

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 17th February, 2012

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairman);
the High Sheriff (Alderman Campbell);
Alderman Browne;
Councillors Convery, Garrett, Haire, Hanna, Hendron,
Jones, Lavery, Maskey, McCarthy, 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. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman Newton and Councillors Attwood and McKee.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 6th and 20th January were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st February, subject to the omission of the minute under the heading "Connswater Community Greenway – Update on Contract" which had been taken back to the Committee for further consideration at the request of Alderman Stoker.

Declaration of Interest

The following declaration of interest was declared:

- Councillor Ó Muilleoir declared an interest in relation to item 4 (a) Requests for the Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality in so far as he was a Director of the Belfast Media Group.

Connswater Community Greenway - Update on Contract

The Committee considered further the undernoted minute:

“Connswater Community Greenway – Update on Contract

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update in relation to the contract associated with the Connswater Community Greenway and affirmed its decision to grant authority to the Director of Property and Projects, in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Town Solicitor, to pursue the most advantageous option to ensure value-for-money and expeditious completion of the project to the acquired design standards and also to follow up with the Connswater Joint Venture the issue of an independent review of cost and value.”

After discussion, the Committee agreed to affirm its decision of 20th January, subject to independent advice being obtained and the matter being dealt with in consultation with the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Committee.

Modernisation and Improvement

Response to the Draft Programme for Government, the Draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland and the Draft Northern Ireland Economic Strategy

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

“1.0 Relevant Background

- 1.1 On 17 November 2011, the First Minister and deputy First Minister published the draft Programme for Government 2011-2015 and draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland. In parallel, the Department of Trade and Investment (DETI) DETI released the draft NI Economic Strategy for consultation.
- 1.2 The draft Programme for Government 2011-2015 (PfG) sets out the high level objectives and actions of the NI Executive over the next four years which focuses on the following key priority areas:

- **Growing a Sustainable Economy and Investing in the Future**
- **Creating Opportunities, Tackling Disadvantage and Improving Health and Well-Being**
- **Protecting Our People, the Environment and Creating Safer Communities**
- **Building a Strong and Shared Community**
- **Delivering High Quality and Efficient Public Services**

1.3 The draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021 (ISNI) sets out the NI Executive and central government's investment priorities over the next decade. The Investment Strategy seeks to provide a modern and efficient infrastructure which will act as a stimulus to create a growing and sustainable economy, and delivering high quality and efficient public services.

1.4 The draft Economic Strategy for Northern Ireland seeks to improve the economic competitiveness of the economy by increasing employment and wealth opportunities for all. The draft strategy includes a framework for economic growth, built around the rebuilding and rebalancing themes. It includes a range of short, medium and long-term priorities for growth within which specific activities are identified. The rebuilding theme focuses on increasing private sector productivity while the rebuilding theme is based on creating employment in export focused sectors.

The key priorities under the rebalancing theme are:

- Stimulating innovation and creativity**
- Improving employability and the level, relevance and use of skills**
- Competing in the global economy**
- Encouraging business growth**
- Developing economic infrastructure**

The key priorities under the rebuilding theme are:

- Improving employment opportunities and employability**
- Promoting employment**

1.5 It is clear that the three documents are interrelated and will collectively shape the future direction of public investment within Northern Ireland. Given the clear linkages and synergies between the draft PfG and ISNI and the Council's own Investment Programme, a combined response to both documents has been prepared and is circulated for Members consideration.

- 1.6 The Development Committee had given detailed consideration to the draft NI Economic Strategy on 7 February and a draft Council response has been circulated for Members consideration. As the Economic Strategy seeks to deliver against a number of the key priorities identified within the draft PfG and ISNI including growing a sustainable economy, supporting economic recovery and growth, and rebalancing and rebuilding the economy, the draft Council response incorporates the relevant points raised in the draft response to the Economic Strategic.

Draft Council response to PfG and ISNI

- 1.7 The draft Council response to the PfG and ISNI is a companion piece to the Council's own investment programme seeks a firm commitment from the NI Executive to include the Investment Programme within the PfG and ISNI and to enable us to jointly maximise the potential opportunities for greater alignment and integration of resources/efforts to ensure key investment priorities for the city area delivered. A commitment to work in partnership and integrate resources to ensure effective delivery within Belfast is the underpinning tenet of our response.
- 1.8 The response provides an Executive Summary of the main issues raised as well as a number of specific comments linked to the priority areas identified within the draft PfG and ISNI. An overview of the key points outlined in the draft response include:

General

- The Council commends the NI Executive on its clear commitment to continue to invest during this period of economic austerity, a commitment shared by the Council as set out within the Councils Investment Programme.
- A request that the Belfast Investment Programme be supported by the NI Executive and specifically incorporated within the PfG and ISNI
- The Desire of the Council to work in partnership with NI Executive to identify and develop joint delivery models and to align and integrate resources where possible to ensure delivery.
- The PfG and ISNI need to commit resources to the identified investment projects for Belfast.

- A proposal to establish a 'Belfast Delivery Forum' and 'Implementation Plan' which ensures that capacity exists across all agencies and resources to ensure delivery of key investment projects.
- A request for greater focus to be given to creating a set of policy instruments to maximise the benefits of our cities in supporting the economic recovery of Northern Ireland.
- Support a new urban development programme as part of the next wave of EU funding programmes (2014-2020)

Priority 1: Growing a Sustainable Economy and Investing in the Future

- A request to work with the NI Executive and DETI to maximise the economic benefits of the potential investment in enhancing the City's broadband infrastructure as recently announced by the UK Chancellor George Osborne.
- The need to explore alternative forms of finance for major capital schemes and a request for the Executive to put in place the necessary regulatory requirements to allow councils to explore these options.
- The need to consider the future supply of appropriate office accommodation for large scale investments and a request to urgently review this and to consider how future supply might be incentivised in the current climate.
- A proposal to establish a ministerial working group to look at town and city centre regeneration issues, as has happened in the Welsh Assembly and Scottish Parliament
- Request that recognition is given to Belfast's role as the regional driver and that an appropriate interface is put in place across government to coordinate policy and address the challenges presented in delivering key strategic projects, particularly the relocation of the University of Ulster into Belfast City Centre.
- Identification of the opportunities presented by business tourism and the associated need for adequate investment in providing needed infrastructure e.g. integrated conference and exhibition facilities for conferences of an international scale.

- Identification of the opportunities presented by the renewables sector and the need for a targeted strategy for its future development. This might include the establishment of an Enterprise Zone for renewables in the Belfast Harbour/North Foreshore area of the city
- Request that consideration be given to allocating further investment in the provision of public transport as an overall percentage of the investment in roads infrastructure.

Priority 2: Creating Opportunities, Tackling Disadvantage and Improving Health and Wellbeing

- Seek the support of the NI Executive and relevant government departments to deliver the actions emerging from the Belfast Strategic Partnership's 'Framework for Action on Life Inequalities 2011-2015'.
- Seek further discussions with NI Executive and the Department of Finance and Personnel in pursuance of integrated approaches to address poverty and social inequalities within Belfast and wider region.
- Advocate that the co-location and integration of public services should be considered as a key service delivery model of the future.
- Suggest that the new Public Health Strategy for Northern Ireland should be considered as a key building block for the draft PfG and ISNI.
- Welcome the creation of the Social Investment Fund and request that consideration be given to Belfast City Council securing representation on any governance structure put in place to over the administration of the fund.
- Request that a budget be included in the PfG and ISNI for the delivery of the Belfast rapid transit system which will play a key role in supporting local economies, linking businesses with markets and linking communities and people with potential employment opportunities.

Priority 3: Protecting our People, the Environment and Creating Safer Communities

- Advocate for greater level of funding for the development of critical waste infrastructure within Northern Ireland
- Advocate that further consideration be given to the potential to create a single waste disposal authority within Northern Ireland.

- Suggest that incremental targets for both reductions in greenhouse gas omissions and air quality standards be included.
- Request that the Department of Regional Development's pilot initiative to roll-out electronic vehicle infrastructure be included in the draft PfG and ISNI.
- Request that consideration be given to the potential inclusion of a Belfast based public bike hire scheme as part of the PfG and ISNI investment priorities linked to sustainable transport.

Priority 4: Building a Strong and Shared Community

- Council desire to work with the NI Executive and all relevant statutory and community stakeholders to build a strong and shared community and promote equality and good relations.
- Advocate the need for a concerted and inter-agency approach to addressing historic physical and non physical barriers within the city and their contribution to division and segregation.

Priority 5: Delivering High Quality and Efficient Public Services

- The Council welcomes and remains committed to taking forward local government reform and ensuring the effective and efficient transfer and integration of important new place-shaping functions.
- The Council would wish to explore with NI Executive and DFP the types of financial mechanisms which could be utilised to enable local government fund specific elements of reform on an 'invest to save' basis.
- Commend that the transfer of functions be rates neutral at point of transfer to local government.
- The Council recognises the strategic significance of Planning in supporting economic development and regeneration activity and wish to work with NI Executive and DoE to ensure that planning can deliver against the ambitious targets set out within draft PfG and ISNI.
- The Council would wish to explore with the NI Executive and government departments the potential for greater integration/co-design and co-location of public services at the local level.

- Support for the commitment to explore the implementation of social clauses for government capital schemes, urging a dialogue across government to maximise the potential impact of these

1.9 As recommended by Members at the recent SP&R delivery workshop on 3 February and recent discussions in regards to the development of the Council's own Investment Programme, in responding to the draft PfG, ISNI and Economic Strategy, the Council will request to meet with the NI Executive, the First and Deputy First Minister and other relevant Ministers to discuss the Investment Programme and shared investment priorities for the City.

3.0 Resource Implications

There are no financial or human resource commitments contained within this report.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 Members are asked to:

- consider the contents of this report;
- consider the draft Council response to the draft PfG and ISNI and provide any feedback which they may have;
- consider the draft Council response to the draft Economic Strategy and provide any feedback/comments which they may have; and
- agree that the revised Council's responses, taking account of any amendments made by Members, be submitted to OFMDFM and DETI"

The Committee adopted the recommendations and noted that full copies of the responses were available on the Council's website. The Committee agreed also that its meeting on 3rd March take the form of a workshop to consider the current position on the Review of Public Administration.

Finance/Value-for-Money

Quarter 3 Financial Reporting

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed on the 18 June 2010 that:-

- The council would produce financial reporting packs for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and each Standing Committee on a quarterly basis.
- The Budget and Transformation Panel would also receive monthly financial updates if there were any significant issues to report. In line with the Council’s financial reporting timetable, financial reporting packs, which outline the Council’s financial performance for quarter 3 2011/12, were presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 17 February 2012, after which departmental report packs can be distributed to each Standing Committee.

The reporting pack contains a summary dashboard of the financial indicators and an executive summary explaining the financial performance (Appendix 1). It also provides a more detailed explanation of each of the relevant indicators covering the year to date and forecast financial position, implications for reserves and payment of creditors and recovery of debt.

The style and layout of the financial reporting pack reflect the discussion and feedback arising from the members’ financial training at the end of September 2010.

Central finance and departmental management teams have worked together to develop the information within the reporting packs.

Key Issues

Current and Forecast Financial Position 2010/11

The financial position of the council at the end of quarter 3 is a net under spend of £1.48m, after allowing for the LPS claw back, the deficit on the gas pension scheme and the allocation of expenditure for 2011/12 projects.

The forecast year end position is an under spend of £879k, with the main components of the under spend being:-

- Departmental budgets are forecast to be under spent by £2.18m mainly due to a reduction in landfill costs through reduced tonnages and gate fee costs, savings in employee costs through unfilled posts and restructuring and slippage in corporate and departmental projects.
- The Land and Property Service have advised that the forecast rates claw back is now estimated at £277k, which is a significant reduction on the estimate of £967k advised to the council in December 2011.
- The deficit on the Gas Pension Fund of £650k arising from the revaluation of the scheme by AON Hewitt.
- The forecast £1.47m of expenditure on the revenue projects approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 23 September 2011, including the transfer of £600k to a specified reserve to fund the Titanic Centenary celebrations and the World Irish Dance Championships in 2012/13.

The financial reporting packs contain more detail on both the overall council position and the financial performance in each of the committees.

Capital Financing Expenditure

Capital financing expenditure is forecast to be balanced with the 2011/12 planned expenditure arising from the financing of current loans, new capital expenditure and the redemption of existing loans to support the sustainability of the City Investment Programme.

Reserves Position

The council's general reserves at the end of 2010/11 were £10.43m. The forecast position at the year end is £13.32m arising from the forecast year end departmental contribution of £879k together with a further £990k of funds set aside from the SP&R programmes and prior year adjustments, such as rent reviews, which add a further £1.03m to reserves.

Better Services: Creditors and Debtors

The number of invoices paid to creditors paid within 30 days has increased from 69.1% at quarter 2, to 70.3% in quarter 3. The Investment Programme provides a commitment that the council will process 90% of its invoice payments within 28 days by 2015.

The overall debt position of the council has reduced from £4.1m at 30th June 2011 to £3.3m at quarter 3 this year as a result of the improvements to debt recovery processes and actions reported to the Committee on the 22 October 2010. The agreement of repayment plans with some debtors as part of these improvements has impacted on the percentage of debt over 90 days, which has increased from 41.7% to 49.9%

Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- Note the above report and associated financial reporting pack;
- Approve the payment of £650k to the Gas Pension Fund to address the deficiency on the Gas Pension Scheme arising from the revaluation undertaken by AON Hewitt.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Green New Deal

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

“Relevant Background Information

At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 21st October 2011 it was agreed that further work would be undertaken to assess the potential of the Council's involvement in the Green New Deal scheme. This report provides an update on the progress of the work undertaken and resultant recommendations.

The 'Green New Deal' (GND) proposal is a joined up approach aimed at tackling the '*triple crunch*' of recession, rising energy prices and climate change by installing a series of energy efficient measures to combat fuel poverty.

The GND is targeted at homes that do not fall within the other 'Warm Homes' type initiatives currently administered through the NIHE. The homeowner would be provided with a loan to provide energy saving improvements such as insulation and boiler replacement. The loan would be required to be repaid with interest using the energy savings achieved.

The scheme would be financed through £2.4m from the Council (£800k per annum for three years), £12m from central government and a £40m bank loan. The bank would be at no risk to bad debt.

Key Issues

A proposal and related financial model was provided by the representatives of the Green New Deal to the Council in December 2011 to evaluate and carry out a financial appraisal. A similar proposal was also presented to DSD. In reviewing the proposal council officers met with Green New Deal representatives on numerous occasions and also with DSD officials at the end of the process.

Following the appraisal a number of key issues were raised around the overall structure and financing of the proposal. They were:

The potential for debt

The level of debt within the model was 4% and was viewed as being low given the economic environment we are currently experiencing. At present the figures provided by Land and Property Services has a default debt rate of 11%. At this rate there would be minimal recovery of the investment and nothing would be recovered before year 11. Essentially a significant proportion of DSD and Council money would be required to absorb the bad debt.

Target Group

The business model is not based on local market research and it is not clear who the scheme will be targeted at. There are a number of 'warm homes' schemes aimed at households in receipt of benefits and vulnerable pensioners. At the other end of the scale those households who can afford to pay for energy improvements are unlikely to require a loan. This leaves households in the middle bracket who are not in receipt of benefits and cannot afford to pay directly for energy improvements. There has been no market testing of this group to determine take up rates. Figures have been quoted using the Kirklees project but this scheme involved giving grants to households and not loans. It was fully funded by government and energy providers.

Sustainability of the programme

From year 4 onwards there is additional funding required to make the GND proposal sustainable. This would need to be financed by DSD/DFP and councils. No details of how this is to be achieved have been provided to the council.

Running Costs and Associated Value for Money

The current proposal is based on the scheme being run by Green New Deal. No detail has been provided around the running costs or how these could be changed to allow for an improved VFM proposal.

Members should note that similar concerns were raised by DSD when we met them on 13th January 2012.

Resource Implications

None.

Decision Required

Given the financial risk and potential reputational issues associated with the GND proposal it is recommended that at this stage Members do not proceed with the investment. Officers will continue to work with GND and DSD to develop a more feasible and sustainable scheme.

Key to Abbreviations

GND – Green New Deal
VFM – value for Money
LPS – Land and Property Services
DSD – Department for Social Development”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Democratic Services and Governance

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

(Councillor Ó Muilleoir left the room while this item was under discussion.)

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

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Audiences Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Theatre Association and Theatre Forum Ireland	All-Ireland Arts Conference Dinner 14th June, 2012 Approximately 250 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 and Together', 'Better opportunities for success across the City' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate Cost £500
Belfast City Council, Parks and Leisure Department	City of Belfast International Rose Trials – Judges Reception and Dinner 19th July, 2012 Approximately 150 attending	The use of City Hall and the provision of Hospitality in the form of a Civic Dinner	The City of Belfast International Rose Trials will be held during Rose Week. The Trials are renowned worldwide for attracting international rose growers in addition to a significant number of visitors. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together'.	The use of City Hall and the provision of Hospitality in the form of a Civic Dinner. Approximate Cost £5250
Common Purpose	Meridian Course Final Day and Award Ceremony 2nd August, 2012 Approximately 50 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.	'Meridian' is a leadership programme that brings together a diverse group of leaders from the private, public, voluntary and community sectors. The participants learn how to improve their capacity to lead, effect change and expand their networks through the investigation of real-life challenges. This event will recognise the achievements of those individuals which have successfully completed the Meridian Programme. 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 tea/coffee and biscuits. Approximate Cost £125

<p>Malaysian Students Society Northern Ireland</p>	<p>Malaysian Night 2012</p> <p>10th March, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 400 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall</p>	<p>Malaysian Night 2012 is the climax event of a week long programme called Malaysia and You 2012.</p> <p>This programme consists of a series of events which includes a mini charity carnival, sports tournament, interactive bazaar and ends with a formal dinner which the organisers wish to take place in the City Hall.</p> <p>The aim of the programme is to promote cultural diversity, encourage charity activity and also to forge closer relationships between Malaysians and the citizens of Belfast.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and of 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall</p>
<p>Belfast Eagle Sea Cadets</p>	<p>Belfast Eagle Sea Cadets Showcase Evening</p> <p>12th March, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 100 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event aims to recognise and showcase the contribution made by the Belfast Eagle Sea Cadets in helping young people develop values of leadership and teamwork.</p> <p>The event seeks to demonstrate the organisation's ethos of togetherness and exclusiveness by showcasing some of the work which has been undertaken.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together', 'Better opportunities for success across the City' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £250</p>

Loch Lao	<p>The Loch Lao Story</p> <p>18th March, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 500 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall	<p>This will be a joint inter-city (Belfast / Dublin) event showcasing the range of talent of young people from 8-18 years of age.</p> <p>The event will take the form of a concert to perform the Loch Lao Story which tells the history of Belfast through music and narration as seen through the eyes of the black bird flying along the shores of Belfast Lough. The musical arrangement has been developed by Patick Davey, a local Belfast composer, and features tunes such as The Titanic Leaving the Lough, King Billy's March, the Viking Raid, the Blitz, the Blackbird.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	The use of the City Hall
Volunteer Now	<p>Volunteer Now – Awards Ceremony</p> <p>28th March, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 150 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception	<p>This event seeks to recognise those volunteers who have demonstrated a commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society, their community, the environment or individuals.</p> <p>The event also seeks to promote the positive effect which volunteering has in combatting poverty, helping those who are disadvantaged and promoting social inclusion.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'Better opportunities for success across the City', 'Better support for people and communities' and 'Better Services – Listening and Delivering'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>

<p>Department for Regional Development</p>	<p>Launch of Charge Points for Electric Vehicles in Northern Ireland</p> <p>29th March, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 200 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event will launch the scheme which provides government funding to support the roll out of electric charging infrastructure, which is necessary to support zero carbon electric transport in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Belfast City Council has endorsed this scheme and is involved directly in supporting the roll out of the first phase of the project.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together, 'Better opportunities for success across the city' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall</p>
<p>Youthcom – Crossing the Bridges Project</p>	<p>Young People Trading Places</p> <p>29th March, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 200 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>The event aims to provide an opportunity for young people from different communities to express their views to civic leaders regarding interfaces/ shared spaces, etc and provide a renewed respect for each other and their communities.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>

<p>The Fostering Network</p>	<p>Foster Carer of the Year Awards Ceremony</p> <p>14th May, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 70 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event seeks to recognise the work of individual foster carers and will recognise the commitment and lasting difference they make to children's lives.</p> <p>The awards will acknowledge the support provided to young people in care and the role played by foster carers in their communities.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £175</p>
<p>Barnardo's Northern Ireland</p>	<p>'Dr. B's Kitchen' Awards 2012</p> <p>17th May, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 150 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event will highlight the work of 'Dr. B's Kitchen' which trains young people from the city with learning difficulties to prepare them for a career in the catering industry. The scheme provides the young people with the opportunity to work and live independently and contribute socially or economically to their local communities.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together', 'Better support for people and communities' and Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £375</p>

<p>Belfast Media Group</p>	<p>Belfast Sports Volunteer Awards 2012</p> <p>5th July, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 150 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception</p>	<p>This event seeks to recognise the achievements and contribution made by individuals who have given their time voluntarily to help support sport in order to ensure that young people can enjoy their games and fulfill their ambition.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
<p>British Institute of Cleaning Science</p>	<p>Northern Ireland Cleaner of the Year 2012</p> <p>14th September, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 40 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event seeks to acknowledge the vital role of cleaners across various industries in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The event will also aim to recognise those individuals who have been nominated within their respective industries for undertaking their duties to a high standard.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £100</p>

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that hospitality in the sum of £500 be provided for the Loch Lao Story event.

Request to Use of the City Hall to Mark the Centenary of the Signing of the Solemn League and Covenant

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 The Joint Group of the Party Leaders' Forum and Historic Centenaries Working Group, at its meeting on 13 January, was advised that an application had been received from the

Presbyterian Church in Ireland requesting the use of the City Hall for an event in April, 2012 to mark the centenary of the Signing of the Ulster Covenant.

- 1.2 The Working Group agreed that such applications for the use of the City Hall should be dealt with in the normal way and be subject to the existing Council policy on the use of the building and also the principles already agreed by the Historic Centenaries Working Group on 13 January.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has submitted an application form requesting the use of the City Hall to hold an event entitled 'Citizenship, Covenant and Christ' on 19 April, 2012.
- 2.2 The purpose of this event is to acknowledge the particular relationship between Presbyterian history and the signing of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant by holding an event which will include academics who will provide insight from different perspectives, a panel discussion and an question and answer session. The event seeks to provide a platform to acknowledge the centenary in a manner which promotes the fact that different opinions can be shared and discussed across civil society without fear or mistrust.
- 2.3 The event aims to 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. It will do this by involving historians and academics from across the island of Ireland who will speak during the event from different perspectives as well as considering theological matters. A range of non-governmental organisations and groups will be invited to participate in the day and to bring a question from their perspective to the panel which will be made up of the above mentioned historians. Representatives of all the political parties will be invited together with representatives of all the churches across the Island.

- 2.4 The event aims to 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. It will do this by gaining input from the historians and academics which the organizers deem as being essential to making this event inclusive and broad in its perspective. One of the aims of the event is to provide a platform where people with different views of the past can talk and listen to one another.
- 2.5 The organisers are seeking to ensure that the event is non-exclusive and welcoming to all sections of the community in Belfast by inviting representatives from the churches, all political parties and a range of non-governmental organizations, such as 'Healing Through Remembering', 'Unionist Centenaries Committee', 'Ulster Scots Association' and 'Relatives for Justice', who have an interest in the past. There will be representation from across the Island in each of these spheres thus ensuring broad participation and bringing together in Belfast a significant and highly representative group of people.
- 2.6 The organisation has made it clear in their application that as information is released about the event, they will be keen to accommodate requests from other groups interested in participating and/or attending the event. The organisers hope that this event will help to recall other stories of the Signing of the Covenant and that together there can be a new and clearer focus on citizenship across the Island of Ireland.
- 2.7 Based on the information received, the application appears to satisfy both the criteria on the use of the City Hall and the principles agreed by the Joint Group of the Party Leaders' Forum and Historic Centenaries Working Group on 13 January.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 The Committee is recommended to grant the use of the City Hall for the event on 19th April, 2012."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Use of the City Hall for an E-Counting Demonstration

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from the Chief Electoral Officer for the use of the City Hall on 30th and 31st May, 2012 for the purpose of holding a demonstration of the electronic counting of votes. The Committee was reminded of the criticism which had surrounded the length of time which had been taken to announce the results of the Assembly and the Referendum counts in May, 2011. The Chief Electoral Officer was keen to investigate the possibility of substantially reducing the time taken for the counting of votes in Northern Ireland elections by considering the introduction of the electronic counting of votes. Such a system had been used for the last few years in Scotland and had been welcomed by all of the political parties.

The Democratic Services Manager explained that the first stage in the consideration of such a change to the electoral process was for the holding of an information event by way of a demonstration of how electronic counting worked. The demonstration lasted about one hour and a rolling programme of demonstrations would be held over a two day period. All elected MLAs and Councillors in Northern Ireland, together with Council and Assembly staff involved in election planning, would be invited to attend. Any costs associated with the event would be met by Opt2Vote, the company which delivered the electronic counting package, and the Electoral Office. There would not be any costs accruing to the Council. He pointed out that the Electoral Office recognised the importance of Belfast as the capital City of Northern Ireland and the City Hall as an iconic seat of local democracy and, as such, would be very keen to base the demonstration in the City Hall.

The Committee agreed to grant to use of the City Hall for the demonstration of E-Counting on 30th and 31st May, 2012.

Date of the Annual Council Meeting in June, 2012

The Democratic Services Manager reminded the Members that the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) Act 1972, at paragraph 1(2) of Schedule 2, required that the Annual Meeting of the Council be held in June each year with the exception of the year of the Local Elections. The Council's Standing Orders provided that the Annual Meeting of the Council must be held in each year in accordance with the provisions of the Act. In addition, the Standing Orders provide that other monthly meetings of the Council "shall not take place on a Bank Holiday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday but shall be held on the next following weekday instead".

The Democratic Services Manager pointed out that, although traditionally those restrictions had been applied when considering the date of the Annual Council Meeting each year, there was not any legal requirement to do so and the Annual Council Meeting could be held on any day in June. In June, 2012, there would be an additional Bank Holiday to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee which would mean that, should the normal restrictions be applied, the Annual Meeting of the Council would not take place until Wednesday, 6th June. However, that date coincided with the arrival at the City Hall at 5.00 p.m. of the Olympic Torch for which a large-scale civic event was being held with an estimated crowd of over 30,000 people in attendance. Obviously, it would not be appropriate to schedule the Annual Meeting for 6.00 p.m. on that evening.

The Democratic Services Manager indicated that it would be possible to hold the Annual Meeting on Friday, 1st June. That would not be a breach of any legal obligation as it would meet the provisions of the Local Government Act. It was, however, outside of the Council's normal procedure and would require the Committee's approval.

The Committee agreed that the Annual Meeting of the Council in 2012 would take place on Friday, 1st June at 4.00 p.m.

Local Authorities Members' Association – Spring Seminar

The Committee was advised that the Local Authorities Members' Association was holding its Spring Seminar in Waterford, County Waterford on 13th and 14th April. The theme of the seminar was "The Role of Local Authorities in Enabling Economic Development". Expert speakers would include Michael Walsh, Waterford City Manager, Ann-Marie Caulfield, President of Waterford Chamber of Commerce, and Sinead Carr, Director of Services, South Tipperary County Council. The Council had been represented at the Association's events for a number of years and representatives attending previous seminars had felt that their attendance had given them a valuable opportunity to meet with local government representatives from throughout Ireland to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern. The theme of this year's seminar was particularly relevant given the current economic climate. The approximate cost per delegate attending was £722.

The Committee authorised the attendance at the Local Authority Members' Association Spring Seminar of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, the Council's representatives on the National Association of Councillors, Northern Ireland Region, the Democratic Services Manager (or their nominees) and a representative of each of the Parties on the Council not represented by the aforementioned Members.

Northern Ireland Local Government Association Subscription

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Relevant Background

- 1.1 The Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) acts as a voice and representation body for elected Members from local government; providing a forum for collective discussion on regionally significant policy issues and assisting with the formation of collective policy position as necessary. It acts as an interface between local government, as a sector, and the NI Executive, government departments, parliament and other key institutions.**

1.2 NILGA is supported by all the main political parties in Northern Ireland with 25 of the 26 local councils being current members (with Newtownabbey not a member). It comprises of 147 elected representatives and a 27 (+ 5 observers) Executive Committee including a President and 4 Vice-Presidents.

2.0 Key Issues

Role of Belfast City Council within NILGA

2.1 Belfast City Council has currently 17 elected Members nominated onto NILGA with 1 Member designated as an Office Bearer and as members of the NILGA Executive. A number of BCC elected Members are represented on the established NILGA working groups such as 'Modernisation and Reform', Planning, Waste and Environment.

2.2 Whilst recognising the important role of NILGA as an advocate/champion for local government and in providing advice and policy support to the sector, the Council would not currently require or fully avail of the support provided by NILGA to the same extent as other councils. This is as a result of the level of internal capacity which exists within the Council, the capability to develop and coalesce around corporate positions on emerging policy issues and to secure direct access to the NI Executive, Ministers, central government departments and other important national and European institutions.

2.3 Notwithstanding, we are entering a period of significant change, with local government reform and the future of European Structural Funds under review. Whilst the Council will continue to directly seek to influence, shape and drive forward these and other critical matters for the economy and the sector, it will be important that we do not lose sight of the importance of engaging with and informing the wider local government sector's consideration and approach to such matters. The continued participation and engagement in NILGA will be an important strand of this. Some of the important issues which NILGA are seeking to influence on behalf of the LG sector and which the Council have a direct interest and focus include e.g.

- i. **Shaping the future direction of local government reform**
- ii. **Shaping future planning policy and reform**
- iii. **Lobby for the development of an urban policy agenda/strategy which recognises and supports the strategic significance of urban areas as key regional economic drivers**
- iv. **Maximising the level of investment secured through European sources for Belfast.**
 - **Shaping the future direction of EU Structural Funds 2014-2020 – it is understood that there is 3.76b Euros agreed for 2014-2020 Structural Funds. Whilst the NI block allocation is still to be negotiated and agreed, £356m was secured in last round which finishes in 2013. It is likely that the new NI allocation is of a similar scale.**
 - **Influence the allocation of other emerging European funding streams (e.g. Horizon 2020; Framework 7)**
- v. **Supporting the development of a new central/local government relationship**

Belfast City Council Annual Subscription Fee

- 2.4 **NILGA request an annual Belfast City Council subscription fee of circa £107,500 (excluding VAT) which is calculated based on the relative strength of the penny rate product for councils. This equates to approximately 25% of NILGA's total subscription base.**
- 2.5 **Members will note that in considering its annual subscription fee to NILGA, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee previously agreed to pay a reduced subscription fee of circa £76,500 for the periods 2009/2010 and 2010/2011. This subscription had been calculated on the basis of the Council's population size relative to the other councils. This reduced subscription fee represents 18.5% of NILGA's total subscriptions and is on par with the subscription contributions made by the larger/capital city councils in other jurisdictions towards their local government association (e.g. Cardiff contributes 17% towards the Welsh Local Government Association and Glasgow contributes 19% towards Convention of Scottish Local Authorities).**

- 2.6 NILGA has been recently in contact requesting that the Council consider (i) the 2011/2012 annual subscription payment, which has not yet to be released and (ii) the incoming 2012/2013 subscription payment. Based on the previous precedent set by the Committee, Members are asked to consider whether they would wish to agree to pay the NILGA annual subscription fee for the periods 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 at the reduced £76,500 annual payment. This reflects the previously agreed BCC subscription payment and is similar to the contributions made by both Cardiff and Glasgow towards their local government association.
- 2.7 Now that local government reform appears to be back on the agenda, it will be critical that NILGA fundamentally review its future role and focus within the context of the new 11 stronger council environment. During the next 1-3 year transition period, it will be important that the Council continues to work alongside NILGA, its Executive Committee and Office Bearers to explore how the Association can evolve and provide maximum benefit to the sector post reform.

3.0 Resource Implications

Financial and Human Resources

If Members agree to pay the proposed reduced subscription fee for the periods 2011/2012 and 2012/13, the financial implications would include:

- £76,500 (excluding VAT) for 2011/2012; and
- £76,500 (excluding VAT) for the period 2012/2013.

Initial discussions with the Director of Finance and Resources has indicated that adequate funding remains in the 2011/2012 corporate subscriptions budget and the agreed 2012/2013 budget estimates to cover subscription payment if agreed by Members.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the foregoing report and whether they would wish to agree payment of the NILGA annual subscription for the periods 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 at the reduced fee of £76,500."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Minutes of the Meeting of the
Governance Working Group**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Governance Working Group of 30th January.

Standing Order 55 - Employment of Relatives

It was reported that, in accordance with Standing Order 55 and the authority delegated to him, the Director of Finance and Resources had authorised the appointment of members of staff related to existing officers of the Council.

Noted.

**Tender for Computer Based Administrative
and Clerical Skills Testing**

The Committee granted authority for the commencement of a tendering exercise and delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Resources, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, to accept the most advantageous tender received in respect of a computer-based administrative and clerical skills testing software programme for a period of three years, with the option to extend for a further two years and in accordance with the agreed award criteria.

Asset Management

**Request to Lay a Wreath at the Cenotaph –
Irish Guards Association**

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from the Ulster Branch of the Irish Guards Association to have a “Walk for the Wounded” wreath-laying event at the City Hall Cenotaph at 2.00 p.m. on Saturday, 17th March, 2012. The Committee was reminded that the authority delegated to the Director of Property and Projects in respect of the use of the City Hall and grounds specifically excluded the Cenotaph and that, consequently, all such requests must be placed before the Committee.

The Committee was advised that the wreath-laying ceremony was the last part of a fundraising event which involved members of the Irish Guards Association walking the 128 miles from Dublin to Belfast from 26th February till 3rd March. The purpose behind completing the walk was “to raise funds for Irish Guardsmen injured in the line of duty in recent conflicts such as Iraq, Afghanistan and other conflicts”. On reaching the City Hall the Association wished to have a short service at the Cenotaph. Approximately 50 people would be in attendance. A piper and bugler would be present and there would be standard bearers representing both the Republic of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Irish Guards Associations. The organisers of the event would be liaising with the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Parades Commission about obtaining the necessary approvals for parading to the City Hall.

Accordingly, it was recommended that the Committee accede to the request from the Ulster Branch of the Irish Guards Association to hold a wreath-laying event at the City Hall Cenotaph as outlined.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**North Foreshore Giant's Park –
Proposed Licence for Site Investigation Works**

The Committee was reminded that a site of approximately 8.5 acres at the North Foreshore Giant's Park had been allocated to arc21 for the development of an organic composting facility. arc21 had procured Natural World Products Limited as its preferred operator and a planning application for the proposed development would be lodged with the Department of the Environment's Planning Service later in the year. The planning application would necessitate site investigation works and arc21 had appointed Golder Associates to carry out the works and prepare a report.

The Director of Property and Projects reported that Golder Associates had appointed a sub-contractor, Hanmar Site Investigation Services, which would require access to the site to drill boreholes and dig trial pits. The sub-contractor would require a licence to carry out the works which would commence in mid-March, 2012 and last for approximately two weeks. The contractor would be required to provide a methodology statement, a risk assessment report and insurance cover to the satisfaction of the Director of Property and Projects. In addition, the licence would indemnify the Council against any claim which might arise as a result of the licensee's use and occupation of the site.

The Committee granted a licence to Hanmar Site Investigation Services for the purpose of drilling boreholes and digging trial pits at the North Foreshore Giant's Park at a nominal fee of £1, subject to all works, including reinstatement works, being agreed with the Director of Property and Projects prior to the licence commencement.

Good Relations and Equality

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

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

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

Forum for Cities in Transition Conference

The decision of the Partnership to commend to the Committee that it be represented at the Forum for Cities in Transition Conference, to be held in October in Kirkuk, Northern Iraq, by up to six of the Elected Members of the Partnership (or their nominees) on the basis that the Forum would meet the costs of up to four delegates, with the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee approving the costs, if necessary, for an additional two places.

**Minutes of the Joint Centenaries Working Group
and Party Group Leaders' Forum**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meetings of the Joint Centenaries Working Group and Party Group Leaders' Forum of 27th January and 10th February and adopted the recommendations in respect of the following:

**Equality Impact Assessment Report
on the Flying of the Union Flag**

“Following a lengthy discussion on the matter, it was agreed that:

- (a) the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to proceed with the formal consultation process on the Equality Impact Assessment, based upon the best advice available from the Equality Commission and others as to the form which this should take;*
- (b) a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Working Group in relation to a number of questions which had been raised in relation to the religious breakdown of the Council workforce and whether a question could be included within the survey of employees asking if staff would be opposed to the removal of the Union flag from the City Hall and other Council properties;*
- (c) a further discussion on the Equality Impact Assessment would take place at the meeting to be held on 10th February, to be facilitated by Dr. Duncan Morrow.”*

Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

An extract of the minute of the Forum in relation to the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations is set out hereunder:

“Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

The Working Group considered the undernoted report which had been prepared by the Democratic Services Manager:

‘1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 18 November, agreed that the Historic Centenaries Working Group and the Party Leaders' Forum should meet for an intensive series of meetings to discuss the establishment of a Council Diversity Strategy. A range of issues were referred to that Joint

Group, including consideration of the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations in June, 2012. The celebrations will take place over the extended weekend of 2-5 June 2011 with the extra Public Holiday taking place on 5 June.

1.2 The Joint Group, at its meeting on 13 January, 2012, decided that consideration of the Council's involvement in the Diamond Jubilee celebrations should be prioritised due to the limited time available before June for arrangements to be set in place.

2 Key Issues

2.1 The Council previously agreed to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002 by way of a Civic Reception and the establishment of a small-scale grants scheme for groups wishing to celebrate the Jubilee by way of street parties etc. In 2002 the Council established a budget of £100,000 for the celebrations. Approximately £30,000 of this was used for the Civic Dinner with a significant amount of this being paid to "celebrities" for their attendance at the event.

2.2 It is worth noting the current positions of the Government and Buckingham Palace to the Jubilee celebrations:

2.3 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) at Whitehall is responsible for co-ordinating the Government led aspects of the celebrations. At the moment, Government planning centres on:

- A series of visits by the Royal Family including Northern Ireland;**
- A competition for the grant of city status to one town in the UK;**
- A competition for the award of a Lord Mayoralty (or Lord Provostship in Scotland); and**
- A commemorative Jubilee medal which is most likely to be focussed on the armed and emergency services.**

2.4 In addition, the Big Lottery Fund is expected to announce that its People's Millions Programme for 2012 will focus on Diamond Jubilee projects.

2.5 *Buckingham Palace has advised that the celebrations will be marked by grass roots community celebrations and national set-piece events. These include:*

- *The Queen will attend the Epsom Derby on Saturday 2 June;*
- *A “Big Jubilee Lunch” initiative where communities will be encouraged to celebrate the Jubilee will be organised on Sunday 3 June;*
- *The Diamond Jubilee Pageant with international cultural displays in Windsor Castle over 10-13 May;*
- *The Thames River Pageant will take place on 3 June with up to 1,000 boats being led down the Thames by the Royal Barge;*
- *A televised BBC concert in Buckingham Palace on Monday 4 June will be followed by the Jubilee Beacon Lighting event.*
- *A service of Thanksgiving at St Paul’s Cathedral will be preceded by a Carriage Procession;*
- *The lighting of beacons across the UK and the Commonwealth on 4 June.*

2.6 *Advice from the Government Department and from the Royal Household is that any celebrations should reflect the current economic climate and that wide-spread public involvement is more important than set-piece or special interest events.*

2.7 *At an Assembly level, OFMDFM have advised that there will not be any regional funding for Jubilee events and that organisations planning for such events must ensure that they are self financing.*

2.8 Issues for discussion

The first thing which the Joint Group will have to decide is whether it wishes to recommend that the Council should support the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations. If this recommendation is forthcoming then there are a number of actions which have been proposed and which require the appropriate authority.

2.9 Tree Planting – Saturday 2 June

The Jubilee Woods project has been chosen by the Queen as a charity and was launched by the Woodland Trust. The aim is to plant 6 million trees across the UK. As part of the Project, 60 “Diamond Woods” will be planted to mark the Jubilee.

Whilst the Council would not have the available land to plant a wood, Andrew Hassard has confirmed that the Parks and Leisure Department could organise the planting of commemorative trees in each part of the city to mark the Jubilee. Small, local community events could be arranged at each of these plantings.

Costs for this could be covered through the Parks and Leisure departmental budget.

2.10 Tea Dance(s) in City Hall/Ulster Hall – Saturday 2 June

A Tea Dance could be organised in the City Hall – 500 maximum using both the Great Hall and the Banqueting Hall. This would include limited hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and traybakes. These are always popular with older people. We could organise the event in the Ulster Hall but this is both more costly and has reduced capacity.

Approximate cost - £5,600.

2.11 “Big Sunday Lunch” Event – Sunday 3 June

Nationwide “Big Sunday Lunch” events are being encouraged across the United Kingdom for 3 June. If the Council wishes to mark this it could do so by arranging an event at the City Hall. It should be noted that the Continental Market will be in operation in the City Hall grounds over the Bank Holiday weekend which effectively rules out the holding of a Jubilee event in the grounds at the same time. However, it is suggested that an event inside the City Hall could be arranged on the following basis:

- Main focus inside City Hall where all space would be utilized, similar in operation to Titanic Festival Weekend held over Easter period. All function rooms accessible as well as Marble and Rotunda. Rolling type events.*
- Nostalgia, “trip down memory lane” themed events mixed with activities for young people.*
- Footage of Coronation could be shown on screen in Reception Room or Great Hall. Also possible to provide communications link between a large screen in Great Hall and what BBC showing on screen in grounds of City Hall.*

- *Stage in Great Hall could include Galaxy Showbands playing 1950's type music with likes of George Jones/Max Bygraves type compere. Pete Snodden to appeal to younger audience.*
- *Actors circulating in period costume.*
- *Historical drama performances.*
- *Story telling about history of the era.*
- *Street entertainers, juggling, walking on stilts – internal and in grounds.*
- *Tours of City Hall to focus on royal portraits and artefacts.*
- *“Crown” making and other art type workshops for kids.*
- ** Option of community type stalls – Fire Service, PSNI, RNLI charitable orgs locally based and in existence longer than 60 years to link in with jubilee theme: key charities identified with Diamond Jubilee.*

In 2002 when the Council was celebrating the Queen's Golden Jubilee, the Council held a major Civic Dinner costing £30,000. Such dinners, no matter how they are shaped in terms of the guest list, are always seen as being selective.

The suggestions set out above would not be as costly as a civic dinner, would allow open admission to any member of the public wishing to attend and would undoubtedly attract greater support at a community level.

Approximate costs - £15,000.

2.12 Jubilee Beacons – Monday 4 June

The Council has been requested to take part in a UK-wide Beacon Lighting event on 4 June 2012. Discussions have been held with Events Unit and they advise that this could be arranged using the experience within the Council under the Bonfire Management Programme. The event location would need to be determined but one suggestion might be Cave Hill. The lighting of the Beacon would be co-ordinated with the lighting of other similar beacons in neighbouring Council areas.

The estimated cost of this is £6,000.

2.13 Small-Scale Grants – Ongoing over the Jubilee Weekend

Community Services have indicated that they could administer a small grants scheme. We would need to establish the levels of the grant available and whether grants would be open only to groups registered with the Council. Grants will only be paid on receipted expenditure.

A budget provision of £50k has been made in the Councils estimates for potential Diamond Jubilee events. If the above recommendations are accepted this would leave an amount of £23k available for small grants.

Experience of administering small grant schemes shows that the vast majority of grants are below £500 and the total amount paid out tends to be about £10k less than the amount approved. This would allow a potential grant pool of £30k if the committee is minded to approve such a proposal.

As part of the grant-aid, groups would be asked to evaluate the impact of the events and provide a short report to the Council on their programme. This would allow the Council to consider the contribution of these individual events to its stated aim regarding Belfast as a 21st century city which is shared, open and tolerant.

2.14 Consideration of the Diversity Principles

At its meeting on 13 January, the Joint Group agreed to systematically test the principles already agreed and their practical application in relation to the programmes related to key anniversaries. These principles, as adopted by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, are attached at Appendix 1.

However it should be noted that the principles are designed to assess historic centenaries relating to events rather than an anniversary such as the Diamond Jubilee.

It is therefore suggested that the group may wish to consider the issue by referring to the Council's normal criteria for funding cultural events, an overview of which is attached at Appendix 2.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 A budget within the Civic Hospitality code has been allocated for Diamond Jubilee celebrations and set at £50,000 in the draft estimates.**

The costs associated with the proposed events are:

<i>Tree Planting</i>	<i>0 (covered by Parks & Leisure)</i>
<i>Tea Dance</i>	<i>£5,600</i>
<i>Big Sunday Lunch</i>	<i>£15,000</i>
<i>Beacons</i>	<i>£6,000</i>
<i>Small-Scale Grants</i>	<i>£30,000</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>£56,600</i>

4 Equality and Good Relations Implications

- 4.1 The Diamond Jubilee celebrations are being considered in the context of a wider diversity policy for the Council.**

5 Discussion required

- 5.1 The Joint Group is asked to consider the following:**

- Are the proposed actions outlined for the Diamond Jubilee programme satisfactory?**
- Are the Group happy for the funding to be considered under the Council normal funding criteria for cultural events?**
- Given the time constraints do the Group agree to make an early recommendation to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee?'**

Following a lengthy discussion, the Working Group agreed to the following course of action.

(Councillors McVeigh and Maskey wish to be recorded as abstaining from the decision.)

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to:

- (a) agree that the Council should mark the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen in June, 2012;*
- (b) agree that a series of tree planting events would be held in various parts of the City on Saturday, 2nd June and that local community events be arranged at each of the plantings;*
- (c) a tea dance being organised in the Ulster Hall on Saturday, 2nd June;*
- (d) the holding of the event in the City Hall on Sunday, 3rd June, as outlined in the report;*
- (e) agree to the organisation of the beacon lighting event on Monday, 4th June at the Cave Hill;*
- (f) agree that a small scale grants scheme be organised, whereby groups registered with the Council could apply for funding for Jubilee events over the Jubilee weekend. The grants would only be paid on the basis of receipted expenditure and groups applying would be required to abide by criteria to be agreed by the Working Group."*

The Committee approved also the undernoted criteria to be used in the funding of cultural events, including the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations:

**"CRITERIA to be used in the funding of
cultural events including the
DIAMOND JUBILEE Celebrations (proposed)**

In the Council's Good Relations Plan, 'developing shared cultural space' is a central theme.

All communities should be supported in the positive expression of their cultural heritage.

It is important that groups and organisations celebrate all that is good about their cultural traditions as a way to build understanding, celebrate diversity and affirm the validity of different backgrounds. In a shared city, these events should be safe, welcoming, accessible and of good quality.

Overarching guidelines

Cultural events supported by the Council should demonstrate:

1. Inclusivity

The event will be open and non-exclusive. It will involve diverse communities and seek to build better relationships within local neighbourhoods. Where possible, groups should also invite local neighbouring communities to their events.

2. Broad programme activity

The programme for the event should include a range of activities for all ages. It should be engaging, educational and based on factual information with a range of different inputs.

3. Respect for difference and diversity

Events should include a range of different perspectives and viewpoints on the subject where possible to stimulate wider debate in order to dispel myths, stereotypes and facilitate new thinking. The programme should seek to reflect the vibrancy and diversity of the modern city.

4. Presentation

The style of presentation of any event should be appropriate to the occasion; celebrations should be meaningful and respectful and also considerate of other community backgrounds. Events should not be divisive or triumphalist. No flags or emblems should be flown that could cause offence or seek to exclude people. Flags erected for cultural or festive events should also be time-bound to the timeframe of the staging of the event.

Council funding can only be used for:

- activities associated with running a street party
- bouncy castles
- bouncy slides
- face painting/magicians etc
- food and refreshments
- workshops/exhibitions/talks (where appropriate)
- venue hire

Council funding cannot be used for:

- flags
- bunting
- prizes (cash prizes and trophies)
- late night discos (beyond 9.00pm) or anything that might cause annoyance within local neighbourhoods
- alcohol”

Cross-Cutting Issues

Political Nominations on the Belfast Community and Safety Partnership and the Four District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships

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 political appointments, so far as is practicable, to reflect the strength of the Parties on the Council.

1.2 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed at its meeting held on 18th November, 2011 to appoint a PCSP consisting of nineteen Members (10 political and 9 independent); and to appoint the Political Members to the four DPCSPs (24 in total) based on the Council’s system of proportionality.

2 Key Issues

2.1 The allocation of the 10 political places on the main PCSP is as follows:

Sinn Fein Party	3
Democratic Unionist Party	3
Social Democratic & Labour Party	2
Alliance Party	1
Ulster Unionist Party	1

- 2.2 The breakdown of the total number of political places amongst the Parties on the four DPCSPs is:

Sinn Féin	8
Democratic Unionist Party	7
Social, Democratic and Labour Party	4
Alliance	3
Ulster Unionist Party	1
Progressive Unionist Party	1

- 2.3 A meeting was held with the Party leaders on 6th January and the following political composition of the four DPCSPs was agreed using a d'Hondt based table of choices:

North	South	East	West
2 SF	2 SF	2 SF	2 SF
2 DUP	2 DUP	2 DUP	1 DUP
1 SDLP	1 SDLP	1 SDLP	1 SDLP
1 UUP	1 ALL	1 ALL	1 ALL
			1 PUP

- 2.4 The individual Party nominations for the Belfast PCSP and the four DPCSPs have now been received and a list is provided at Appendix 1 along with the agreed allocation of Chairmanships of the four DPCSPs. The Council is required under the legislation to formally appoint the political Members to the PCSP and to the four DPCSPs.

3 **Resource Implications**

None

4 **Equality and Good Relations Implications**

None

5 **Recommendations**

- 5.1 The Committee is recommended to approve the appointment of the Political Members to the Principal Belfast PCSP and its four DPCSPs as set out in Appendix 1.

6 **Key to Abbreviations**

PCSP – Policing and Community Safety Partnership
DPCSP – District Policing and Community Safety Partnership

7 **Decision Tracking**

Suzanne Wylie, Director of Health and Environmental Services
24th March, 2012

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 Political Nominations and the appointment of
Chairmen to the Principal Belfast PCSP and its four DPCSPs.

Appendix 1

**Nominations to the Four District Policing and
Community Safety Partnerships**

**24 Places to be Nominated – 16 as of Right,
8 to be Allocated Using D'hondt**

North Belfast DPCSP – 6 Places

Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr M. E. Campbell
Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr Maskey
Democratic Unionist Party	-	Cllr McKee (Chairman)
Democratic Unionist Party	-	Cllr Thompson
Social Democratic and Labour Party	-	Cllr Convery
Ulster Unionist Party	-	Ald Browne

South Belfast DPCSP – 6 Places

Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr Hargey
Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr Ó Muilleoir
Democratic Unionist Party	-	Cllr Patterson
Democratic Unionist Party	-	Ald Stalford
Social Democratic and Labour Party	-	Cllr Mullan
Alliance Party	-	Ald Ekin (Chairman)

East Belfast DPCSP – 6 Places

- Sinn Fein Party - Cllr Hargey
- Sinn Fein Party - Cllr Ó Donnghaile
- Democratic Unionist Party - Cllr A Newton
- Democratic Unionist Party - Cllr Robinson
- Social Democratic and Labour Party - Cllr Hanna (Chairman)
- Alliance Party - Cllr Jones

West Belfast DPCSP – 6 Places

- Sinn Fein Party - Cllr Corr
- Sinn Fein Party - Cllr Garrett (Chairman)
- Democratic Unionist Party - Cllr Kingston
- Social Democratic and Labour Party - Cllr Attwood
- Alliance Party - Cllr Hendron
- Progressive Unionist Party - Ald Smyth

**Nominations to the Belfast Policing and
Community Safety Partnership**

10 Places Available

Sinn Fein Party (3 Places – 2 to be Nominated Plus 1 Chairman of DPCSP)

- Chairman of DPCSP – Cllr Garrett
- Cllr McVeigh (Chairman)
- Cllr Austin

**Democratic Unionist Party (3 Places – 2 to be Nominated Plus
1 Chairman of DPCSP)**

- Chairman of DPCSP – Cllr McKee
- Cllr Hussey
- Cllr Spence

Social Democratic and Labour Party (2 Places – 1 to be Nominated Plus 1 Chairman of DPCSP)

- Chairman of DPCSP – Cllr Hanna
- Cllr Keenan

Alliance Party (1 Place – 0 to be Nominated Plus 1 Chairman of DPCSP)

- Chairman of DPCSP – Ald Ekin

Ulster Unionist Party (1 Place – 1 to be Nominated)

- Ald Rodgers

Allocation of Chairmanships of the Four District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships

Year 1

- North Belfast Sub-Group - DUP
- South Belfast Sub-Group - ALL
- East Belfast Sub-Group - SDLP
- West Belfast Sub-Group - SF

Year 2

- North Belfast Sub-Group - SDLP
- South Belfast Sub-Group - SF
- East Belfast Sub-Group - DUP
- West Belfast Sub-Group - ALL

Year 3

- North Belfast Sub-Group - SF
- South Belfast Sub-Group - SDLP
- East Belfast Sub-Group - ALL
- West Belfast Sub-Group - DUP

Year 4

North Belfast Sub-Group	-	SF
South Belfast Sub-Group	-	DUP
East Belfast Sub-Group	-	SF
West Belfast Sub-Group	-	SDLP

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Nomination to the Northern Ireland
Policing Board of Independent Members**

The Committee was advised that the Council was required, under Part 3 of the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 to establish the Police and Community Safety Partnership and four District Police and Community Safety Partnerships. The legislation required that a Public Appointments process be undertaken in order to appoint the Independent Members to the Partnership and, in accordance with the Statutory Code of Practice on the Appointment of Independent Members to the Partnerships, the Council had appointed a short-listing and interviewing panel for the purpose of determining which of the independent applicants were deemed suitable for appointment.

The Committee was advised that the Statutory Code, at paragraph 64, required the Council to formally nominate to the Northern Ireland Policing Board those deemed to be suitable for appointment by the interview panel. The interviewing panel would commence its work on 17th February, with the completion of interviews on 9th March. That would result in a list of suitable candidates being tabled at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 23rd March and approved and adopted by the Council at its meeting on 2nd April. Bearing in mind the tight timescales that the Policing Board was working in relation to the appointment process, the Policing Board's Interim Chief Executive had written to all Council Chief Executives requesting that, providing that the appropriate Council agreement can be secured, Councils try to expedite that element of the process as quickly as practicable. To ensure that the Policing Board's final appointment panels could proceed with the appointment stage without due delay, it was suggested that authority be delegated to the Committee to approve at its meeting on 23rd March, on behalf of the Council, the list of suitable candidates.

The Committee agreed that the Council be recommended to delegate authority to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to approve, on behalf of the Council, the list of suitable candidates for consideration by the Northern Ireland Policing Board as independent members of the Belfast Police and Community Safety Partnership and the District Police and Community Safety Partnerships.

Chairman