

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 22nd November, 2013

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Robinson (Chairman);
Aldermen Browne and Campbell;
Councillors Attwood, Carson, Clarke, Corr,
Haire, Hargey, Hendron, Jones, McCabe, McCarthy,
Mac Giolla Mhín, McVeigh, Mullan, Newton,
Reynolds and Spence.

In attendance: Mr. P. McNaney, Chief Executive;
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;
Mr. John Walsh, Town Solicitor;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apology

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Alderman Newton.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Investment Programme

Investment Programme Half Year Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Committee the half year update report on year 2 of the Investment Programme.

2 Background

2.1 At their meeting in June Members approved the year 2 implementation plan for the Investment Programme. This report provided project briefs detailing milestones and actions for all the key projects and it is this document that Chief Officers use to performance manage the delivery of the Investment Programme. A key aspect of the performance management arrangements is

regular reporting to Committee and over the past few months members have received updates on a number of individual projects as well as details of spend and approvals within the capital programme. The Committee will receive a further detailed capital programme update and stage approval report at this meeting which should be considered in conjunction with this report.

2.2 This report now sets out the half year update on all the key projects in the Investment Programme.

3 Delivery of the Investment Programme
Year 2 – Key Highlights

3.1 The Investment Programme has projects and commitments across the four strands of Physical Investment; Economy; People, Communities and Neighbourhoods; and Value for Money. Details on the progress of all the physical projects (capital programme and LIF projects) have been circulated. The key highlights are listed below.

3.2 Physical Programme

3.2.1 In the Investment Programme we committed to investing £75 million in council facilities for local communities

- £20 million in partnership projects which will contribute to city regeneration
- £50 million levered from Europe and other sources to provide key economic infrastructure projects; and
- £5 million in smaller local regeneration projects

To date we have levered in a £29 m with the total due to be levered in above target at nearly £70million. A list of all schemes where funding has been agreed in principle and /or secured have been circulated.

Capital Programme

3.2.2 Significant progress has been made in the delivery of the physical development element of the Investment Programme since June 2013. This has included completion on a wide range of projects including –

- the opening of the £3m upgrade at Mary Peter's Track which included a new eight-lane track, a revamped field events area and spectators stand. The new track, the same as the one laid in the Olympic stadium in London, now meets the highest international standards for athletic events

- the opening of £4million refurbishments at Dunville and Woodvale Parks, which were match funded by the DSD. The refurbishments included a new 3g pitch and changing accommodation, new play areas, new paths, fencing and artwork
- the installation of the new £200,000 John Luke Bridge in Clement Wilson Park which was officially opened on 15th November
- the development of the £487,000 Mountain Bike Trail at Barnett's Demesne in partnership with SportNI and Lagan Rural Partnership
- the £470,000 new pitch at the Hammer Complex which was developed in partnership with SportNI
- In addition work is nearing completion on the £1.8m relocation of the Belfast Welcome Centre to Donegal Square which was handed over to the Council at the start of November. An official opening, to which all Members will be invited, is taking place on 12th December
- 3 community gardens have been opened across the city at Finlay Park, Knocknagoney Linear Park and Whiterock
- a new £600,000 fuel station at Duncrue for Council vehicles

3.2.3 Work is also underway on -

- the £4million Phase 1 of the Connswater Community Greenway project including the installation of the new £500,000 steel bridge at Victoria Park which has been named after local playwright Sam Thompson
- the new 3G pitch at Marrowbone which went on ground at the start of November
- Phase 3 of the Alleygating Programme with test gates installed and the programme due to roll-out from January

3.2.4 Preparatory work is also continuing on a wide range of projects including -

- Pitches strategy – The development of new 3G pitches and changing accommodation is taking place at 10 sites across the city. Planning permission has been granted for the new pavilions at Waterworks and Dixon, planning permission has been applied for all other sites with the exception of Cherryvale. Tendering is underway for the majority of the sites and the first work is expected to go on ground in the New Year.
- Girdwood Hub – a letter of offer for £9.6m has been received and discussions on terms and conditions are continuing with SEUPB.
- Belfast Zoo – Activity Centre – new £430,000 activity centre at Belfast Zoo part funded through the ERDF. The project is due to commence early next year.
- Public Bike Share Scheme – a bidders day was held on 12th November.
- the Belfast Waterfront Exhibition and Conference Centre, Innovation Centre, Creative Hub and the infrastructure at the North Foreshore – these projects are all subject to ERDF funding and no letters of offer have been received. However Committee has previously agreed that the Council may continue to work at risk on this project in order to meet the tight programme timescale but that no construction contracts will be awarded until LOOs are received and all outstanding issues have been resolved.
- Olympia and Andersonstown regenerations – as part of Phase 1 of the Leisure Transformation Programme.

Local Investment Fund Programme

- 3.2.5 Members will be aware that an integral part of the Investment Programme was the establishment of a £5million Local Investment Fund which was designed to support the delivery of key local regeneration projects in neighbourhoods and as a means for Members to connect with local communities in their area, in preparation for their formal role in community planning under the Reform of Local Government.
- 3.2.6 To date 67 have been recommended in principle for funding under the Local Investment Fund; of which 65 remain following 2 groups withdrawal from the process. Out of these 33 projects (of the 65 in total) have fully progressed through due diligence process; representing £2,062,502 of committed funding. . Due-diligence

work is continuing on the other projects which have been approved in principle and officers are working closely with groups to ensure that all information is being forwarded to the Council. A further update on LIF is contained in the Area Working update report which is also on the agenda for today's Committee.

Belfast Investment Fund

- 3.2.7** Members will be aware the Belfast Investment Fund (previously the City Investment Fund) was established to enable the Council to take a lead role and work in partnership to deliver key investment projects across the city.
- 3.2.8** The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee have already agreed that 13 projects as outlined below are progressed to Stage 1 as potential projects under the Belfast Investment Fund which will test their feasibility in the first instance. Further recommendations from the North Area Working Group are included in the Area Working update report which is also on the agenda for today's Committee. Further updates on these projects will be brought to Committee as necessary

South	Lagan, Gilpins and Markets Tunnels
Shankill	St. Andrew's Church
West	St. Comgall's, An Sportslann, Corpus Christi – sports pitches, St Mary's Christian Brothers – sports facilities, Conway Mill, Belfast Hills, Lionra Uladh (Raidio Failte) and Suffolk community forum – integrated pre-school development at Teeling's Green
East	Strand Cinema Community Arts project

- 3.2.9** Members are asked to note that Corporate Communications are working on a calendar of events to ensure that the media opportunities around each of these projects is maximised. As highlighted pictures of the above projects are attached at Appendix 2 so Members can see both the completed projects and the work which is underway. The Property and Projects Department is also happy to arrange site visits for Members/Party Groups to be undertaken to any of the projects including capital programme projects, LIF projects or emerging BIF projects which the Council has contributed to.

3.3 Economy

- 3.3.1** In support of improving the Economy the Council has provided employability and skills training to 3,278 people significantly exceeding its target of 1,200. Internally work is continuing to increase job opportunities in BCC with 107 work placements created and 76 job opportunities advertised.
- 3.3.2** We continued to invest in the city through our events by hosting a very successful World Police and Fire Games with 7,000 participants attending from over 60 different countries. Preparations have begun for the Giro D'Italia in 2014 and the return of the Tall Ships in 2015.
- 3.3.3** In support of the tourism sector the roll out of World Host training has begun, with a target to accredit 400 businesses by Spring 2014. Octobers Restaurant Week received positive feedback with final outcomes currently being evaluated. Additionally, 70 people attended the launch of the Creative and Cultural Belfast Fund in October.
- 3.3.4** We continue to expand the international profile and economic relationships of the City. India week, held in June, attracted over 300 businesses and facilitated new export links. In the autumn the Lord Mayor spearheaded several trade missions to New York and Silicon Valley. These initiatives were extremely well received, and additional investment into Belfast is anticipated. We are also strengthening our links with China. The Mayor of Shenyang will be visiting the City in November where he will meet the Lord Mayor and sign a letter of intent to strengthen city to city relationships.
- 3.3.5** The three strands of the £16.7 Super-Connected Belfast project have been agreed – voucher scheme, wireless and Wi-Fi. The Belfast Voucher scheme received more applications than any other city and puts us on course to be the most successful of all the cities. The success of the Belfast Voucher scheme has led to the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) using our scheme design and administration processes as the template for all other cities. It is anticipated that the Secretary of State for DCMS will announce the decision on the full rollout of the voucher scheme early in November. If the scheme is approved it will see us opening up the full scheme across the whole of Belfast. DCMS have agreed that the vouchers can be applied to businesses in the areas transferring from Lisburn and Castlereagh.

- 3.3.6** Increasing local procurement has been prioritised with Belfast spend at 43% in 2013-14. An independent study was carried out by CLES which showed that every £1 of council expenditure generates; 76 pence is spent or re-spent in the Belfast economy and 80 pence spent or re-spent in the post LGR boundary. A final report on the study will be presented to the Development Committee in November. A toolkit has been produced to increase business ability to build consortiums or joint ventures. This will open up more public tenders to smaller companies, and has been supported with capacity building workshops. The Council's website has also been refreshed to make it easier for businesses to locate tender opportunities and an internal 'buy local first' campaign has commenced asking departments to consider local suppliers in the first instance.
- 3.4** **People Communities and Neighbourhoods**
- 3.4.1** Project activity continues on Peace III funded projects including Youth Engagement and Tension Monitoring. The Youth Engagement project has allocated £345,546 for service delivery in local communities to engage with young people and their families to address issues at identified interface areas across the city. Through this project over 200 young people and their families are receiving intensive support from various agencies. A total of 319,536 has been allocated to deliver Tension Monitoring services in local neighbourhoods through Neighbourhood Plans with delivery happening via local community groups
- 3.4.2** The IBM Smarter Cities challenge took place in September. An international team of six IBM senior officers provided £400,000 worth of professional expertise through a 3 week period to study deprivation within the context of segregation in two pilot areas. The team attended 47 meetings, met with approx 150 people from over 60 stakeholders including community and voluntary sector government departments, GPs and health professionals, schools and representatives from the private sectors. The final report is due by the end of November.
- 3.4.3** Through Belfast's Police and Community Safety Partnerships we have allocated a total of £620,000 towards projects and initiatives in local communities which will help to tackle issues such as alcohol, drugs and anti-social behaviour. This has included awarding more than £194,000 in PCSP Small Grants across Belfast enabling 48 groups to deliver projects that tackle crime and antisocial behaviour in their local area.

- 3.4.4 The area intervention pilot in Lower Falls / Divis continues with the delivery of an action plan consisting of over 20 additional projects. This intervention has also secured an additional £150,000 for services to be delivered in the local community as well as significant increased service deliver through current service providers. This includes the installation of an outdoor learning classroom at the local primary school, delivery of educational and training programmes aimed to increase job opportunities in the local area and the implementation of intensive youth and family support programmes to tackle health issues and reduce antisocial behaviour. Statistics show that levels of ASB in the area have been reduced by 25% since the intervention started.
- 3.4.5 The Council continues to work in partnership with a range of agencies to tackle health inequalities and with the Belfast Strategic Partnership facilitated a mindfulness conference with 350 people in attendance. A Kids Space event was delivered in the City attracting 1,000 children and we also facilitated two Age Friendly workshops. Through the Active Belfast Partnership we have supported more than 1,500 people with physical activity programmes following their referral from the health sector and allocated £200k to local organisations through the Active Belfast grant scheme.
- 3.4.6 The Council continues to take a lead role in developing its work on Age Friendly Belfast, over the past six months some of the work we have delivered on includes engaging over 700 older people from local communities to help develop a draft 3 year Age-Friendly action plan. We have also engaged with 518 older people through our winter warmth clinics, resulting in 200 additional referrals for the home safety check scheme.
- 3.4.7 As part of our ongoing work to regenerate local neighbourhoods we continue with our Dilapidated Buildings project. Since April 2013 we have successfully completed our DOE funded project and which carried out £486,000 worth of refurbishment work on dilapidated properties across the city. A further 12 properties have had significant remedial work carried out and BCC are working with 34 owners who are in the process of refurbishing dilapidated properties in local communities.

- 3.4.8** The Council continues to improve its open space with two further parks, Lagan Meadows and Grove Playing Fields, being awarded Green Flag and ten other sites retaining their Green Flag Status.
- 3.4.9** In terms of Renewing the Routes, work on the Ormeau Road and Newtownards Road is progressing. Additional DSD funding has been secured, and designs are being developed. Design Teams have been appointed for Oldpark / Stewartstown Road and, following completion of stakeholder consultation, contact with individual owners has commenced
- 3.4.10** Our playground improvement programme continues with refurbishment work currently underway at Dover Street, Taughmonagh and Michelle Baird Memorial Park. Work on these is due to be completed by the end of December. Work will commence in the New Year on a further three playgrounds at Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park; New Lodge and Clara Street which will be due for completion by the end of March.
- 3.5** Value for Money
- 3.5.1** The Council is continuing to work through this year's estimating process to achieve its £2m efficiency savings target. Future efficiency savings are also being targeted through the Procurement and Fleet Improvement Programmes.
- 3.5.2** The implementation of the Financial Improvement Programme to increase the number of creditors paid within 28 days is progressing and we have exceeded our half year target of suppliers paid within this time frame with 78.3 % paid against the target of 70%.
- 3.5.3** The agreed programme of work on rate setting is progressing with options to be considered by Members in November. The Council continues to work with LPS on vacancy inspections to help maximise the rate base. The IRRV have been commissioned to support the Council in identifying and resolving issues relating to the new rate base in line with Local Government Reform.
- 3.5.4.** Through the Investment Programme we have a commitment to maximise the social and community benefits of our physical investment programme to date social clauses have been included in a number of our contracts including; Connswater professional services contract phase 1; Connswater work contract phase 1;

Belfast Waterfront professional services contract; Waste contract for kerbside collection; Integrated Design Framework and Girdwood Hub. In addition the Council has commissioned the development of a social clause policy and guidance notes.

4 Supporting the Delivery of the Investment Programme Year 2

4.1 Programme and performance management arrangements are in place to support the delivery of the Investment Programme. Project managers are responsible for delivery of all key projects with Programme managers providing additional support and assurance on their delivery. In the case of large or complex projects project boards have been established with a Chief Officer assigned as Senior Responsible Officer. An Oversight Board chaired by the Chief Executive meets monthly to receive updates on projects and resolve any issues. Committee will continue to receive update reports on various aspects of the programme including the stage movements in the capital programme. A full year end update on all year 2 projects will be presented to committee as part of the Council's annual report.

4.2 Work has also continued in the delivery of the agreed communications plan for the Investment Programme which included a significant amount of media relations, web and social media and branding activities. A summary of activity from June to October is included in Appendix 5 together with an outline of potential communication opportunities for the next three months and below are some major milestones during which the profile of the Investment Programme can be raised:

- The opening of the Belfast Welcome Centre on 12 December to highlight the achievements of the Investment Programme during the past calendar year;**
- The announcement of the Waterfront Hall funding – used to highlight our commitment and funding secured from other sources for major projects, including Girdwood and Superconnected;**
- The announcement of the rates in January/February – ‘what your money is doing for the city’**

- Launching the second phase of the Investment Programme in February/March and outlining projects that will be delivered up until April 2015, including the Leisure Transformation Programme

5 **Resource Implications**

- 5.1 The resources for the delivery of the plan are included in the Investment Programme budget.

6 **Equality and Good Relations Implications**

- 6.1 There are no equality and good relations implications arising from this report.

7 **Recommendations**

- 7.1 Members are asked to note the year 2 half year report for the Investment Programme

- 7.2 Members are asked to note the communication activity set out at Appendix 5 and provide direction on how they wish to take advantage of the communication opportunities for the period November 2013 to January 2014.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that a reception be held for those members of staff who had been involved in the Investment Programme.

Area Working Update – including Update on Belfast Investment Fund, the Local Investment Fund and Area Interventions

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

“1.0 **Relevant Background Information**

Role of the Area Working Groups

- 1.1 Members are aware that the Area Working Groups (AWGs) were established last year as a means of connecting Members to local areas in preparation for their role in community planning under the Reform of Local Government. In governance terms, the AWGs were established to have an advisory role, informing the implementation of the Investment Programme. It was agreed that the AWGs would have no delegated authority and no budget.

1.2 Since this time, the AWGs have played an integral role in recommending investment decisions for their areas in terms of the Local Investment Fund, the Feasibility Fund and Local Interventions Funds to the SP&R Committee. It was also previously agreed at SP&R last November that the AWGs would play a central part in the decisions related to the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF) given their knowledge of local areas and projects.

1.3 This report should be read in conjunction with the '*Investment Programme Half Year Update*' report which is also on the agenda at today's Committee. Members are asked to note Property & Projects is happy to facilitate site visits for Members/Party Groups to any of the Council physical projects (including those funded under the Capital Programme and LIF) as they may help inform future investment decisions under BIF.

2.0 Key issues

Belfast Investment Fund – Update

2.1 Members will be aware the Belfast Investment Fund (previously the City Investment Fund) was established to enable the Council to take a lead role and work in partnership to deliver key investment projects across the city. Members have been updated at Committee in September and October on the objectives of the BIF and its approval processes. These are reattached at Appendix 1 and 2 respectively for Members' interest. This approval process reflects the Stage Approval process that SP& R has previously agreed that all Council capital projects must go through whereby decisions on which projects progress are taken by SP&R Committee in its role as the Council's investment decision maker. The first stage of this process is the development of a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) which will test the four abilities of the projects – i.e. feasibility, deliverability, affordability, sustainability.

2.2 The SP&R Committee has already agreed recommendations from the South, East, West and Shankill Area Working Groups in relation to BIF. Since this meeting the North Area Working Group has also shortlisted a number of emerging BIF proposals. These are outlined in the Table below for Members.

2.3

AWG	Recommended projects	Status
North	Malgrove; Cancer Lifeline; St. Kevin's Hall; Grace Women's Centre; Ballysillan Masterplan and the Old Grove site	To be agreed by Committee
West	St. Comgall's, An Sportslann, Corpus Christi – sports pitches, St Mary's Christian Brothers – sports facilities, Conway Mill, Belfast Hills, Lionra Uladh (Raidio Failte) and Suffolk community forum – integrated pre-school development at Teeling's Green	Agreed by Committee 25th October
East	Strand Cinema Community Arts project	Agreed by Committee 25th October

AWG	Recommended projects	Status
South	Lagan, Gilpins and Markets Tunnels	Agreed by Committee 20th September
Shankill	St. Andrew's Church	Agreed by Committee 20th September

- 2.4** Members are asked to consider if they wish to progress the projects as recommended by the North Area Working Group to be moved to Stage 1 (i.e. the development of an SOC) which will test their feasibility in the first instance. Members are asked to note that this does not constitute a final decision to invest in any project. A high level overview of the information that will be assessed through the SOC is attached at Appendix 3. Any costs associated with the development of SOCs will come from the Feasibility Fund.
- 2.5** Members are asked to note that if they agree the recommendations by the North AWG as outlined above there are now 19 emerging BIF proposals which are being taken forward to Stage 1 – Feasibility. As highlighted last month there are associated resource implications with this, particularly when considered in the context of the other work which the Council is progressing currently in terms of the physical programme with over 70 projects on the Capital Programme; 65 under the Local Investment Fund, the developing Leisure Transformation Programme and the implications of SIF which have not yet been quantified. If the above projects are agreed, as with the other emerging BIF proposals, a project sponsor (or two depending on project scale) from the Property & Projects Department will be assigned to the emerging BIF proposals. Once these are assigned the project sponsor (s) will be in contact with groups to kick-off the SOC process and agree next steps.

3.0 Local Investment Fund – Update

- 3.1** Members will be aware that an integral part of the Investment Programme was the establishment of a £5million Local Investment Fund which was designed to support the delivery of key local regeneration projects in neighbourhoods. At the time of establishment it was intended that the lifespan of LIF would be over the current council term (i.e. up to 2015). To date 67 projects have been recommended in-principle for funding; of which 65 remain following 2 groups withdrawal from the process. Out of these, 33 projects have fully progressed through due diligence process; representing £2,062,502 of committed funding.
- 3.2** Members, through the recent round of AWGs, have been updated that some of the recommended LIF projects have made limited progress in terms of going through the due-diligence process which the Council has established to ensure that proposals are properly and rigorously scrutinised. This has been due to a range of factors including the groups' capacity to manage capital projects, the scale and complexity of some schemes and the fact that many are reliant on match funding that is not yet in place, particularly from the Social Investment Fund (SIF). At this point it is likely that some of these schemes may not complete by the end of the current Council term and/or many have to de-commit their in principle funding. Members are asked to note that even projects which have gone through due-diligence may still not complete due to a range of external factors including planning, match funding and other technical issues. Members may therefore have to reconsider these schemes and there may be an opportunity to reallocate monies to alternative projects or existing LIF projects which require additional funding.
- 3.3** In the first instance, and to help inform AWGs about which projects are likely not progress and how much additional monies may be available for reallocation, it is proposed that the Director of Property & Projects writes to all groups who have not yet been through the due-diligence process and requests that all outstanding information is provided by the end of January 2014. Members, through the AWGs, will continue to be kept up to date of the progress of LIF projects and in the interim, AWGs will be asked to consider alternatives for any potential reallocation which could include additional money to existing schemes, removing the requirement for match funding and/or progressing new schemes.

- 3.4 As outlined above, some LIF projects are dependent on match funding being secured and this is a key reason why they cannot be progressed through the due-diligence process. One of the key match funding streams for projects is SIF and some Area Working Groups have requested that a letter is sent to OFMDFM expressing their concern about these delays. However it is understood that there may be announcements in relation to SIF in the coming weeks. The Committee is therefore asked to consider if it wishes to send a letter on behalf of all the AWGs in this regard.

Specific projects issues – Walkway Community Association

- 3.5 In October 2012 the SP&R Committee agreed, in principle, to provide LIF support to the Walkway Community Association's Open Space development project up to a value of £250,000 (Ref – ELIF008). The Walkway Community Association has developed a draft concept plan to include a MUGA and a play park on the land. This is outlined in red on the plan attached at Appendix 4. Members are asked to note that the land required for the project is owned by the DRD Roads Service. DRD is reluctant to enter into a lease arrangement with the Walkway Community Association and their preference is to enter into a lease with the Council.
- 3.6 The land forms part of the Comber Greenway and is currently zoned within the draft BMAP as EWAY and it is within the protection line for the Comber Route E14 road scheme. The current proposals for the Belfast Rapid Transit are that it will run along the Upper Newtownards Road rather than the Comber Greenway, therefore the land will not now be required for the EWAY. In addition, the DRD Minister, Danny Kennedy, has confirmed DRD's intention to abandon the E14 Road Scheme on the adoption of BMAP (now scheduled for Spring 2014) and thereafter the land could then be subject to the normal land disposal process, should this be deemed appropriate.
- 3.7 The Estates Management Unit have had discussions with DRD Roads Service to clarify the way forward. Roads Service have agreed to initiate the disposal process on publication of BMAP and it is noted that the publication of BMAP is at the discretion of Planning Service and is currently scheduled to be published in Spring 2014. In the interim Members are asked to agree that officers continue to progress discussions with Roads Service with a view to acquiring, by way of long lease, this land and progress discussions with Walkway Community Association with a view to

sub letting said land with a further report to be brought to this Committee in due course. Members are asked to note that Walkway Community Association will be responsible for the maintenance and the long term sustainability of the facilities.

4.0 Local Intervention Fund

Shankill AWG - *Local Intervention*

4.1 The Shankill AWG made the following recommendation for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their Local Intervention Fund money:

£	AWG Comments
£40,000	That £40,000 be allocated from the Shankill's AWG's Local Intervention Fund to support a range of community events and activities in the run up to Christmas designed to animate the local area, bring people together and contribute to local businesses

5.0 Area planning

5.1 Members will be aware that they have previously agreed to look at the development of area plans within the context of the emerging community planning framework. Members are asked to note that a scenario planning workshop was held with the Inner South NRP in October to look at proposals for the broader Markets, Lower Ormeau and Donegall Pass areas. This workshop was attended by local community representatives, local Elected Members and officers from departments/services across the Council. The planning session was very well received and it is intended to follow this up with further scenario planning workshops in Falls/Lower Divis and Andersonstown in the coming months. The outcomes of workshops such as these, together with other masterplans which are being led by DSD and the various NRP plans which are already in place, can provide a nucleus for the development of area frameworks which in turn can help inform Members' investment decisions.

6.0 Resource Implications

Financial: BIF - Any costs associated with the development of Strategic Outline Cases for emerging BIF proposals will be met from the Feasibility Fund.

Human: Officer time in working with groups on developing their project proposals

Assets: none at present

7.0 Equality Implications

As part of the Stage approval process, a screening will be carried out on each project to indicate potential equality and good relations impacts and any mitigating actions needed.

8.0 Recommendations

Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and

Belfast Investment Fund

- agree the request from the North AWG that their shortlisted BIF projects (St. Kevin’s Hall; Malgrove; Grace Women’s Centre; Cancer Lifeline; Ballysillan Masterplan and Old Grove site) are progressed to Stage 1 and the development of SOCs to test their feasibility, affordability, sustainability and deliverability. Members are asked to note that this does not constitute a final decision to invest in any project**
- note the associated resourcing implications and that a project sponsor (or two depending on project scale) from the Property & Projects Department will be assigned to the emerging BIF proposals. Once these are assigned the project sponsor (s) will be in contact with groups to kick-off the SOC process and agree next steps.**

Local Investment Fund

- note that some projects which have been recommended for in-principle funding under LIF have made limited progress in terms of going through the due-diligence process and agree in the first instance that the Director of Property& Projects writes to all groups in this situation to request that all outstanding information on projects is received by the end of January and to also note that even projects which have gone through due-diligence may still not complete due to a range of external factors including planning, match funding and other technical issues**

- note that AWGs will continue to receive updates on the status of all LIF projects in their areas in the coming months which will help inform decisions re re-allocations of LIF monies to existing or alternative projects
- note that some AWGs have expressed concern over the ongoing delays in decisions regarding SIF projects and the impact that this is having on groups seeking match funding and have requested that a letter outlining these concerns is forwarded to OFMdfM. However it is understood that announcements regarding SIF may be forthcoming and the Committee is therefore asked to consider if it wishes to write to OFMdfM on behalf of the AWGs in this regard
- *Walkway Community Association (ELIF 008)* – agree that officers progress discussions with Roads Service with a view to acquiring, by way of long lease, the land outlined red on the plan at Appendix 4 and progress discussions with Walkway Community Association with a view to sub letting said land with a further report to be brought to this Committee in due course

Local Intervention Fund

- agree the Local Intervention recommendation as proposed by the Shankill AWG

Area Planning

- note a scenario planning workshop was held recently with the Inner South NRP and it is intended to run similar workshops in the coming months in the Lower Falls/Divis areas and at Andersonstown.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Leisure Transformation Programme

(Mr. A. Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee was reminded that it had agreed previously the urgent need for fundamental change in its Leisure Services, with a focus on delivering better health outcomes and improved value for money. In a report which had been considered by the Committee in March, 2013, three potential business delivery models had been outlined:

- transformed in-house direct service operator;
- non-profit distributing organisation (NPDO); and
- private sector partnership.

The in-house “status quo” option had been ruled out as a result of an agreement to seek £2 million efficiency savings from the Leisure Service budgets, which was to be delivered by 1st April, 2016. That had been agreed by the Committee in June when it had set a £105 million capital expenditure affordability limit for the Leisure Transformation Programme. The Committee was advised that work was now underway to develop the three business model options, with the intention that the report thereon being submitted to the Committee in December in order that it could specify a preferred business operating model. The options report would provide information on the costs, benefits and sustainability of the three delivery models.

The Director of Parks and Leisure explained that, in order to inform the Committee's decision on the preferred business model, a number of strategic criteria had been prepared so that Members could examine the three models and assess which delivery model offered the most potential for delivering the political ambitions for the Leisure Transformation Programme.

The strategic criteria would be used as a framework for discussions at a workshop to be held on 6th December. At that workshop, external consultants would outline the detail of the three options under consideration and support Members to select their preferred option. The objectives of the workshop were:

- to examine future business model options for delivering leisure services in Belfast;
- to identify a preferred business model for presentation to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for its decision; and
- to understand the legal implications of the decision and a route map for implementation.

An additional session would also be held on the evening of 5th December. Those events would inform the formal recommendation to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on

13th December. He pointed out that all Members of the Committee and the Parks and Leisure Committee would be invited to attend.

The Committee agreed to the holding of the workshop and additional session and noted the strategic criteria.

Local Government Reform

Programme and Resourcing

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 Members will be aware that we are now in the midst of the Local Government Reform (LGR), with key decisions having been made in regards to the timing of elections to Shadow Councils and the transfer of new functions and powers to the Council. The Local Government Bill, which will bring about significant governance and operational changes for local government, is currently making its way through the NI Executive. Members should note the following key milestones :

- Inaugural meeting of Belfast Statutory Transition Committee on 10 December 2013
- Shadow Council elections 22 May 2014
- New Council operational 1 April 2015

1.2 In 2015 the Council will be responsible for planning, regeneration and community planning on behalf of the city and at the same time the city's boundary will be extended; welcoming around 56,000 people, 22,000 households and 1,000 businesses into the new Belfast. This is a once in a generation transformation programme and we have under 200 days remaining until elections to the Shadow Council and just over 500 days to deliver the foundations for the new Council becoming operational and delivering the new functions and powers.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 Members will be aware that Local Government Reform represents the biggest change to impact upon the Council since 1972 and is a highly complex programme of work with many uncertainties and inter-dependencies. This report attempts to articulate a recommended approach to the delivery this programme and the resources required to support this.

- 2.2** Members will appreciate that the LGR work is being taken forward alongside maintaining current business as usual, the delivery of the £150m Investment Programme, the £105m Leisure Transformation Programme, and the £20m Efficiency Programme.

What does the LGR programme of work involve?

- 2.3** In a simplified form, the following sets out what the Council needs to do to deliver the LGR programme and ensure the organisation is in a state of readiness to manage the change.

- **Get the Statutory Transition Committee (STC) up and running**
- **Decide on what governance arrangements will work best for the new Council**
- **Recruit the new Chief Executive**
- **Work out how best, within financial limits, to deliver services to the areas moving in from Castlereagh and Lisburn councils**
- **Transfer people and assets from Castlereagh and Lisburn councils**
- **Develop a physical programme of projects for the new areas transferring**
- **Consider the impact of Leisure Transformation Programme for those areas transferring**
- **Agree a rates convergence scheme for transferring ratepayers**
- **Communications and engagement with new ratepayers**
- **Transfer of money, people and assets from central government attached to the new functions and powers**
- **Be in a position to deliver transferring services from central government e.g. planning and regeneration**
- **Work out how best for the city the new powers of planning, regeneration and community planning will be exercised**
- **Run the elections in May 2014**
- **Develop and implement a major capacity building programme for Members**
- **Assess the impact of all of these on the new organisation in terms of, for example:-**

- Creation of a Constitution and associated governance frameworks e.g. Standing Orders
 - Support required for new governance arrangements
 - New Corporate Plan
 - New Corporate Risk Register
 - Set a new rate in context of new ratebase
 - Establish new budgets
 - New Medium-Term financial plan
 - New Capital Programme
 - New planned maintenance programme
 - Determine organisation structure required to support new governance arrangements
-
- Wind-up of the old organisation in 2015

2.4 In order to ensure that the Council is in a position to deliver this programme a detailed transition (action) plan and resource plan has been prepared. It should be noted that the LGR transition plan, by its very nature, will remain an evolving programme of work with further iterations submitted to Committee as we move forward. The following outlines the key actions over the coming months for Members in relation to LGR and related priority areas.

November 2013

- Agree the engagement mechanism for the LGR governance work
- Agree the LGR resource plan
- Leisure Transformation Programme Workshop (23 or 30 November 2013)

December 2013

- Party Group briefings re: rates and estimates process
- Members' workshop on governance arrangements
- Agree Appointment Panel for new Chief Executive recruitment

January 2014

- All Members' Workshop on corporate priorities
- Setting of the rate and estimates

- Detailed Party Group briefings on governance arrangements
- Intensive capacity building programme linked to transferring functions including planning

February 2014

- Detailed Party Group briefings on governance arrangements
- Intensive capacity building programme linked to transferring functions including planning
- Members' engagement on Community Planning and Local Area Working
- Resource Plan

2.5 Members will recall that in June 2013, it was agreed that a £2m budget be allocated for local government reform and to support the necessary preparatory work required. Over the last number of months there has been detailed work undertaken to further define the exact nature of the resources required and the allocation of the agreed £2m LGR budget. The detail is set out at Appendix 2 of the report. Key highlights are set out below for Members consideration

1. Governance

- expertise and support to work with Members to identify and examine the types of new governance and political management arrangements available to the council and the associated issues for consideration

2. Service Transition linked to Lisburn and Castlereagh and central government departments

- Support officers to undertake necessary due diligence assessments and develop service convergence and delivery plans
- Expertise and corporate challenge including service redesign and potential efficiency opportunities

3. Community Planning

- Expertise to assist in designing an approach including options around delivery models/structures at a city, thematic and neighbourhood level

- Establishing the evidence base and process for city-wide engagement
- Development of key frameworks including city vision and outcome framework

4. Regeneration

- Consultancy support for the development of a Strategic Regeneration and Investment Plan specifically focused in the first instance on the City Centre. This will provide the policy context for the Local Area Plan which the new Council will be required to produce by 2017.
- Expertise/practitioner support to take forward necessary developmental work in relation to future delivery structures, frameworks and processes.
- Members will note that a more detailed report is on the Committee agenda for discussion.

5. Planning

- Expertise/practitioner support to inform design work in terms of future delivery structures, processes and governance arrangements for a fit-for-purpose planning service
- Commence early preparatory work in relation to the creation of a Local Development Plan and any associated local area plans
- Development of local Area Planning Policies
- Development of Enforcement process and policies

6. Organisational Support

There will be a substantial programme of work to be taken forward to put in place the necessary organisational foundations to ensure that the council is in a state of readiness to deliver the reform programme and associated governance, legislative and functional changes. For example:-

- HR – e.g. staff transfer, creation of new structures, capacity building
- Finance – e.g. rates convergence, new budgets, new rate, winding up of existing council
- Legal – e.g. transfer of people and assets/ legislative and governance change, planning as a quasi-judicial function

- **Estates – e.g. transfer of assets and liabilities, accommodation implications**
- **Communications– e.g. engagement with current and new staff, residents**
- **Digital Services – e.g. connectivity to new assets and staff from Lisburn and Castlereagh and also central government departments, provision of necessary ICT infrastructure, provision of new hardware and software**

- 7. Shadow Council period - Whilst it is understood that central funding is likely to be made available to support specific costs which may be incurred by Councils in operating in Shadow form (e.g. payment of Members allowances), no detailed Guidance has yet been released by the DoE. The Director of Finance and Resources will bring back a further report on the detail on any financial consequences for the Council of operating in Shadow Council in parallel to the running the existing council and the associated options in regards to how this can be funded.**

Role of Members in driving the process forward

- 2.6 Over coming weeks and months there will be increasing demands being placed on Members time and energy in helping to take forward the LGR change programme; in shaping the new organisation in terms of its future governance arrangements; and the delivery of the new place-shaping functions and powers which it will have responsibility for delivering. As the planning and regeneration authority for the city and having a statutory duty to lead a community planning process, the Council and Members will be more outward focused and will have a greater leadership role within the City.**
- 2.7 In the lead up to and preparation for April 2015, it will be important that Members' time is effectively utilised and focused on the key priority issues. There will also be a need to develop a shared understanding and capacity among both Members and officers in terms of the delivery of the new functions and powers and operating within the new governance arrangements that will be introduced.**
- 2.8 Whilst it has been agreed (subject to Council ratification) that the council moves ahead and establishes the Belfast STC, which will be responsible for taking forward preparatory work for LGR, it will be important that there is support provided to Party Groups and**

all Members given the significance and scale of change involved. It would be the intention that the schedule of Party Group briefings over the coming months will be used as a key forum to engage with Members and seek views and input in emerging areas.

- 2.9 Members will be aware that there are currently two meetings of SP&R Committee scheduled each month; with the first meeting of the month focusing on business relating to Belfast Voluntary Transition Committee. Notwithstanding the establishment of the Belfast STC, It is recommended that the first SP&R meeting each month be utilised to consider and discuss specific local government reform and transformation related business.
- 2.10 The Committee may also wish to consider the potential to reconstitute the Members' Governance Working Group, to comprise of 12 Members; providing a forum for detailed discussion and engagement on complex issues in advance of bringing to Committee for formal consideration and direction. This will not be a decision making forum but rather enable informed proposals and/or recommendations to be brought to Committee for consideration.

3.0 **Recommendations**

Members are asked to:

- i. consider the contents of the report and the LGR programme of work attached at Appendix 1
- ii. agree the breakdown of the LGR £2m budget as set out at para 2.4 above and Appendix 2 attached;
- iii. agree to the retention of the two meetings of SP&R Committee each month; with the first meeting be used to consider specific local government reform or transformation related matters; and
- iv. consider the reconstitution of the Members' Governance Working Group to comprise of 12 Members nominated on a proportional basis."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Transfer of Functions - Urban Regeneration

The Director of Development submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

"1 **Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 There are a number of strands of work being taken forward at present to prepare for the transfer of several new functions to the Council as part of the Local Government Reform (LGR) programme. A number of

these functions are closely related including urban regeneration and community development, statutory planning and local economic development responsibilities. The introduction of the new Community Planning framework will also be a significant factor when considering a future regeneration policy development.

- 1.2 Initial work has focussed on developing a baseline position for these functions insofar as the information that can be verified at this stage. This has begun to identify some of the key strategic issues which need to be given focused consideration in moving towards transfer. In relation to urban regeneration, this includes the need to effectively balance business continuity at point of transfer on 1st April 2015 with the opportunity to deliver a 'transformed' and integrated place shaping agenda over the longer-term (i.e. from 2017).
- 1.3 The transfer of a range of functions as part of LGR, including responsibilities for regeneration and statutory planning, offers an unprecedented opportunity for the Council to address these challenges in a more co-ordinated and productive way. The Council will be able to lead the development and implementation of localised policies which stimulate investment, create jobs and support sustainable growth in the local economy. As a result the new Council will be able to pro-actively influence investment, tourism, development and regeneration across the city.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The Department of the Environment expect each of the 11 new Councils, as part of their new statutory planning function, to develop and adopt new local Development Plans for their area by 2017. Development Plans apply regional policies at the local level, setting out the policy framework and land use proposals that will be used to guide development decisions within the local area.
- 2.2 The statutory planning policy context for Belfast will be set out in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP), which is due to be published before the transfer of the planning functions in 2015. This new BMAP, on adoption, will formally replace the existing Belfast Urban Area Plan 2001 as the statutory Development Plan for the City. Although yet to be adopted, the significant delay in formally approving BMAP means that it is already dated.

- 2.3 Whilst many of the localised neighbourhood-level policies may still be considered relevant, the economic circumstances have changed significantly since BMAP policy was drafted. It is therefore recognised that those elements of the plan relating to the City Centre in particular are in need of review and policies revised to account for the economic downturn, changes to consumer patterns, the high level of vacant properties and take account of emerging projects planned for the city such as the relocation of the University of Ulster.
- 2.4 As a result of the LGR the Council will have responsibility for the development of an overarching Strategic Planning Framework for the City and a more specific Local Plan Policy document. Although the Council cannot formally commence the preparation of these Development Plan Documents in advance of 2015, Planning Service wish to undertake early pilot work with the Council and the Department for Social Development (DSD) to develop a policy framework which fully integrates planning, regeneration and economic development.
- 2.5 This will be a significant departure from current arrangements and represents a new approach to planning development and regeneration in NI which has not been possible due to related functions being dispersed across a number of departments and agencies. This has however been more common practice for a number of successful cities across the UK and Ireland, including Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dublin.
- 2.6 To successfully deliver this new Strategic Policy Framework it is proposed that the Council secures independent specialist support, with international experience in strategic planning, to supplement existing officer knowledge. This would provide a high-level focus to develop a shift towards a new, integrated development and regeneration approach based on a clear strategic agenda.
- 2.7 Given the changed economic context within Belfast and the number of significant developments proposed in the City, the initial focus for this work would be on the 'core city' area. This would provide a strategic context for proposals and emerging regeneration projects including: the proposed University of Ulster Campus; potential BBC relocation; the opportunity for enhanced accessibility through rapid transit; the integrated transport hubs; emerging plans for City Gateways (such as the Northern Corridor and Shaftesbury Square) and issues associated with the development of the Harbour Estate (City Quays, Titanic Quarter etc). Developing integrated proposals for the 'Centre City' also aligns with the emerging recommendations from the Belfast City Masterplan Review.

- 2.8 The appointed consultants would also be tasked with developing an approach that addresses thematic challenges including, city centre living, repopulation, student housing and capturing the benefit of regeneration for the communities of Belfast. The specific objectives would focus on securing economic growth, capturing benefits for residents, addressing quality of life issues and creating neighbourhoods of choice. This work in turn would provide a policy basis for developing similar regeneration plans across other areas of the City. An outline of the proposed Terms of Reference for this work is set out in Appendix 1

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 Within this context, a budget of £250,000 is requested from the £2m non-recurrent convergence budget agreed by the VTC and SP&R for the procurement of consultants to support the development of a functional and integrated approach to urban regeneration in the longer term. This is based on the experience from other cities who have undertaken similar work and will allow early work to be undertaken to set the strategic context for a range of future initiatives.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

- 4.1 Proposals developed for the future delivery of a transferred and transformed urban regeneration function will be subject to full Equality and Good Relations screening.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that Members:

Approve the procurement of independent expert support estimated at £250,000 (from the agreed £2m non-recurrent convergence budget) towards pilot work with Planning Service and DSD to develop an integrated and functional approach to the future development and regeneration of the city."

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendation.

Finance/Value-for-Money

Minutes of Budget and Transformation Panel Meeting

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel of 15th November.

Half Year Financial Reporting

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed on 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.

1.2 The reporting pack contains a summary dashboard of the financial indicators and an executive summary explaining the financial performance. It also provides a more detailed explanation of each of the relevant indicators covering outturn for the quarter, payment of creditors, recovery of debt and procurement compliance.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 Current and Forecast financial Position 2013/14

The financial position for Quarter 2 is a net departmental under-spend of £911k (1.5%). The forecast year end departmental position is an under-spend of £644k (0.5%) which is well within the acceptable variance limit of 3%. Members should note that the forecast includes cover for the committed funding of £250k for the NI Hospice.

2.2 Capital Financing

The capital financing budget is £10.14m. This budget is forecast to break even and will be used to finance the capital programme and feasibility work to support the Investment Programme. A detailed half year capital programme report is included on the agenda.

2.3 Rate Income

The quarter 1 forecast by LPS was that BCC would have a favourable

outturn of £1.m. The quarter 2 forecast was initially set at £900k favourable, but this has recently been adjusted to £395k favourable, following the settlement of a major rating appeal.

2.4 Reserves

The general reserves balance at the start of the financial year was £13.3m. Based on the forecast movements included in this report general reserves are expected to be just over £13m at the end of the financial year.

2.5 Investment Programme

Committed expenditure approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for the 3 year Capital Programme stands at £43.753m, leaving £31.247m of schemes within the 3 year programme at the uncommitted or emerging project stage. A half year investment programme update report is included on the agenda.

2.6 Committed expenditure on LIF projects currently stands at £5m. At the end of quarter 2, actual expenditure was £297k and 33 of the recommended projects, totalling £2.062m, have progressed through the due-diligence process.

2.7 The amount of levered external funding for the Investment Programme which has been agreed in principal is £69.905m, with £19.053m of these funds confirmed through letters of offer.

2.8 Actual capital expenditure for the period was £3.5m, while non-recurring expenditure was £0.4m.

2.9 Other Financial Indicators

The percentage of average for debt under 90 days old increased during the quarter to 57.3% which was below the target of 65%. However the overall debt reduced from £3.8m to £3.4m during the quarter.

2.10 The average number of creditors paid within 28 days for quarter 2 was 78.3%, compared to a target of 80%

3.0 Resource Implications

3.1 The forecast year end departmental position is an under-spend of £644k (0.5%). At a special meeting of the Strategic Policy and

Resources Committee on the 15 November 2013 it was agreed that £275k of funding should be provided to support the 'Christmas in Belfast Campaign'. If this decision is ratified by Council, the forecast year end under spend presented in this report will be reduced by a further £275k to £369k (0.28%).

3.2 It is recommended that no further reallocations of the forecast year end under spend are made given that both the Council's budget and the rates position are close to break even.

4.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

There are no equality and good relations implications associated with the report.

5.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to:-

- Note the contents of the quarter 2 financial report.
- Agree that no reallocations of the forecast under spend be made at this stage given the forecasts for both the Council's budget and the rates position are close to break even."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

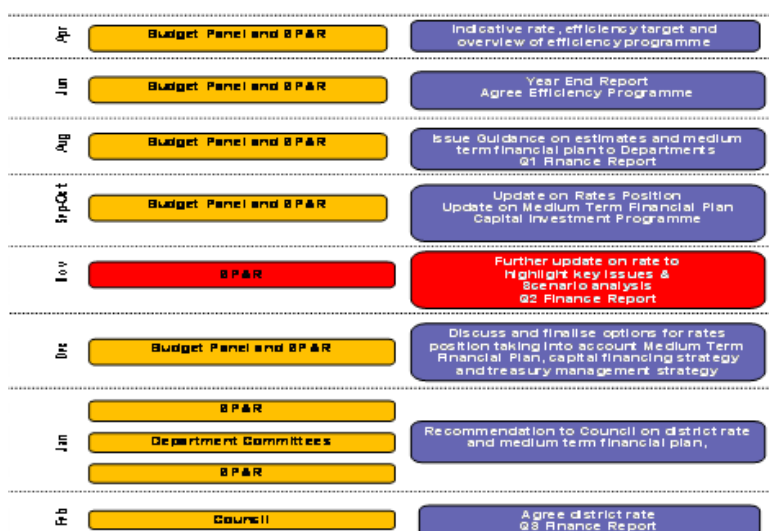
Rate Setting 2014-15

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

"1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 This report provides an update for Members on the development of the 2014/15 revenue estimates, in line with the summary of the rate setting process for 2014/15 outlined in Table 1 below.

Agreed rate setting process for 2014/15



2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The report is presented in the context of the commitment given by Members, as part of the Investment Programme, that the Council would set a district rate at no more than the rate of inflation. The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) annual inflation stands at 2.2 per cent in October 2013, and is forecast by the Bank of England to be around 2.0% in 2014.
- 2.2 **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 2014/15 and the outcome is that an increase of £1,295,800 (1.00%) is required for 2014/15.
- 2.3 This increase comprises of the net effect of the following factors:
- Departments will incur £3m of uncontrollable costs as summarised in table 2 below. This includes provision of a central budget to cover the potential for a 1% pay rise.
 - £1.7m of planned savings have been removed from budgets as part of the Council's efficiency programme.

Table 2: Uncontrollable Costs

	£	%
<u>Superannuation</u>	900,000	
<u>Pay Rise</u>	843,000	
<u>Pay Increments</u>	300,000	
<u>Energy and Fuel Costs</u>	469,000	
<u>Income Risk (North Foreshore Electricity)</u>	292,500	
<u>Total Uncontrollable Costs</u>	3,060,000	2.35

Capital Expenditure Plans

- 2.4 ***Capital Programme:*** This is used to pay for enhancements to existing council assets or for the provision of new assets owned by the council. The capital programme is financed through an annual budget of £10.14m and this budget is sufficient to meet the spending plans included in the council's investment programme and therefore no increase to the capital financing budget is required for 2014/15.
- 2.5 ***Leisure Capital Transformation Financing:*** This will be used to pay the £38m for the first phase of Leisure capital investment in Olympia and Andersonstown. The annual financing budget of £3.23m has been provided through the agreed transfer from the annual Belfast Investment Fund contribution meaning that no increase is required for 2014/15.
- 2.6 ***Belfast Investment Fund:*** This is used to finance investment package schemes for non-council assets. The current annual contribution to the fund of £2.77m will ensure that £20m of Belfast Investment Funding is available by 2014/15. There is therefore no requirement to increase the current level of contribution to the Belfast Investment Fund during 2014/15.
- 2.7 **Local Investment Fund –** This is used to fund neighbourhood capital projects for non-council assets. The £5m fund has been fully financed and there is therefore no requirement to make additional contributions through the district rate during 2014/15.
- 2.8 **Reserves –** The council's general reserves position at the year end is forecast to be at least £13m by the end of 2013/14. Given the uncertainty surrounding the financial implications of local government reform and the new rate base it is believed that this level of reserves is appropriate.
- 2.9 **Rate Base –** council officers are currently working with the LPS and the IRRV on the rates forecast (EPP) for 2014/15. At this stage we are not in a position to provide an accurate figure. Update reports on the rate base position will be provided to the Budget and Transformation Panel and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in December.

Scenarios

- 2.10 Scenario 1: 1% rate increase:** This option summarises the current position of the revenue estimates prepared by departments.
- 2.11 Scenario 2: 0% rate:** This option will require a reduction of £1.295m from the current position. There are three potential ways to achieve this:
- £300k - £400k of efficiency savings from the VFM review of security;
 - Authorise the Director of Finance and Resources, in consultation with the Budget Panel, to further challenge the department estimates and report back to the Committee in December on reduction options.
 - Review the EPP position in December.
- 2.12 Scenario 3: -2% rate decrease:** This option would require a reduction of £3.89m from the current position. The following issues need to be considered:
- The options for scenario 2 would deliver a maximum of £1.295m of the required decrease. This means that a further £2.6m of savings would need to be found. It would not be possible to deliver this level of budget reduction through planned efficiency savings in the timeframe available.
 - The half year finance report shows that the Council's budgets are becoming much tighter with a year-end variance between budget and actual expenditure forecast to be 0.5%. Therefore the option to find £2.6m of budget reductions without impacting on service delivery is not available
 - Members should note that this does not mean that the Council cannot deliver further efficiency savings. Indeed, the Council has committed to making £2m savings in 2015/16 to support the setting of the district rate and £2m savings from both the leisure budget and the new rate base to finance capital investment in leisure facilities.

- The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting in September 2013, agreed to join iESE – a mutual which specialises in the delivery of efficiency savings. A review by an iESE expert of potential efficiency opportunities has already started. The types of efficiency projects she has identified which the organisation will need to consider in the coming years include:
 - Review of major spend areas such as cleansing and grounds maintenance.
 - Introduce a single point of contact for customers across a number of access channels e.g. telephone, mobile and face to face.
 - Rationalise all support services through a shared services approach.
 - Commercialise discretionary services such as the Zoo, Malone House and Belfast Castle.
 - Reduce the number of management tiers.
 - Streamline the number of job description types.
 - Develop and implement an accommodation strategy.
 - Review overall approach to community services and the level of grant support.
 - Review service levels and eligibility criteria for statutory services
 - Reduce energy and utility costs.
 - Reduce variable pay costs such as overtime and allowances.
 - Accelerate the procurement improvement programme.

Preferred Option

- 2.13 The setting of the district rate for 2014/15 will be the last rate to be struck by the existing Council. In 2015/16 the Council will face the costs of delivering services to the areas transferring from Castlereagh and Lisburn; expanding its capital programme to include projects in these areas; and delivering the new functions and exercising the new powers transferring from central government.
- 2.14 There is a significant degree of uncertainty as to how much money will be available to finance these new responsibilities. The value of the new rate base and its income yield is unknown; the impact of the non-domestic revaluation will not be assessed until September 2014; the

rates convergence and non-domestic revaluation relief schemes have not been agreed; and the amount of money to be transferred from central government has not been calculated.

2.15 This degree of uncertainty creates a high degree of financial risk to the organisation and for this reason the Director of Finance and Resources would view the setting of a -2% district rate to be imprudent at this time and would make it difficult for him to provide assurance on the robustness of the estimates which the Local Government Finance Act 2011 requires him to do.

2.16 The preferred option would be to present a report to the Committee in December based on the delivery of a 0% rate. The setting of a zero rate would represent a reduction of 2.2% in real terms based on the current CPI rate. This would mean that for the first time the Council would have set a 0% district rate in two consecutive years. It would also:

- Sustain the commitment to provide £150m of capital investment as part of the Investment Programme and £105m of capital investment in leisure facilities.
- Support the achievement of £20m of efficiency savings by 2015/16.
- Provide a strong financial foundation for the new council.
- Meet the commitment given as part of the Investment Programme to set the rate below inflation.

3 Recommendations

3.1 Members are requested to:

- (a) note the contents of the report;
- (b) agree to consider a detailed report based on a 0% district rate 2014/15 in December 2013."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Capital Programme update – Stage Approvals

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The Capital Programme is a rolling programme of investment which either improves existing Council facilities or provides new facilities. This report provides an update on –

- proposed recommendations for movement between the Capital Programme stages
- projects requiring additional resources and/or approval to go to tender
- proposals in relation to next steps for the Capital Programme including the potential for the placing of a moratorium on any new

This report should be read in conjunction with the *‘Investment Programme – Half Year Update’* report which is also on the agenda at today’s meeting as this contains an update and photos of capital projects which have been completed or which are underway/planned. As highlighted the Property & Projects department is happy to arrange site visits for Members/ Party Groups to Council funded capital project (capital programme, LIF and emerging BIF).

2.0 Relevant Background Information

Rolling Capital Programme 2013/14 onwards

2.1 Members have agreed that all capital projects must go through a Stage process where decisions on which projects progress are taken by SP&R. This provides assurance as to the level of financial control and will allow Members to properly consider the opportunity costs of approving one capital project over another capital project. Importantly it will also enable Members to focus on delivering the projects which can have maximum benefits and investment return for the city and local areas.

2.2 Members are aware that the Capital Programme (as agreed by Committee on 22nd March 2013) has been reconfigured to reflect the 3 approval stages as agreed –

- Committed projects (Stage 3) - projects which have completed a Full Business Case (FBC) and where approval has been obtained by SP&R to proceed to tender. There are 4 Tiers under this Stage including –
 - Project which are completed (Stage 3 - Tier 3);

- Projects which are at construction stage (Stage 3 – Tier 2);
- Projects at tender preparation stage (Stage 3 – Tier 1) or
- Schemes at risk (Stage 3 – Tier 0) – which are normally schemes seeking external funding and are still awaiting letters of offer (LOO) (i.e. ERDF applications) but that need to be progressed to tender preparation stage in order to meet tight funding deadlines or projects which have outstanding project issues to resolve. Members are asked to note that no construction contracts will be awarded on these projects until a LOO is in place or that any other outstanding issues have been resolved
- Uncommitted projects (Stage 2) –projects where a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) has been agreed by Committee and work on the project is being progressed through the development of an Outline Business Case (OBC), but they have not yet been developed to a stage where permission could be sought from SP&R to proceed to tender.
- Emerging proposals (Stage 1) –proposals which require completion of an SOC before they could be considered further by SP&R Committee.

3.0 Key Issues

Capital Programme – Proposed movements - Projects recommended to move up a Stage

Proposed movements from ‘Stage 2 – Uncommitted’ to ‘Stage 3 – Committed’

- 3.1 It is proposed that the projects outlined in Table 1 below are advanced from Stage 2 – Uncommitted to Stage 3 – Committed and are advanced to tender preparation stage. Members are asked to note that the costs cited are pre-tender estimates only. These costs will be challenged and assessed at the tender preparation stage and any significant changes will be brought back to Committee.

Project	Project overview	Proposed Stage	Estimated Gross Cost	Estimated Net cost
Whiterock Community Corridor	Part of the wider Falls Park Masterplan. This project will redevelop the 0.7 acre vacant site at the front of the Whiterock Leisure Centre for provision of facilities for local community groups and enhance the wider open area of the site with environmental improvements including a new playground; new fencing and new access points. The project also includes wider infrastructure	Stage 3 (Tier 0)	Up to a maximum of £1.7million	To be confirmed subject to other funding sources

Project	Project overview	Proposed Stage	Estimated Gross Cost	Estimated Net cost
	for the site. This project is linked to two other Council funded project – the new pitch and pavilion at Falls and the Glor Na Mona LIF project which will be on site in 2014			
Commercial Waste Bin Weighing system	The procurement of bin weighing hardware, to be installed on 8 waste refuse collection vehicles, as well as a software management system from which reports can be generated on the tonnage of waste collected.	Stage 3 (Tier 1)	Up to a maximum of £200,000	Up to a maximum of £200,000

- 3.2 Whiterock Community Corridor – it is proposed to move this to Stage 3 – Tier 0 (Schemes at risk). Members are asked to note that this project is part of the wider Falls Park Masterplan. It also has major inter-dependencies with two other Council funded projects - the new Falls Parks pitch and pavilion which is currently a Stage 3 project on the Capital Programme (this scheme is at tender preparation stage) and the Glor Na Mona LIF project (WLIF025) which is going on the same site. Both these projects are due to go on site in 2014 and progressing these projects together will help to minimise costs and overall interruption to the site as works are undertaken. Members are asked to note that £1,700,000 is the maximum available to this project. External sources of funding which could contribute to the overall costs of this project are currently being explored. Members are therefore asked to note that this project will remain ‘at risk’ until the Director of Finance & Resources confirms that this project is within

the affordability limits of the Council (subject to the outcome of any external funding). In the interim, progressing this project to tender preparation stage will allow designs to be fully worked up and will enable the project to be advanced to a state of readiness for planning. Members are asked to note that NO construction contracts will be let until all outstanding issues have been resolved.

- 3.3 Commercial Waste Bin Weighing system – It is proposed that that this is moved to Stage 3 – Tier 1. Members are asked to note that £200,000 is the maximum available to this project. The Director of Finance & Resources has confirmed that this project is within the affordability limits of the Council.**

Proposed movements from Stage 1 – Emerging Projects to Stage 2 – Uncommitted

- 3.4 It is proposed that the projects outlined in Table 2 below are advanced from Stage 1 – Emerging Projects to Stage 2 – Uncommitted. A Strategic Outline Case has been completed for each of these which has examined (i) Background to the project; (2) Feasibility; (3) Affordability; (4) Deliverability and Sustainability. Members are asked to note that at SOC level the affordability of a project is only examined at a very high level and this is tested and challenged further during Stages 2 and 3.**

Project	Project overview	Proposed Stage
Alleygates – Phase 4	Phase 4 – Strand 1 – the installation of alleygates in known crime and ASB ‘hotspots’ across the city	Stage 2
Boxer Sculptures	The design and installation of 3 sculptures in 3 council owned parks across the city which will recognise the contribution of boxing to the city	Stage 2
Falls Parks Service Yard	Development of a serviceyard/both in Falls Park. Part of the Falls Park Masterplan	Stage 2
MUGA programme (New and refurbishments)	Development of a MUGA programme to look at both new and refurbishments of existing MUGAs across the city	Stage 2

- 3.5 MUGA programme – Members are asked to agree that £30,000 is set aside out of the Feasibility Fund in order to help develop up this Programme. Further details on this will be brought back to Committee in the New Year.**

Projects requiring additional resources and/or approval to go to tender

- 3.7 **Creative Hub – As Members are aware the Council is pursuing an application under ERDF for the development of a creative hub facility to help support the development and growth of the film, television, music and digital content sectors within Belfast. It is envisaged that this will be a refurbishment of an existing building. Members will recall that they agreed in June 2013 that the Creative Hub project would progress ‘at risk’ in order to progress the design to meet the tight ERDF deadlines. The Council has continued to work on this project to progress it to a level where it is ready to commence as soon as possible after a Letter of Offer is received in order to ensure successful delivery of the Hub. This will now require design up to RIBA Stage D and to facilitate this it is recommended that £150,000 is allocated to this project ‘at risk’. These costs will be recovered if a Letter of Offer is received. Members are asked to note that the Creative Hub project does not have any prior allocation of ‘at risk’ monies.**
- 3.8 **Fleet Replacement Programme – Members will know that the Council needs to run and maintain a substantial fleet in order to deliver its services. However Members may recall that a recent external consultancy review of the Council’s Fleet Management recommended a significant reduction in the size of fleet and that a comprehensive fleet replacement policy and programme should be developed. The updated fleet replacement policy was agreed by Committee in September and at this stage Members were updated that discussions were ongoing with departments in relation to the specific assets which will be included in the reduction exercise. Members were also updated at this stage that there has been very little fleet procurement activity since at least 2010/11 because of the external review.**
- 3.9 **As a result a significant proportion of the Council’s fleet is now out-of-life on the basis of the revised vehicle replacement policy adopted by the Committee in September and there is now a need to begin a fleet replacement programme for the remaining 80% of vehicles which are not included in the reduction exercise set out above.**
- 3.10 **However, as no fleet procurement has taken place for several years the Council has no subsisting contracts with suppliers of the various types of vehicles required, and will need to invite tenders across most of the categories comprising the fleet. Approval is therefore sought to initiate the necessary procurement processes for the 26 categories of vehicle (as outlined in Appendix B) for the Fleet Replacement Programme in order that suppliers will be available and orders can be**

raised as soon as the capital provision is agreed. However no contracts will be awarded until all outstanding issues have been resolved and the project is confirmed as being within affordability limits by the Director of Finance and Resources.

- 3.11** Members are also asked to note that all the specifications will, on foot of a further HBC recommendation, be validated through the use of an independent, external 'critical friend' before any tenders are invited. This is intended to ensure that technical criteria are appropriate in the light of prevailing market trends, that competition is encouraged through the use of open specifications and that any mandatory features specified do not unduly distort or deter competition. Tenders will also be sought on both an outright purchase and leased basis in order to ensure that all options are explored in terms of value for money.

4.0 **Capital Programme – Next steps Proposed temporary moratorium**

- 4.3** It is proposed that Members consider placing a temporary moratorium on any new projects being added to the current Capital Programme until March 2014. There are also a number of benefits to doing this –

- Members are aware that the Council is currently trying to deliver a major physical programme under its Investment Programme with over 70 projects on the Capital Programme, 19 emerging BIF projects and nearly 70 LIF projects – many of these projects are major both in terms of their scope and size and are also up against tight timescales in terms of their delivery due to external funding deadline. The ongoing addition of new Emerging projects is impacting on the progress of delivery of agreed schemes. Members are asked to note that delivery on the ground of projects was limited in 2102 due to time taken to put the necessary resources in place. The pace of delivery has increased significantly in 2013 however there will be even more project at the 'on the ground' stage in 2014/15 as letters of offer are received and other projects with outstanding issues are resolved (e.g. the Pitches Strategy). Consequently the level of expenditure, risk and effort will also increase significantly. Placing a temporary moratorium on any new projects on the Capital Programme will allow officers to concentrate on the successful delivery of the projects currently on the Programme
- Members are also aware that the Council is embarking on a once in a lifetime, challenging leisure transformation programme which will have associated financial and officer resource implications

- Members will also acknowledge that the implications of the Social Investment Fund are currently unknown due to the ongoing delays in agreeing projects. However if decisions on these projects are taken in the coming months this may have associated implications for the Council who is the proposed delivery agent for many of the capital projects across the Belfast zones. The projects again have tight timescales for delivery and many are major in scope and scale

- As highlighted there are limited resources available and an increasing demand on the Council to deliver more projects under all its capital streams. Members have already agreed the need for the development of area plans and also the ongoing need to take the requirements of the city centre into consideration. This is all within the context of the emerging responsibility for community planning which the Council will assume under LGR. The development of such plans would help Members to use their civic leadership role and continue to best facilitate the shared political ambition by delivering those projects which will have maximum benefit at a local and city level. It will also help with prioritisation of projects as there is an opportunity cost of investing in one project over another. Imposing a temporary moratorium will give Members time to concentrate on the development of these plans and an opportunity to reflect on the outcomes that they wish to see for their areas and the wider city. As outlined in the '*Area Working Group*' Update report which is also on the agenda for today a planning workshop was held with the Inner South NRP in October and it is intended to hold similar sessions in the coming months in Falls/Lower Divis and Andersonstown. The outcomes of workshops such as these, together with other masterplans which are being led by DSD and the various NRP plans which are already in place, can provide a nucleus for the development of area frameworks which in turn can help inform Members' investment decisions.

- importantly a temporary moratorium at this stage will also allow the Council an opportunity to fully consider the impact of the new boundaries under Local Government Reform. This will necessitate a new Council Capital Programme from 2015 onwards which takes into account the extended Council area. Placing a hold on any additional new projects at this stage will allow the Council sufficient time to plan for this and for a new Capital Programme for the extended Council area in 2015 to be developed.

4.4 Members are asked to note that in this interim period there may be exceptions where work will need to be progressed on a capital project either for health and safety reasons or as a result of a statutory requirement. Committee will be advised of these exceptions as required.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to –

- agree if they wish to progress the projects as outlined in Table 1 (3.1 above) to move from Stage 2 -Uncommitted to Stage 3 – Committed and agree that these projects are advanced to the invitation of tenders, to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver
- Whiterock Community Corridor agree to move this to *Stage 3 – Tier 0* (Schemes at risk). Members are asked to note that no construction contracts for this project will be let until all outstanding project issues have been resolved. Members are asked to note that £1.7m is the maximum amount available to this project and that potential avenues for external funding towards these costs are being explored
- Commercial Waste Bin Weighing System - agree to move this to Stage 3 – Tier 1. Members are asked to note that £200,000 is the maximum available to this project
- agree if they wish to progress the projects as outlined in Table 2 (3.4 above) to move from Stage 1 –Emerging Projects to Stage 2 – Uncommitted. Members are asked to note that at this stage this does not constitute a decision to invest in projects.
- MUGA Programme (New and refurbishment) – Members are asked to agree that up to £30,000 out of the Feasibility Fund be set aside to help with the development of this programme and further detail on the planned programme (new and refurbishments) will be brought back to Committee in the New Year
- approve an allocation of £150,000 ‘at risk’ towards the Creative Hub project prior to confirmation of funding in order to progress design work and ensure this project is ready for tender to meet the funding timescales.

- **Fleet Replacement Programme – approve that this is advanced to the invitation of tenders, to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received**
- **consider placing a temporary moratorium on any new projects being added to the current Capital Programme until March 2014. This will allow officers the opportunity to concentrate on the successful delivery of the vast array of projects which are already on the capital programme and the other physical programmes including the Local Investment Fund, Belfast Investment Fund. As previously highlighted there is growing demand on the Council to deliver projects within increasingly scarce financial resources. Imposing a temporary moratorium will allow Members the opportunity to consider all projects and their overall prioritisation and to begin to and will help enable the Council to start to pre-plan for a new Capital Programme for the extended Council area in 2015. Members are asked to note that there may be exceptions to this and there may, in the interim period, be times where work will need to be progressed on a capital project either for health and safety reasons or as a result of a statutory requirement or for another reason. Committee will be advised of these exceptions as required. An update report on the Capital Financing strategy will be brought back to Committee in early 2014.”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Security Review

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the value-for-money review of security arrangements for the Council.

After discussion, the Committee granted approval for:

- (i) the Head of Facilities Management, in conjunction with Corporate Human Resources, to undertake a trawl for expressions of interest in voluntary redundancy among the employees likely to be affected by the review of Security in order to ascertain the number of employees who might wish to be released on a voluntary basis; and
- (ii) the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Property and Projects to provide a further update to Members in relation to Security as part of their monthly Party Briefing sessions which were scheduled for November and December.

Democratic Services and Governance

**Requests for the use of the City Hall
and the Provision of Hospitality**

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
Centre for Secure Information Technology – Queen's University Belfast	4th World Cyber Security Technology Research Summit 2014 13th March, 2014 Approximately 150 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the quarterly meeting will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500
Chartered Institute of Wastes Management	Chartered Institute of Wastes Management - Inauguration of President 14th October, 2014 Approximately 250 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the quarterly meeting will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500
Young Social Innovators	"Speak Out" Event 26th March, 2014 Approximately 300 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	This event aims to highlight the positive contribution that young people can make to their communities and will showcase the various projects they have taken part in and how these can help to improve the future of the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits Approximate cost of £750

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
			leadership, strong, fair and together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	
Girlguiding Belfast	County Awards Ceremony for young people and leaders 15th May, 2014 Approximately 200 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits	This event seeks to recognise the achivements of Guides and their Leaders. Awards being presented include Queen's Guide, Duke of Edinburgh, Baden Powell Award for Guides and Long Service Awards for Leaders. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better opportunities for success' and in addition would contribute to the Council's thematic area of Children and Young People.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits Approximate cost £500
Northern Ireland Music Therapy Trust	'True Colours' CD launch 5th March, 2014 Approximately 250 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits	This event will highlight the work of the Music Therapy Trust in illustrating that there is ability in disability. It will provide the opportunity for adults with learning or physical disabilities to perform in public while launching the CD that the group has recorded. This unique event will provide support and recognition for the disabled community across the City. This event would	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £625

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
			contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together', 'Better opportunities for success' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	
Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure	DCAL – Outline of priorities and opportunities 17th December, 2013 Approximately 250 attending	Use of the City Hall	<p>This event aims to provide a platform for the Minister and staff of the Department to consider its work over the past twelve months as well as focus on the priorities and opportunities for the next twelve months.</p> <p>Much of the event will showcase the vibrancy and ambition of Belfast, by specifically focusing on the hosting of the World Police and Fire Games in 2013; the major capital investment in three Belfast stadia - Casement Park, Ravenhill and Windsor Park; and the opportunities and challenges presented with the future hosting of Giro d'Italia Grande Partenza..</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better opportunities for success'.</p>	Use of the City Hall
Age Sector Platform	Northern Ireland Pensioners' Parliament –	The use of the City Hall and provision of	This event will provide a mechanism for older people from	The use of the City Hall and provision of hospitality in the form

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
	<p>Belfast</p> <p>21st February, 2014</p> <p>Approximately 200 attending</p>	<p>hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>across Northern Ireland to have their say on the issues that matter to them.</p> <p>The event is one of seven local events which will identify issues of concern within the city and will be used to elect representatives to the overall Pensioners' Parliament.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together', 'Better Services – listening and delivering' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>of tea/coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
<p>Malaysia and You Belfast 2014</p>	<p>Malaysia and You Belfast Night 2015</p> <p>9th March, 2014</p> <p>Approximately 350 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall</p>	<p>Malaysian Night 2014 is the climax event of a week long programme called Malaysia and You 2014.</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>The use of the City Hall</p>

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
			This event would contribute to the Council's key themes 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and of 'Better support for people and communities'.	

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Local Authorities Members' Association –
Spring Seminar**

The Committee was advised that advance notification had been received in relation to the Local Authorities Members' Association Spring Seminar which would be held in Monaghan on Friday, 31st January and Saturday, 1st February, 2014.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that the theme of the seminar and details of the keynote speakers were still being finalised and details were not available at this stage. He pointed out that the Council had been represented at the Association's events for a number of years and participants had felt their attendance provided them with a valuable opportunity to meet with Local Government representatives from throughout Ireland to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern. The total cost per delegate attending would be £540.

The Committee authorised the attendance at the Local Authorities Members' Association Autumn 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.

2014 Somme Pilgrimage

The Committee was advised that correspondence had been received from the Somme Association enquiring if the Council would wish to be represented on the 2014 Pilgrimage to the Somme from 20th June until 2nd July, 2014. The Somme Pilgrimage, to mark the 98th Anniversary of the Battle, would follow the route taken by both the 36th (Ulster) and 16th (Irish) Divisions during their service in the First World War. Services of Commemoration would be held in both Thiepval and Guillemont, in addition to attendance at the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate, Ypres. The cost per delegate attending the tour would be approximately £600 per person.

The Committee approved the attendance on the tour of a representative of each of the Political Parties on the Council and the Chief Executive (or his nominee) and authorised the payment of the appropriate travel and subsistence allowances in connection therewith.

The Committee agreed further that officers investigate the possibility of the Council making alternative arrangements for attendance at the 2014 Somme Pilgrimage.

Northern Ireland Local Government Association
Annual Conference and Exhibition

The Committee was advised that notice had been received in relation to the Northern Ireland Local Government Association Annual Conference and Exhibition to be held in La Mon House Hotel on 27th February, 2014.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that the Council was usually represented at the conference each year and that the event would focus on "Local Councils – Democracy, Civic Pride and Sustainable Development". In addition to the Annual Conference, the Northern Ireland Local Government Awards for 2013 would be held at the event. Should the Council be included in the list of finalists for the awards, it would receive two free tickets for that part of the event. The cost of attendance at the Conference, Exhibition and Awards Ceremony was £168 per person and a 5% discount would apply to any bookings made by the end of November.

The Committee approved the attendance at the Annual Conference, Exhibition Awards Ceremony of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, the Council's representatives on the Northern Ireland Local Government Association and the Chief Officers (or their nominees).

Human Resources

(Mrs. J. Minne, Head of Human Resources, attended in connection with these items.)

Recruitment of Chief Executive for Belfast

(With the exception of the Head of Human Resources, the Head of Finance and Performance and the Senior Democratic Services Officer, all other officers left the meeting whilst this item was under discussion.)

The Head of Human Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration a report in relation to the recruitment and selection of the Chief Executive for the new Council.

She pointed out that the purpose of the report was threefold:

- to update the Members on the recruitment and selection arrangements to appoint the Chief Executives of the 11 new Councils;
- to advise Members on the remuneration recommendations from the Joint National Council (JNC) on the salary bands for the 11 new Chief Executive posts and the existing Chief Executives in respect of their additional workload on Local Government Reform and the JNC recommendations; and

- to make proposals regarding the release of the existing Chief Executive through the Review of Public Administration Staff Severance Scheme for Local Government given the time frame to recruit a new Chief Executive for Belfast City Council.

The Head of Human Resources outlined the main aspects of the report and, after discussion, the Committee:

- (i) noted the arrangements for the appointment of the new Chief Executives and that a report on the matter would be submitted to the first meeting of the Belfast Statutory Transition Committee on 10th December, 2013;
- (ii) agreed to award the current Chief Executive three increments for significant additional duties on Local Government Reform as set out in the JNC circular of 18th November, 2013, with an effective date of 1st March, 2012;
- (iii) agreed to adopt the Review of Public Administration Severance Scheme, as recommended by the Local Government Reform Joint Forum, for Belfast City Council's Chief Executive, using 31st March, 2015 as the effective date for calculation purposes;
- (iv) agreed that, given the timeframe for appointing the new Chief Executive and Belfast City Council's "one-off" particular circumstances an earlier release date for the current Chief Executive (depending on the appointment date and handover period of the new Chief Executive). That would reduce the overlap period of two Chief Executives being in post at the same time and thereby alleviate the significant potential for confusion and organisational disruption in the run up to the new Council coming into place; and
- (v) agreed also to make the necessary personal loss of earnings compensatory payment to the current Chief Executive for each month of his early release allowing him to be released from Council at a mutually agreed date while achieving efficiencies of approximately £6,800 per month.

Interim Role of Assistant Chief Executive

With the exception of the Senior Democratic Services Officer, all Members of staff left the meeting whilst this item was under discussion.)

The Committee was reminded that the Town Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive had retired on 31st October, 2013. At its meeting on 20th September the Committee had agreed that the two main functions of his role – the provision of the legal function for Belfast City Council, that

is, the Town Solicitor element and the day to day management of the Chief Executive's Department, that is, the Assistant Chief Executive element, would be covered on an interim basis by payment of honoraria to appropriate officers.

The Committee had agreed that the Legal Services Manager would undertake the higher-level additional duties associated with the role of interim Town Solicitor and that expressions of interest would be sought from relevant officers within the department to undertake the duties associated with the role of interim Chief Executive. The Committee had agreed further that, should more than one officer express an interest in that role, a merit based selection process would take place in accordance with the principles of the Local Government Staff Commission's Code of Practice on Recruitment and Selection.

The Committee was advised that two officers had expressed an interest in the role and there would be a merit-based selection process, that is, structured interview. The Selection Panel should comprise the Chairman of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (or his nominee), the Deputy Chairman (or his nominee), and an Elected Member from another Political Party, the Chief Executive and a Director. The Selection Panel must comprise men and women and be representative of both main communities in Northern Ireland.

The Committee agreed that the Chairman (or his nominee) and the Deputy Chairman (or his nominee) be appointed to the Selection Panel to appoint the interim role of Assistant Chief Executive.

Moved by Councillor Jones,
Seconded by Councillor Hendron,

That Councillor Hendron be appointed as the third Member of the Selection Panel.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Attwood,
Seconded by Councillor Mullan,

That Councillor McCarthy be appointed as the third Member of the Selection Panel.

On a vote by show of hands nine Members voted for the amendment and nine against. As there was an equality of votes, the Chairman exercised his second and casting vote against the amendment and it was accordingly declared lost.

The Committee accordingly agreed that Councillor Hendron be appointed as the third Member of the Selection Panel to appoint the interim role of Assistant Chief Executive.

Review of Civic HQ Unit

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Civic HQ Unit manages the reception and telephonist staff in a number of council properties, and also manages the City Hall public and private tour service, liaises with function organisers in relation to civic and non-civic functions in the City Hall and provides a 'client' role for most city-centre council properties.
- 1.2 Members will also be aware that the Property & Projects Department is in the process of carrying out service reviews on most aspects of its current operations, with a view to improving services and identifying efficiencies where possible. Reviews of the Procurement, Security, Project Management, Fleet Management, Business Support and Property Maintenance units have already been carried out in this regard.
- 1.3 The Civic HQ unit has not been reviewed from a structural or functional perspective in the last ten years, and it is the department's belief that the current structure, functional arrangements and existing job descriptions have become outdated and unfit for purpose. This has become more evident since the re-opening of the City Hall in 2009 and the changes in its business environment, most notably:-
 - a sustained 40% increase in tours & tourists;
 - a sustained 22% increase in civic and non-civic functions;
 - the requirement to provide reception cover in additional buildings such as Adelaide exchange;
 - an enhanced 'client' role in terms of the upkeep, maintenance and servicing of the council's principal civic buildings;
 - new 'client' responsibilities for the Duncrue and ISB/Seymour House sites from 2013/14 onwards;
 - new responsibilities in terms of managing access-control systems and a potential increase in the incidence of such systems;
 - increasing use of the East exhibition space and the City Hall grounds;
 - increased workload in tours, access control and aspects of functions work are being covered via agency and or overtime arrangements;

- potential additional responsibilities for new city-centre council accommodation and enhanced memorabilia and tour offerings; *and*
 - the transfer of telephony responsibilities to Digital Services.
- 1.4 Consequently, permission for a structural review was sought and granted by CMT in June 2012. The review was carried out in-house with Corporate HR support , and the review's findings and recommendations were endorsed by CMT in November 2013. However the review's recommendations require the approval of the Committee under the current Scheme of Delegation.
- 1.5 The structure proposed (see Appendix 1) recognizes the changes in the unit's business environment in terms of increases in tours and tourists, increases in the scale and scope of function-management activity and liaison needed and the increasing requirements in terms of the use of access-control systems etc.
- 1.6 The structure consists of 2 main strands, with the public-facing tours and functions work comprising one strand and the largely internal civic services (reception, telephony, access-control, handyperson etc) comprising the other, with both strands co-operating to deliver the 'client' role at variety of sites (now incl. both ISB & Duncrue).
- 1.7 The review also recognizes that the job descriptions, duties and rostering arrangements in relation specifically to Reception staff require updating, and also that these need to be flexible enough to cope with future changes eg City Hall Memorabilia Project.
- 1.8 Overall, the review recommends a nett increase of 2 FTE posts. In order to achieve this some posts have been deleted, some new posts created and other posts will have the council's categorisation or re-designation processes applied. Should any redundancy situations arise during this phase these would be dealt with solely on a voluntary basis, and some staff have already indicated a willingness to avail of this opportunity should it arise.
- 1.9 Discussions have taken place with staff and staff representatives in relation to the review, and these will continue in respect of implementation should the Committee be minded to approve the recommendations herein.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1** The key issue is that the Civic HQ Unit is facing a sustained increase in the scale and scope of its work and is currently coping through the use of agency and overtime, plus an enhanced reliance on casual staff.
- 2.2** The proposed new structure would align the unit's resources with the increased demands being made upon it, and would recognize the changes in business environment which have occurred and those which may potentially arise in the near future (notably council accommodation, enhanced memorabilia & tour offers etc).
- 2.3** Overall, the review would result in a modest nett increase in the number of front-line posts and there would obviously be some additional costs (see below), but these must be viewed in the context of the enhanced service. These new posts would also assist the council in terms of its ongoing employability obligations under the Investment Programme.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1** The overall financial implications of this review are anticipated to be as follows:-
- the overall additional cost of the review would be £33,382 per annum (£41,480 incl. on-costs); to be derived from departmental efficiency savings;
 - there would potentially be additional one-off costs in terms of voluntary redundancy payments and actuarial payments in respect of pension release, although it is not possible to quantify these at time of writing.

4 Equality and Good Relations Implications

- 4.1** There are no direct equality or good relations implications arising from this report.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1** It is recommended that the Committee approves the establishment of the 2 new posts set out above, and also the revised reporting lines as set out in Appendix 1."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Changes to Property Maintenance Unit Structure

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

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Property Maintenance Unit delivers planned and reactive maintenance to all council properties, using a mix of in-house and externally-contracted resources.**
- 1.2 Members may also be aware that the scope of statutory duties affecting council properties continues to increase across a wide range of disciplines, most notably legionella monitoring & remedial works, management of asbestos, disability-access provisions, fixed wiring, emergency lighting and portable appliance testing etc.**
- 1.3 This increased statutory regulation is in addition to the provisions of the Corporate Manslaughter Act 2007, which members will be aware has already been used to prosecute councils which have failed to meet statutory standards.**
- 1.4 The council's responsibilities in relation to statutory compliance continue to grow as projects come to completion under the Investment Programme and other capital initiatives (and of course there is the potential for a significant increase in properties transferred under the Local Government Reform process).**
- 1.5 In addition, the whole area of property maintenance is an inherently risky environment and the management of health & safety on-site is an increasing concern. Many of the projects carried out by the unit will, because of their scale and scope, trigger the provisions of the updated Construction Design & Management Regulations 2007 (CDM) in terms of site-specific health & safety plans, and of course the development of detailed, site-specific risk assessments is increasingly necessary, not least to protect the organization against personal injury and/or employers' liability litigation.**
- 1.6 Currently a single post-holder is responsible for the planning and management of the inspection and remedial works regime for all compliance-related work, while the CDM and other health& safety aspects are delivered on a scheme by scheme basis by project managers so far as possible. It is felt that this situation must now be rationalised and improved through the introduction of 2 new**

dedicated posts to the unit's structure. The creation of these posts has been endorsed at CMT but the current Scheme of Delegation requires that Committee approval be obtained as they are new posts.

- 1.7 The first proposed post is that of Maintenance Officer (Safety); this post-holder's role will be to manage and co-ordinate all CDM, risk assessments and other health & safety work across the unit. The second post is that of Maintenance Assistant (Compliance), and the post-holder's role will be to assist the Maintenance Officer (Compliance) to manage the increasing compliance workload in order to minimise risk to the council.
- 1.8 In terms of management of these posts it is proposed to make changes to the current management reporting lines within the unit. Given the synergies and similarities between many of the compliance and health & safety elements of the work, it is proposed that both of the new posts will report to the Maintenance Officer (Compliance) and that this post be re-named Compliance & Safety Officer. In addition, it is proposed that the post of Technical Assistant which currently reports to the Property Officer (Building & Procurement) be amended to report to the Compliance & Safety Officer.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 These new posts and structural changes will, in effect, produce a dedicated sub-unit dealing with statutory compliance and building-related health & safety issues and will provide a number of benefits, most notably increased resources to deal with both compliance and health & safety issues, reducing physical, reputational and legal risks to the council and freeing up project managers to concentrate on delivering important maintenance projects.
- 2.2 The new posts will also contribute to the council's employment targets under the Investment Programme. It should, however, be noted that a fuller re-structuring of the Property Maintenance Unit will be necessary in 2014, once the full extent of central and local government property transfers to BCC under the LGR process is known.

3 Resource Implications

The notional grades for the 2 new posts (subject to formal job evaluation) are;

- Maintenance Officer (Safety) – PO1, *and*
- Maintenance Assistant (Compliance) – Sc6

In total this would require an additional £60,317, and this amount has been provided for within the unit's revenue budget. There may also be a financial implication for the post of Safety & Compliance officer in terms of the increased responsibilities taken on, which would be quantified by a job evaluation exercise if approved.

4 Equality and Good Relations Implications

There are no direct equality or good relations implications arising from this report.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Committee approves the establishment of the 2 new posts set out above, and also the revised reporting lines as set out in Appendix 1."**

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Asset Management

Proposed Lease at Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park

The Committee was advised that the Parks and Leisure Committee, at its meeting on 14th November, had approved the letting of first floor offices at the Stables, Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park, subject, in accordance with Standing Orders 46 and 60, to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

The Committee granted the approval sought.

Smithfield Market Unit Lettings

It was reported that, in accordance with the authority delegated to him, the Director of Property and Projects had let the following units at Smithfield Market:

- Unit 23 – James Connolly, 4 Hillview Court, Belfast, at a cost of £165 per month for the purpose of the sale of electronic cigarette kits and accessories;
- Unit 1 – Toufik Tismelane, 35 Ashley Avenue, Belfast, at a cost of £155 per month as a phone repair shop;
- Unit 13/14 – James Gilliland, 4 Oranmore Drive, Belfast, at a cost of £750 per month for the retailing of antiques and collectible toys;
- Unit 35 – Patricia Moore, 68 Sunnyside Street, Belfast and Leanne Hill, 16 The Boulevard, Belfast, at a cost of £420 per month for use as a nail bar;

- Unit 22 – Wayne Kerr, 79 Eastway, Newtownabbey, at a cost of £165 per month for bespoke mounted and personalised prints; and
- Unit 21 – Jacqueline Maxwell and Paul Wigham, 65 Glenbank Drive, Belfast, at a cost of £250 per month for use as a home brew store.

Noted.

Proposed NIE Wayleave at Linen Gardens

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 21st September, 2011, it had approved the lease of an area of land at Linen Gardens to NI Water for the installation of an underground combined sewer chamber.

The Director of Property and Projects reported that NI Water now required a power supply for the pump at the new underground combined sewer chamber and, to facilitate its request, NIE required the Council to complete a standard Wayleave Agreement for approximately 6 metres of low voltage underground cable on the Council's land to supply the NI Water pillar at Linen Gardens.

The Committee granted the approval of a wayleave to NIE for a low voltage cable at Linen Gardens.

Request to Host Invest NI Networking Lunch and Board Meeting in City hall

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from Invest NI to hold its Board meeting in the City Hall on 19th February, 2014. It was part of a move to hold the organisation's Board meetings outside of its headquarters and at key locations across Northern Ireland.

Invest NI had requested the use of the Reception Hall, as well as one Committee Room, to host a networking lunch from 12.00 p.m. till 2.00 p.m. and the Board meeting from 2.00 p.m. till 4.00 p.m. on that date. Attendees at the lunch event would include twelve Board members, twelve executive leaders and up to 60 guests. An invitation to the lunch would be extended to the Elected Members.

The Committee approved the use of the rooms at the City Hall by Invest NI on 19th February, 2014.

City Hall - Memorandum of Understanding – Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages

The Committee was advised that the General Register Office was part of the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, which was an agency of the Department of Finance and Personnel, and was responsible for the administration and control of the civil registration of births, adoptions, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships.

The Director of Property and Projects reported that legislation provided that each Local Government district shall be a registration district and registration was undertaken by Council staff on Council premises. In 1977 the Council and the General Register Office had entered into an agreement in respect of the use of offices at the City Hall and the former General Purposes and Finance Committee had agreed to recover the costs relating to the Council's provision of the service and use of offices. Those costs included rental for the accommodation, which comprised offices, a ceremony room and a parking space, together with recovery of rates, heating, cleaning and other costs.

Since the date of the initial agreement, costs had been recovered quarterly and rent reviews had been undertaken by the Land and Property Services agency every five years. At its meeting on 19th November, 2010, the Committee had considered a report which outlined some changes which the General Register Office had made to the service. In addition, other changes had occurred regarding which costs were recovered and the Memorandum of Understanding sought to regularise the changes which were already in effect.

The Committee noted that a new Memorandum of Understanding had been drawn up between the Council and the General Register Office in respect of the use of the accommodation in the City Hall to include changes to the rent and cost recovery and to record amendments in practice since the initial agreement in 1977.

North Foreshore - Arc21 Agreement to Lease

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Council has previously agreed in 2007 that part of the North Foreshore, the closed Dargan Road waste landfill site, should be developed for waste management purposes.**
- 1.2 The Development Committee had previously agreed on the 18 March 2004 to permit the south east area of the North Foreshore, to be developed for waste management facilities required by the Council and Arc21 under its Waste Management Plan. Approval was granted to allow the organics waste service operator procured by Arc21 to develop an 8.55 acre site for an In-Vessel organic composting facility, subject to the terms being agreed by the Development Department and a Legal Agreement being prepared by Legal Services.**
- 1.3 Arc21 entered into a 25 year organics waste service contract with NWP Ltd (Natural World Product Ltd) in 2008. The organics service contract required the service operator to build an In-Vessel organic composting facility to process all of the Arc21 Councils' organic waste at the North Foreshore site.**

- 1.4 On the 23rd December 2008 Arc21 entered into a 25 year Agreement to Lease with the Council for an 8.55 acre site at the North Foreshore. It committed Arc21 to obtain full planning consent for the facility and all building works to be completed by 23rd December 2013. The terms of this Agreement provided that when Arc21 secured planning consent, the service operator (NWP Ltd) would take possession of the site as a tenant at will and would be responsible for completing the building works by 23rd December 2013. On completion of the building work, it was agreed that the Council would grant a 25 year lease to Arc21 who would then sub lease the site to NWP Ltd.
- 1.5 The agreed rent set out in the Agreement to Lease was £128,000pa or £15,000 per acre per annum based on market rental evidence at that time. It was agreed that the rent would be reviewed every five years from the commencement of the lease.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The existing Agreement to Lease will expire on 23rd December 2013. This Agreement required Arc21 to submit a planning application within two years (later extended to three years) of signing the agreement, and provided a three build period, with a lease being granted on completion of these building works. However, it has not been possible to submit this planning application within the set timeframe due to the complexity of the information that they have had to provide up front to the DOE because of the nature of the site.
- 2.2 Whilst a planning application has not been submitted to date Arc 21 has however been in pre planning discussions (PAD process) with Planning Service and key statutory consultees since 2008. A number of environmental statements, site investigations and assessment reports had to be prepared to satisfy Planning Service and key statutory consultees. Delays have been due in part to site specific challenges, NIEA requirements and resultant design changes. The protracted PAD process has not been helped with changes in Planning Service personnel, which has also delayed the process. Arc21 has indicated that they hope to complete the PAD process by the end of 2013 which would enable them to submit a Planning Application in early 2014.
- 2.3 It should be noted that the organics service contract referred to above required Arc21 to secure planning permission for the North Foreshore site. The North Foreshore site has the critical waste management land

use zoning in the statutory draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan. Arc21 assumed responsibility for obtaining planning permission, because the In-Vessel organic composting facility represented a strategic part of the proposed network of waste infrastructure facilities envisaged in the Arc21 Waste Management Plan, and that the asset would ultimately be in public ownership at the end of the current service contract. It was considered that a planning application made by Arc21 would enhance the prospects of securing planning consent.

- 2.4 Belfast City Council is a member of Arc21, and is committed to delivering the Waste Management Plan for the region. This plan included the delivery of the In-Vessel composting facility at the North Foreshore site. This facility is a modern plant for processing waste; it is a sealed facility that will prevent the emission of dust and odour. It also has the potential to create at least 20 jobs at the site. It is an essential part of the waste infrastructure to recycle organic waste in order to reduce the tonnage going to land fill and to meet European and local recycling targets.
- 2.5 The organics service contract between Arc21 and NWP Ltd specifically identifies the North Foreshore as the site for an In-Vessel organic composting facility to service the Arc21 area. The Council's Legal Services Section has advised that if Arc21 fails to provide the North Foreshore site for the proposed development it could have significant financial implications for Arc21 and hence the constituent councils. In addition if the facility was not built and if organic waste cannot be recycled into compost this would have implications for the Council's recycling targets and potential NILAS fines potentially in excess of £1 million if the waste is land filled.
- 2.6 The Director of Property & Projects recently met with the Chief Executive of Arc21 to discuss the terms of the Agreement to Lease, which is due to expire on 23 December and to ascertain Arc 21's position concerning the future development of the site. Ac21 has confirmed that they still require the North Foreshore site to fulfil their legal obligations. They also indicated that they have been using best endeavours to complete their discussions with Planning Service in order to be able to submit a planning application in early 2014. However, given that the current Agreement to Lease will expire on 23rd December 2013, a new Agreement to Lease would be required setting out new terms including revised timescales and rental agreement to reflect the current market value of the land.

- 2.7 The previous lease agreement proposed an income of £128,000pa to the Council. However this rental level was set in 2008 and it envisaged that a lease would be in place by December 2013 with the Council receiving an annual rent of £128,000p.a (reviewable every 5 years). It is now anticipated that Arc 21 will not be in a position to enter into a lease with the Council for a further 3 years potentially (to allow for the planning approval stage and completion of the building works). The terms of any new Agreement to Lease will therefore need to be revised, particularly in relation to the site rental in order to reflect the current market value of the land and ensure that the Council is acting in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 (Sec 96) which provides for disposal of land at best price or otherwise on best terms.
- 2.8 Members are being asked to approve the granting of a new Agreement to Lease and Lease to Arc 21 in respect of an 8.55 acre site for the purposes of an In-Vessel organic composting facility at the North Foreshore subject to agreement on revised terms. The revised terms will include new rental provisions, with the rent to be agreed by the Estates Manager, on the proviso of it being referred to Land & Property Services in the absence of an agreement between the parties. The revised terms and conditions agreed by the Council and Arc21 will be brought back to Committee for approval.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

The lease of the site to Arc 21 for the proposed development of an in-vessel composting facility will provide a rental income to the Council. The previous lease agreement proposed an income of c£128,000pa to the Council but this will need to be reviewed as part of the revised terms and conditions to be contained in the new Agreement to Lease and to reflect the current market value of the land. However it should be noted that this may have an impact on the gate fee charges, depending on the precise nature of the sub lease arrangements.

In order to enable development and comply with planning and NIEA requirements and for the protection of human health, the site will require capping works (including an active gas abstraction system) to be undertaken by the Council. The cost of the capping work for this c8.55 acre site is approximately £2.1 million. It is worth noting however that in the absence of development the Council may still have to provide a basic capping system. This capping cost is likely to be met from the Landfill Closure Funds.

If this facility is not built and if organic waste cannot be recycled into compost there will be implications for the Council's recycling targets and potential NILAS fines potentially in excess of £1 million if the waste is land filled.

3.2 Asset

The proposed North Foreshore site in the south east area has been designated for development of waste management facilities. The asset forms part of the proposed environmental resource park to create a cleantech business cluster for Belfast.

3.3 Human Resource

Staff resource, primarily from Property & Projects Department and Legal Services.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 There are no known equality or good relations issues relating to this matter

5 Recommendations

5.1 It is recommended that Members agree to grant Arc21 a new Agreement to Lease for the c8.55 acre site at the North Foreshore for an In-Vessel organic composting facility, subject to revised terms and conditions to be agreed between the Council and Arc21, as referred to above. The revised terms will be brought back to Committee for approval."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Good Relations and Equality

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

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Good Relations Partnership of 11th November and approved the following:

Good Relations Audit

The decision of the Partnership to request that funding of £8,000 be made available to appoint an independent external organisation to undertake Good Relations audits and action plans from 2014 till 2017.

Opening of St. Malachy's Youth Centre

The decision of the Partnership to make available funding of up to £400 for hospitality associated with the opening of the St. Malachy's Youth Centre, which had obtained funding of £70,000 through the Council's Local Investment Fund.

Cross-Cutting Issues

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

European Union I Capital Prize

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Innovation is central to economic growth and business competitiveness, and is at the heart of the Europe 2020 strategy. The European Union has set itself the goal of becoming an 'Innovation Union'.

Through its research and innovation and regional policies, the EU has been promoting smart and sustainable urban development. The next EU research and innovation programme, Horizon 2020, will run from 2014 to 2020. It will concentrate more than ever on funding the whole 'innovation chain', from scientific breakthrough to close-to-market development. Future EU regional funding will also focus more on research and innovation, for instance building research infrastructure.

1.2 European Capital of Innovation Award

The European Capital of Innovation Award will reward the city which is building the best 'innovation ecosystem', connecting citizens, public organisations, academia, and business. Given that 68% of the EU population now lives in urban areas, it is these areas that will contribute the most to making Europe more innovative. Cities foster innovation in their own provision of services, but the key is to create the right environment for others to innovate and to allow the public and private spheres to connect.

An independent panel of experts will select the winner in spring 2014, with the city chosen receiving €500000 towards scaling up its efforts. The deadline for applications is 3 December 2013.

Cities will be judged both on initiatives and achievements until now, as well as their future ideas to enhance innovative capacity. They will have to demonstrate that they are following a comprehensive strategy that is:

- Innovative - in terms of concepts, processes and tools.
- Inspiring – with the aim of attracting talent, funding, investment and citizens' involvement and engagement.
- Integrated – demonstrating links with the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy, namely smart, sustainable and inclusive growth across Europe.
- Interactive - building a community for innovation within the city and with other cities.

The award is for cities with over 100 000 inhabitants and for initiatives that have been running since at least 1 January 2010.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Belfast City Council was asked to take the lead by the European Health Alliance to coordinate stakeholders across the city to apply for the award and prize. In order for the partnership to be eligible for consideration, the Lord Mayor must sign the application agreeing to city involvement in the project.

Concept of the application

- 2.2 The focus of the award will be to use digital technology to improve the quality of life of our older citizens.
- 2.3 BCC and its stakeholders have recognised the opportunities of embracing and exploiting digital technology. Investment to date has been targeted to deliver the digital infrastructure and technologies that will enhance the lives of its citizens.
- 2.4 This focus is already paying dividends – Belfast is one of the most connected cities in the European Union. Proactive investment from both the public and private sector means that the city has one of the best digital communications platforms in Europe and indeed the world.

Basic broadband is available across the city and as you are aware BCC secured the second largest Super-connected city project outside of London.

Aim

- 2.5 The overarching objective of the investment so far has been to take a proactive approach to the exploitation of this infrastructure across the city, to realise maximum economic and social benefit. In this vain, the application is being developed with the aim of using digital technology to improve the quality of life of our older citizens through the pervasive nature of our advanced digital infrastructure.
- 2.6 The stakeholders have identified a need to change the way Health and Social Care services are provided as well as the opportunities that technology offers in delivering modern, innovative person-centred services for aging citizens of Belfast.
- 2.7 This will allow citizens to receive care at home, to support patients in their communities and to deliver health and social care services in innovative methods that get people back to health and wellness so that they can engage in the rich economic and social opportunities that the city provides.

Belfast City Council as a civic leader in the project

- 2.8 Belfast has the ambition of becoming an exemplar region for connected technologies. It has already nurtured active collaborative working relationships between industry, professionals and academia. The project directly fits into citizenship within the corporate plan.

The Declaration on Age-friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013

- 2.9 Belfast City Council has identified older people as a priority within its corporate plan and, in March 2012, the Council agreed that the Lord Mayor should sign the Age Friendly Cities and Communities Declaration (2011) committing Belfast to becoming a more Age-friendly city, thereby encouraging active, healthy aging. This was signed by the Lord Mayor in May 2012.

- 2.10 Belfast became a member of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Network of Age friendly Cities in April 2013. The Council is currently collaborating through its role in the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership with voluntary and public sector organisations to develop a 3-year age friendly action plan for the City.

Transforming Your Care: Vision to Action

- 2.11 At its meeting on 9 June 2012 the Committee received a briefing from Colm Donaghy, Chief Executive of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, outlining the content of 'Transforming Your Care: A Review of Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland', published by the DHSSPS. Subsequently, the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Edwin Poots, launched a consultation document, 'Transforming Your Care: Vision to Action' which summarises changes proposed to Northern Ireland's Health and Social Care System.

- 2.12 Recommendations concern the following ten areas of care

- (i) Population health and well being
- (ii) Older people
- (iii) Long-term conditions
- (iv) Physical disability
- (v) Maternity and Child health
- (vi) Family and Child care
- (vii) Mental Health
- (viii) Learning Disability
- (ix) Acute care
- (x) Palliative and end of life care

- 2.13 The recommendations regarding population, health and well being are directly significant to the role and functions of local government and are directly linked to the project.

Ensured citizens' involvement and engagement

- 2.14 While the focus of this initiative is to enhance citizen's care and enablement of our aging society, the investment in enhancing the digital platform has implications and benefits across society.

We are now putting in place additional infrastructure through digital functions hubs which can be used for education, entertainment, business and health, addressing fundamental issues around social inclusion, education, employment and of course health.

2.15 By providing better care for citizens through increased innovation and utilisation of the digital platform the partnership can reduce costs across the Health and Social Care sector; drive innovation which in turn will create jobs and economic activity by enhancing opportunities locally and also through foreign direct investment and open up opportunities for increased commercialisation of Intellectual Assets and increased export of products and knowledge.

2.16 As a result of the world class digital platform, Belfast has a strong and vibrant creative industry as well as ICT sector, both are well positioned to design and create digital technologies that can directly address the needs of those marginalised from society can have a real impact on individuals across the city.

2.17 Partners

Belfast Metropolitan College
European Health Alliance
MATRIX- the Northern Ireland Science Industry Panel
Belfast Health Trust
Health and Social Care NI

3 Resource Implications

3.1 The award is 100% funded by the European Commission.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

5 Recommendations

5.1 It is recommended that Committee agree to submit the application on 3 December, subject to Council approval.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Healthy Cities - Expression of Interest letter to Phase VI

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

Belfast was first designated to the WHO European Healthy Cities Network in 1988 and the city has been a key member since that time. Belfast Healthy Cities, which operates through a Board of Directors

from various statutory and voluntary agencies and a small staff team, has worked over the past five phases of the initiative to place health and wellbeing on the policy agenda of all agencies within the city; to create an intersectoral approach across sectors; and to promote understanding and action to address inequity in health throughout the city.

Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC) has therefore played, and continues to play, an important part in assisting the Council to meet its corporate priorities, particularly in helping it make the linkages between health, improving quality of life and inequalities and enhances the Council's civic leadership role in this area. The role is all the more important given the additional responsibilities that will be within the remit of Council during the Phase VI (2014-2019) period. BHC also supports work programmes within the Belfast Strategic Partnership and leads the work on Regeneration & Healthy Urban Environments and actively contributes to the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership and to the Active Belfast/Active Travel group.

Another key element in the success of the Healthy Cities approach is the added Benefits that cities can attain from being able to network with other cities internationally. BHC is very successful in bringing expert speakers to build knowledge within the city on key health and equity issues. The coming together of different perspectives and approaches on common themes can significantly enhance initiatives for health improvement and can often help reinforce confidence in an approach being adopted within a city.

The Head of Environmental Health is currently a member of the Belfast Healthy Cities Board of Directors. The Chair of the Health and Environmental Services Committee is considered to be the lead politician representing Belfast at the European business meetings. The Council is also one of the core funders of the organisation and its programmes. Other funders are Public Health Agency, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Belfast Health & Social Care Trust.

2 Key Issues

The WHO Healthy Cities Network will come to an end in 2013 and Phase VI of the Network will operate from 2014 – 2019. Dr Eddie Rooney, Chief Executive, Public Health Agency has indicated support for the city applying for membership to the WHO Phase VI Healthy Cities Network. The first stage of making the application is to submit a letter of 'expression of interest' to WHO. This is submitted on behalf of Belfast by Dr Eddie Rooney and the Lord Mayor.

Dr Agis Tsouros, will be in Belfast on 28/29 November 2013 and it is planned that the 'expression of interest letter' will be presented to Dr Tsouros by the Lord Mayor and Dr Rooney at Belfast Healthy Cities 25th Anniversary event on 29th November. On receipt of this, WHO will make the decision if Belfast will be invited to submit a full application to Phase VI, based on Belfast's delivery on the Phase V themes.

The second stage of the application is to submit a full Phase VI application identifying the priorities to be taken forward during Phase VI. A workshop will be held on 10 January 2013 with senior officials from government departments and the Chief Executives from Belfast City Council, Public Health Agency, Belfast HSC Trust and Northern Ireland Housing Executive. The full application should be submitted by the end of March 2014.

3 Resource Implications

The Health & Environmental Services Committee meeting on 5 September 2012, agreed commitment to support the Belfast Healthy Cities until March 2016.

4 Equality and Good Relations Implications

None

5 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Lord Mayor will jointly with Dr Eddie Rooney present the expression of interest letter to Dr Tsouros, whilst he is here on 29th November 2013."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Emergency Planning Update

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update in relation to Emergency Planning matters and agreed that a regular schedule of meetings should be established for the Council's Emergency and Severe Weather Working Group and that updates of the work of that Group should be submitted periodically to the five Area Working Groups.

Chairman