)) or by telephoning (028) 9032 0202 and asking to be put through to the relevant Department or Service; or by letter to Corporate Complaints, Belfast City Council, Freepost, BT1 5BR.

Appendix 2

List of Current Enforcement Policies approved by Council

1. Enforcement Policy Statement for Health and Safety (August 1998)
2. Food Safety Enforcement Policy (February 2002)
3. Food Standards Enforcement Policy (February 2002)
4. Waste Management (Assessment and Enforcement) Section-Enforcement Policy Statement, (May 2002)
5. Enforcement Policy for the Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 (September 2007)
6. Enforcement Policy for Local Authority Air Pollution Control under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations (October 2008)
7. Enforcement Policy for Building Control Service (February 2009)

The Committee adopted the recommendations contained in the report.

Consultation Response to Libraries NI – Opening House Review

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of the Report**

To bring to the attention of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee a draft response to Libraries NI consultation document and EQIA on the Review of Opening Hours. The closing date for consultation responses is Friday 2nd December 2011. A copy of the consultation document and the EQIA Executive Summary has been circulated.

**2.0 Relevant Background Information**

Libraries NI was created in 2009 to take responsibility for the public libraries service across Northern Ireland. One of the first tasks that the new authority carried out was a strategic review of its library provision across the Province.

The first phase in March 2010 included a review of the Greater Belfast area. The Council’s response to the consultation was approved by the Committee at its meeting on Friday 19th March 2010 and was subsequently submitted to Libraries NI. The points highlighted in this response will be included in the draft response to be considered.

The response highlighted that the Council would be keen to explore the co-location of library services within Belfast City Council owned buildings. Particularly where Belfast City Council buildings are located in the proximity of libraries facing potential closure. The response also stressed the need for an assessment of the population needs of the areas where service withdrawal was proposed.

#### Future of Belfast's Libraries

At its meeting on 27th May 2010, the Libraries NI Board scrutinised the findings of the review and the public consultation process. The review encompassed 32 libraries in total, 19 of which are located in the Belfast City Council area. The board determined that of the 19 libraries in Belfast City:

- **Finaghy, Grove, Holywood Arches and Whiterock meet the key criteria for future use and are well placed to provide 21st century library services.**
- **Plans should be taken forward, subject to the availability of funding, for capital investment in Ardoyne, Chichester, Falls Road, Lisburn Road, Ormeau and Shankill Libraries.**
- **Ballyhackamore and Woodstock Libraries originally proposed for closure should remain open, in relation to Woodstock Library the situation should be reviewed in 2 years.**
- **Suffolk Library, originally proposed for amalgamation with Colin Glen Library, should remain open, pending investigation of further developments in the area**
- **The remaining libraries should close and alternative provision be made, particularly for those users who are unable to access an alternative static library. The libraries which will close are Andersonstown, Ballymacarrett, Ligoniel, Oldpark, Sandy Row and Whitewell.**

The Board also decided that the following libraries within the Greater Belfast Area should also close:

- **Belvoir Park, Braniel, Dunmurry, Gilnahirk**

### 3.0 Summary of the Consultation Document

Libraries NI has had significant reduction in the Libraries NI budget for the coming years resulting from the 2010 Budget process. The consultation paper says that this has created a need to find substantial savings by reducing opening hours of libraries. Libraries NI have therefore, reluctantly, had to review library opening hours across Northern Ireland.

The principal aim of the policy review is to deliver savings as required by the NI Executive. The document emphasises that Libraries NI Board considered a range of options for making the required savings and selected reduced opening hours as one of several initiatives as the reduction can be reversed at a later date if the economic position improves.

The report proposes that libraries should be grouped into four bands and that there should be consistency in terms of the total number of opening hours within each band. Libraries have been allocated to bands mainly on the basis of the historic level of use which is detailed in Appendix One of the document. Appendix Two highlights the exceptions to the process for recently refurbished libraries.

The table below depicts the reduction of opening hours for libraries within Belfast City Council district area. The impact on Belfast is minimal with the most impact in rural areas. Appendix one of the consultation document illustrates the overall reduced opening hours for Northern Ireland.

<u>Library</u>	<u>Total Hours Opened</u>	<u>Proposed Hours</u>	<u>Hours variance</u>
<b>BAND 1</b>			
Belfast Central	60	57	-3
<b>BAND 2</b>			
Ardoyne	37	37	0
Ballyhackamore	40.5	40	-0.5
Chichester	40.5	40	-0.5
Falls Road	40.5	40.5	0
Finaghy	40.5	40	-0.5
Grove	40.5	40	-0.5
Holywood Arches	40.5	40	-0.5
Lisburn Road	40.5	40	-0.5
Ormeau	40.5	40	-0.5
Shankill	40.5	40.5	0
Suffolk	40.5	40.5	0
Whiterock	37	37	0
<b>BAND 3</b>			
Woodstock	30	30	0

In the document Libraries NI stresses that they intend to engage with customers in respect of each library where hours are to be reduced. This engagement will take place in January 2012 after the Libraries NI Board has made a decision on the review proposals. Libraries NI have highlighted that they aim to provide a spread of opening hours across libraries which are geographically close to each other, as far as possible, to enable users to access library services for as many hours as possible

#### **EQIA**

Libraries NI agreed that the proposals resulting from the policy review should be issued for consultation and the potential equality impacts should be assessed through an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA).

The EQIA acknowledges that people in certain section 75 categories may suffer an adverse differential impact, although the extent of that impact will depend on each individual and cannot be defined for an entire section 75 category. Libraries NI have identified mitigating measures to reduce the adverse impact.

#### **4.0 Resource Implications**

N/A

#### **5.0 Equality Implications**

The EQIA acknowledges that people in certain section 75 categories may suffer an adverse differential impact. Libraries NI have identified mitigating measures to reduce the adverse impact

#### **6.0 Recommendations**

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is asked to consider the consultation document & EQIA attached at appendix 1 & 2 and to consider if it wishes to either:

- a. Authorise the corporate response to be submitted to Libraries NI  
or
- b. Refer to the Party Groupings on the Council for individual consideration and comment.

Appendix 3

NI Libraries Review of Opening Hours

Belfast City Council Draft Response

1.0 Introduction

Belfast City Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the review of opening hours of libraries in Northern Ireland.

The Council has made comment on a number of occasions about the role of libraries in local communities and the potential that the service represents in meeting local needs. This response reiterates many of the points previously made and the important role we believe that libraries have to play in terms of building a sense of inclusion and citizenship, as well as developing an understanding of our heritage, cultural diversity and dealing with conflict.

The Council notes that Libraries NI have selected reduced opening hours as one of several initiatives as the reduction can be reversed at a later date if the economic position improves. The Council would strongly advocate this principle. We recognise that this initiative is being implemented in order to avoid library closures.

In its response to the RPA Further Consultation Document in September 2005, Belfast City Council stated that it believed that it was essential, when thinking about the future of the public library service, to agree what role we expect the libraries of tomorrow to perform. The Council is committed to the view that successful libraries are not simply about a formal academic understanding of education; they are also about improving quality of life through the provision of a combination of educational, social, cultural, health and general information opportunities for local people.

The Council would reiterate its comments made in April 2010 to the consultation document *'Meeting the Demands for a Modern Public Library Service within Northern Ireland - Stage 1: Greater Belfast Area'*

As previously highlighted Belfast City Council would be keen to explore the co-location of library services within Belfast City Council owned buildings. Belfast City Council previously recommended the need for a more collaborative approach in the creation of estates strategies and the co-location of services in the future. It is important that Libraries NI work closely with other statutory organisations, particularly with the Council, to ensure that a collaborative partnership is adopted. This would help to ensure that the service would reflect the needs of the community by working to incorporate other public services within the facility – based on best practice facilities such as the Grove Well-being centre.

The council recognises the need to deliver savings as required by the NI Executive, however would stress that Libraries have a strong role to play, in terms of building a sense of inclusion and citizenship, as well as developing an understanding of our heritage, cultural diversity and dealing with conflict. It is critical that libraries are seen as a public place for community interaction and accessible to all. Any reduction in hours should take account of the needs of the users of that library in terms of accessibility.

Libraries are an important meeting place for social and community activities many associated with life-long learning outcomes but also just places to drop in, attend thematic events, meet socially and are used by the local community in such a way. Libraries are regularly used as community spaces and local people use them as such. In particular, older people, younger people and migrant workers use libraries frequently.

With respect to Libraries being allocated to bands mainly on the basis of the historic level of usage, it is interesting to note that the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals *“What Makes a Good Library Service – Guidelines on public library provision in England for portfolio holders in local Councils”* clearly states that *“ Libraries benefit everyone, whether or not they use their local library or not. They stand for intellectual freedom, democratic engagement, community cohesion, social justice and equality of opportunity”* the guide goes on to say that *“Libraries give identity to a community and provide opportunities for everyone in it.*

In Belfast the opportunities for libraries to offer a safe and shared environment for people from all sections of the community is also an important consideration

The Council would highlight that The Department of Culture & Leisure in the report *“Delivering Tomorrow’s Libraries”* stated under the heading “Access” that “Static libraries should be located and designed so as to provide suitable access, mobile libraries should serve people where there is no static library, and opening hours should meet the needs of users – with the target – 85% of households have access to a library service within 2 miles”. Libraries NI should be mindful of this when making decisions in relation to proposed reduction of hours.



The Council would again highlight the need to consider alternative methods of delivery and it would be worthwhile to note that, across the world, an increasing number of public libraries are being located in, or close to, shopping centres in recognition of the very large numbers of people which shopping centres attract. There is mutual benefit to retailers and libraries of co-location, with the added benefit of parking convenience for library users. In the United Kingdom, research found that placing a library in a shopping centre puts the library where many people can easily visit. This includes people from a potentially larger population than would usually access a public library.

Libraries must be community facilities and for this reason the Council continues to believe that libraries should no longer be stand alone buildings but should be integrated with other public service facilities such as education and health for the ultimate benefit of the whole community.

One such example is a new £2 million Shepherd's Bush Library which was opened at London's biggest shopping centre in September 2009. Situated at the heart of Westfield Shopping Centre the library was entirely built and fitted out by the centre's owners at their own expense.

Belfast City Council's comments are intended to be constructive and positive and the Council looks forward to working with Libraries NI to ensure that the review has a minimal impact on communities at the local level.

It is important to ensure that any decisions on reduced opening hours are made as a result of genuine engagement with the local community and that the equality implications of this strategy are fully considered.

Belfast City Council seeks reassurances from Library NI that any decisions about future library provision in Belfast should take into consideration the need to maintain shared spaces and would fully address issues relating to need in communities across the city."

The Committee approved the foregoing comments as the Council's response to the consultation and agreed that it be amended to include a comment indicating that, whilst the reduction in opening hours appeared minimal, when taken into context with the previous decisions to close a number of libraries, the overall impact was significant.

**Human Resources**

(Mrs. J. Minne, Head of Human Resources, attended in connection with this item.)

**Industrial Action involving Belfast City Council  
Employees on 30th November**

The Head of Human Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration a report providing an update on industrial action involving Council employees on 30th November. She indicated that the ballots of the Trades Unions had taken place and the majority of those who took part in the ballot had voted in favour of strike action. As a result, strike action by UNITE, NIPSA, GMB and SIPTU members was planned for 30th November. She indicated that the Council had established an Industrial Action Contingency Group and outlined the action which would be implemented during the day of industrial action.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and that a further report would be submitted to the Committee outlining the impact the day of industrial action had had on the Council.

Chairman