

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 25th April, 2014

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Robinson (Chairman);
Aldermen Campbell and Patterson;
Councillors Attwood, Carson, Clarke, Corr,
M.E. Campbell, Haire, Hargey, Hendron, Jones,
Kennedy, McCarthy, Mac Giolla Mhín, McVeigh,
Newton and Reynolds.

In attendance: Mr P. McNaney, Chief Executive;
Mrs S. Wylie, Chief Executive (Designate);
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. A. Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure;
Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mrs. J. Minne, Assistant Chief Executive/
Head of Human Resources;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apology

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

Declarations of Interest

The Chairman (Alderman Robinson) declared an interest in Item 9(a) insofar as he was Special Advisor to the First Minister; and Councillor McVeigh declared an interest in Item 10(d) Leisure Transformation Programme, in that he was employed by SIPTU.

Democratic Services and Governance

Requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality

The Committee considered the undernoted request for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality:

Appendix 1

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Queen's University Belfast	Higher Education for Democratic Innovation International Consortium Conference Reception 26th June, 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 conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500
Queen's University Belfast	Radiocarbon in the Environment Conference Reception 18th August, 2014 Approximately 100 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 conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500
Queen's University Belfast	European Conference on Domestic Violence Conference Dinner 8th September, 2015 Approximately 450 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500
European Society for Mental Health and Deafness	Opening Ceremony of World Congress – 'Pathways to Rights' 16th September, 2014 Approximately 400 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 conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500

<p>British Institute of Cleaning Science</p>	<p>Northern Ireland Cleaner of the Year 2013 20th September, 2013 Approximately 50 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event seeks to acknowledge the vital role of cleaners across various industries in Northern Ireland. The event will also aim to recognise those individuals who have been nominated within their respective industries for undertaking their duties to a high standard. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits Approximate cost £125</p>
<p>Common Purpose</p>	<p>Meridian Course Final Day and Award Ceremony 7th August, 2014 Approximately 50 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.</p>	<p>'Meridian' is a leadership programme that brings together a diverse group of leaders from the private, public, voluntary and community sectors. The participants learn how to improve their capacity to lead, effect change and expand their networks through the investigation of real-life challenges. This event will recognise the achievements of those individuals which have successfully completed the Meridian Programme. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits. Approximate Cost £125</p>
<p>Ulster Journals Limited</p>	<p>Ulster Tatler People of the Year Awards 2014 18th September, 2014 Approximately 360 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall</p>	<p>This event aims to highlight and recognise those individuals who have excelled in their chosen field. The awards ceremony will acknowledge those individuals who have demonstrated significant achievement in categories such as Business Man/Woman of the Year, Arts Personality</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall</p>

			<p>of the Year and Hotelier/Publican of the Year.</p> <p>The event will also pay tribute to an individual by way of the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' that has previously been presented to Dame Mary Peters, Sir James Galway, Brian Friel, Phil Coulter, Darren Clarke, James Nesbitt and Gloria Hunniford.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	
NOW	<p>Graduation Ceremony</p> <p>13th November, 2014</p> <p>Approximately 250 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall	<p>This event will highlight the work of NOW an organisation which provides training and employment services for people with learning difficulties. It will aim to demonstrate that Belfast is a city that supports people with all levels of learning difficulties and will provide the much needed support for integration into all areas of public life.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together', 'Better support for people and communities' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	The use of the City Hall
The Royal Irish Academy	<p>Launch of Volume Five of Art and Architecture of Ireland</p> <p>17th November, 2014</p> <p>Approximately 400 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception	<p>This event will seek to be a celebration of all aspects of Irish art from Georgian houses to illuminated manuscripts, and will provide new insight into every facet of the strength, depth and variety of both artistic and architectural heritage.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>

European Society for Mental Health and Deafness

The Committee agreed that the hospitality for the Opening Ceremony of the World Congress – ‘Pathways to Rights’ being organised by the European Society for Mental Health and Deafness be upgraded to a finger buffet.

The Committee adopted the remaining recommendations as set out.

Notice of Motion – Irish Rugby Squad

The Committee was reminded that at the Council meeting on 1st April the undernoted Notice of Motion had been proposed by Councillor Ó Donnghaile and seconded by Alderman Robinson:

“This Council congratulates the Ireland Rugby Squad on their recent Six Nations win and in particular commends and recognises the contribution of Brian O’Driscoll to the sporting life of Ireland over the last fifteen years.

The Council requests the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to engage with the IRFU to host, at the earliest convenience for both, a reception/event, led by the Lord Mayor, to recognise the team’s historic win and afford the people of Belfast the opportunity to express their thanks, appreciation and support for our Ireland Rugby heroes.”

The Motion had been passed unanimously by the Council.

The Committee agreed that a suitable civic reception be held to mark the occasion.

Notice of Motion – Display of election posters during the Giro d’Italia

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st April, in considering a minute of the Development Committee in respect of the preparations for the Giro d’Italia, had agreed that the Lord Mayor write to the Environment Minister, Mr. M. Durkan, MLA, encouraging him to introduce legislation to prohibit the erection of election posters along the route of the race until the event was over.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that a response had been received from the Minister. In his letter, the Minister had indicated that, whilst the political parties

at the Northern Ireland Assembly had expressed their support for a voluntary ban on a display of elections posters, officials within his department had been working to introduce draft legislation to bring the display of election posters under planning control. In essence, such legislation, as and when it was introduced, would prohibit the display of election posters along the route of the Giro d'Italia until after the race had left Northern Ireland. Therefore, the display of election posters along the route would be prohibited until Wednesday, 12th May.

The Minister had pointed out, however, that the effectiveness of such a measure would depend upon the prior cooperation of all of the political parties to agree to abide by the regulations and not to erect posters. He added that officials from his department would be consulting with key stakeholders, including the Council, to ascertain how each body could contribute towards ensuring that the ban on election posters would be adhered to for the duration of the race.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and noted also that the ban was now in place and would be effective from 9th till 11th May.

Request to film a Council Meeting

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from Pi Communications, which was the Northern Ireland Assembly Broadcasting Unit, seeking authority to access the Council Chamber floor to film a portion (15 minutes) of footage of the Council meeting on 1st May, 2014. The purpose of the film was to gather high definition footage of a Council meeting in session which might be used in an educational video that Pi Communications was making which was entitled 'The Importance of Voting'. It was intended that the footage would be available in time for the Council and European Elections in May.

The Committee agreed to the filming of a portion (15 minutes) at the beginning of the Council meeting on 1st May, subject to the approval of the Council on that evening.

European Local Democracy Week 2014

The Committee was advised that European Local Democracy Week (ELDW) was an annual event held each October, the overarching purpose of which was to promote a better involvement of citizens in public life, enhance transparency of local government mechanisms and improved social cohesion, in particular among young people and disadvantaged groups. The ELDW built on Local Democracy Week in which the Council had been involved in previous years by organising and hosting events involving young people from across the city. In 2012 and 2013, the Council had organised and delivered EurVoice events which allowed pupils from Secondary Schools, Members of the Council's Youth Forum, representatives of the European Youth Parliament and participants from Community Groups in the City to interact with their local Councillors who undertook the role of Youth Champion within their party. The events have proven to be very successful and feedback from the Schools, Community Groups and from the Councillors after the events was very positive. Participants had felt that last year's event had been an enjoyable and a diverse way for them all to meet

on a one-to-one basis and get a sense of and discuss through many mutually important and relevant issues.

The Committee was informed that EurVoice was a unique community outreach programme designed to engage and empower young people, including those from disadvantaged social and economic backgrounds. The purpose of EurVoice was to provide a platform and framework to allow young people to take ownership of their own opinions, a place in society, to express their views to people in authority and to discover their own importance in shaping the future. The nature of the event served to influence the role young people could potentially have in local democracy decision-making. EurVoice was a sister programme to the European Youth Parliament debating event which brought young people together on a national and international level.

The Democratic Services Manager pointed out that a project steering group had been set-up to organise the event and comprised officers from Community Services, Democratic Services, Corporate Communications and the European Unit as well as external organisations which included the European Commission Office of Northern Ireland and the European Youth Parliament. Following the success of EurVoice 2012 and 2013, it was felt that it would be worth organising an even more engaging event where both young people and Councillors could meet to discuss the relevant issues which faced young citizens of Belfast and to build on the themes which had been discussed at the previous event. In addition to the participants who had attended in 2013, invitations would also be extended to young people in the wider community.

The EurVoice event would take place in the Great Hall on Tuesday, 14th October, 2014 from 12.00 noon until 4.00 p.m. and would target Belfast schools and youth organisations. A series of activities were planned, including:

- Participating in a mock voting exercise;
- Use of technology to conduct an opinion poll on a range of issues affecting young people, enabling instant feedback;
- Facilitated workshops; and
- A panel question and answer session with Members of the Council.

The participation of elected Members would be crucial to the success of the event. Along with the Lord Mayor, the involvement of the Party nominated Youth Champions would assist in achieving the outlined aims as well as breaking down barriers between young citizens, the Council and its Members. It was expected that the event would cost approximately £3,300 which would include hospitality, IT provision and Master of Ceremony costs.

The Committee approved the hosting of the EurVoice event as outlined.

Meetings and Other Commitments for Members in June

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1** Members will be aware that the Committee, at its meeting on 4th June, agreed that the existing 6 Standing Committees should be reappointed at the Annual Council meeting on 2nd June for the remainder of the term of office of the Council, which will end on 31st March, 2015.
- 1.2** Members will also be aware that the Statutory Transition Committee has recommended to the incoming Shadow Council that it appoint 4 Committees in the first instance to take forward the work of planning to take over the administration of the City, with significant additional responsibilities, from 1st April 2015.
- 1.3** There will also be an urgent need to undertake induction training for incoming Members of the Shadow Council and to undertake training for all Members of both the existing Belfast City Council and the Shadow Council on the new Code of Conduct for Members, as this will apply to Members of both Councils from 25th May, 2014.
- 1.4** This workload will have significant implications for Members' time in June, and particularly for those Members who hold a position on both Councils.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1** A schedule of Committee and other meetings of the existing Council for the period from 25th May till 4th July, has been circulated.

Members are asked to give consideration to the following issues:

2.2 Induction Training Requirements

Incoming Members of the Shadow Council will require to undergo initial induction training and will be required to have a number of logistical matters attended to (bank details, security passes, car park passes etc) in the days immediately following their election. All Members of the Shadow Council officially take up office on Sunday, 25th May. Monday 26th May is a Bank Holiday so this initial engagement will need to take place on Tuesday 27th and Wednesday 28th May.

2.3 Code of Conduct Training

The new Code of Conduct for Members (which is still being consulted upon) will apply to Members of both the existing Belfast City Council and the Shadow Council and therefore it is essential that early awareness training is undertaken so that Members do not

inadvertently fall foul of the Code. The Local Government Training Group will be advertising in the week beginning 28th April for training providers to deliver this training across the 11 new Councils. It is envisaged that the training provider selected will deliver the training in partnership with the Ombudsman's Office, which will be responsible for the investigation of any alleged breaches of the Code. No doubt all of the 11 new Councils will be seeking to identify early training dates for this training and our Human Resources Section have already stressed the need for the training to be delivered in Belfast before the first meeting of the Shadow Council on 11th June.

2.4 Engagement with Party Leaders

It will be important that the political parties in the Shadow Council appoint party leaders as soon as possible after the elections and no later than 29th May. A number of meetings of the party leaders will be required to identify if there is common agreement as to the method of proportionality to be applied to the appointment of positions of responsibility and to actually run the agreed process so that a report can be prepared for agreement by the Shadow Council on 11th June. Officers can provide the party leaders with options for consideration for the method of proportionality and the outcome of those methods to a variety of Committee sizes. However, this work cannot be undertaken until after the election results are known. Therefore, the meetings of party leaders will need to take place between 29th May and 3rd June so that the appropriate papers can be circulated at least 5 days prior to the meeting date of 11th June – as required under the provisions of the Local Government Bill.

In addition to this, it will be necessary to seek a meeting of the party leaders of the parties in the existing Council to run the D'hondt exercise for the appointment of Members to Committees for the remainder of the Council Term. This needs to be agreed in advance of the Annual Council meeting on 2nd June and would, ideally take place prior to the local elections on 22nd May. Members will recall that in February 2013 it was agreed that, as there had been a change in the party strengths on the Council with Alderman McCoubrey joining the Democratic Unionist Party in November 2012, that the remaining 2 years of the Term would be considered as two 1-year terms with Sinn Fein having 38 Members across the Committees for the 2013/14 year and the DUP 37 seats with that position being reversed for the 2014/15 year.

2.5 Meetings of Committees and Working Groups

Members will recall that the Committee agreed on 4th April that the existing 6 Standing Committees would be reappointed at the Annual

Council Meeting on 2nd June and that a review of the existing Working Groups should be carried out to assess which should be reappointed for the remainder of the Council Term.

The attached schedule shows the Standing Committees meeting on their existing scheduled days. It also shows indicative meeting dates of the 5 Area-Based Working Groups and of the Good Relations Partnership and the Audit Panel. The meeting of the Audit Panel will be required in order to consider the draft Annual Financial Report including the Annual Governance Statement for recommendation for approval by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 20th June. The Good Relations Partnership, which includes outside Members, will be required to meet to consider issues in relation to Peace 3 funding and potentially matters concerning the Bonfire Programme over the Summer.

Members are asked to give consideration as to whether it is essential that the Area-Based Working Groups meet during June or whether it would be appropriate for any decisions required to be taken directly to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that month. In that way, some dates would be kept free to allow the other matters requiring urgent attention to be dealt with.

2.6 Meetings of Committees of the Shadow Council

Members will be aware that the Statutory Transition Committee has recommended to the incoming Shadow Council that it appoint 4 Committees in the first instance to take forward the work of planning to take over the administration of the City, with significant additional responsibilities, from 1st April 2015. These Committees will need to meet during the month of June and, in order to allow the minutes to be circulated 5 days in advance of the next meeting of the Shadow Council in early July, the meetings will need to be held between 16th and 24th June approximately.

2.7 Party Group Briefings

The attached schedule shows the agreed dates for Party Group Briefings during June. Again, given the number of meetings and other important issues to be addressed by Members during that month, it is suggested that the briefings are cancelled for that month.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 None.

4 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 None.

5 Recommendations

5.1 The Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the contents of the report;
2. Note that induction training for new Members will take place as early as possible after the elections and indicatively on 28th and 29th May;
3. Note that Human Resources will liaise with the Local Government Training Group to attempt to establish early dates for training on the new Code of Conduct and ideally before 11th June;
4. Agree that a meeting of the Party Leaders in the existing Council will take place prior to the local elections on 22nd May to run the D'hondt process for the appointment of Committees for the 2014/15 year;
5. Agree that a meeting or series of meetings will be held with the Party Leaders of the Parties in the Shadow Council between 29th May and 3rd June to consider the allocation of Committee places and positions of responsibility in the Shadow Council;
6. Agree to reappoint the membership of the Audit Panel and the Good Relations Partnership in order that they might hold essential meetings in June with the reappointment of all other Working Groups to be considered as part of an overall report to Committee in August;"
7. Note that the first meetings of the 4 Committees to be appointed by the Shadow Council on 11th June will need to take place between 16th and 24th June approximately.
8. Agree that the existing Area-Based Working Group meetings be postponed for June and any decisions required being reported directly to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee; and
9. Agree to cancel the Party Group Briefings scheduled for June.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Request for the use of the City Hall – Friends of the Irish Guards

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from the Friends of the Irish Guards organisation seeking the use of the City Hall on 31st October, 2014. The organising committee requesting use of the City Hall wished to use the opportunity to promote the 1st Battalion Irish Guards within the local community. The Friends of the Irish Guards, which had been formed in April, 1900, wanted to host a gala ball to commemorate the role of the Irish Guards from World War I to the present day. It planned to invite dignitaries from central and local government as well as senior ranking army officers from London. The organisers wished to celebrate the achievements of the

many people in the Regiment that hailed from Belfast and to mark the charitable work it had been involved with in schools, hospitals and nursing homes. The Council had hosted a similar type Gala Ball in 2012 to bid farewell to the Irish Guards who had been deployed to Afghanistan.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that, normally, any request for an event which referenced a major centenary such as the commencement of World War I would be referred in the first instance for consideration by the Joint Group of the Party Leaders' Forum and the Historic Centenaries Working Group. However, it was unlikely that a meeting of that Working Group would take place prior to August and the proposed event would require a significant lead-in time for organising. Accordingly, the Committee was being requested to consider the application.

The Committee granted the use of the City Hall on 31st October for the Gala Ball for the Friends of the Irish Guards organisation.

**Request by the Ulster Covenant and Historical Society –
Cross exhibition at the Cenotaph or East Entrance area**

The Committee was informed that a request had been received from the Ulster Covenant and Historical Society to have a cross exhibition at the East Entrance area of the City Hall followed by a short act of remembrance at the Cenotaph to mark the centenary of the start of the First World War. The Society was a non-profit making organisation and encouraged membership from across both communities. Although focussing on the 36th Ulster Division, it sought to encourage debate and advance knowledge of the religious and cross-community composition of the 36th and the parallels between it and the 16th Irish Division. In addition to researching and promoting the history of Ireland at the turn of the 20th Century, it was also involved in keeping alive the memory of those who had fought in World War One. It also had a special affiliation with the Battle of the Somme.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that, to mark the centenary of the start of the First World War, the Society was putting together an exhibition of crosses. On each cross would be listed the names of soldiers from the island of Ireland who had died during the First World War and who were commemorated in both the City and Milltown Cemeteries. In total there were 403 names, 298 of who were commemorated at the City and 105 at the Milltown Cemetery. Each cross would have 10 names with an abbreviation of the regiment in which the person served. No ranks were shown and apart from shamrocks and poppies there were no other symbols on the crosses. For display purposes the crosses would be mounted on 3 boards which were 1 metre square.

The organisers of the exhibition would like to display the crosses in the East Entrance of the City Hall for one day and then, the following day, move them to the Cenotaph area where there would be a short act of remembrance. The exact dates of the exhibition were not known at this stage but could be during the month of June. The exhibition would be promoted through the Society's own website. It also expected a lot of media interest because of the significance of the event and because there were many interesting stories about some of the names listed. A separate request might be made for the Lord Mayor to launch the exhibition and provide a small reception in the Parlour.

In addition, the organisers had also approached the Parks and Leisure Department about having the crosses displayed at both the City and Milltown cemeteries.

The Democratic Services Manager pointed out that, again, such requests would normally be referred to the Joint Group of the Party Leaders' Forum and Historic Centenaries Working Group but due to the fact that that group would not meet prior to the event it was necessary for the matter to be placed before the Committee for decision.

The Committee approved the request for the use of the East Entrance of the City Hall and the Cenotaph as outlined.

Local Government Reform

Consultation on the Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Consultation

The Department of the Environment is seeking views from consultees on its proposals in relation to the new Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillor. This is a mandatory code of conduct which outlines the principles which will govern the conduct of councillors.

The Code will be applicable to all Councillors (both existing and new members) following the election on 22 May 2014 and it will outline the principles and rules of general conduct, disclosure and registration of interests, lobbying and access to councillors, decision making and application of the code with regard to planning matters. Part 9 of the Code (in relation to planning matters) will not however come into force until 1 April 2015 when planning powers are formally adopted by the new council. A copy of the consultation document (including the draft Code of Conduct) has been circulated.

In order to meet the 30th April deadline for responses, it is proposed that the draft BCC response be presented to the Belfast STC on the 9th April 2014 and then to SP&R on the 25th April 2014.

The STC approved the attached response at Appendix 2 at its meeting on the 9th April.

1.2 Code of Conduct

The Local Government Bill provides for the introduction of a new ethical framework for local government in Northern Ireland, a key element of which is the introduction of a mandatory code of conduct for councillors. Previously, councillors were guided by a non-mandatory Northern Ireland Code of Local Government Conduct which issued in 2003.

Once it receives Royal Assent the Local Government Act 2014 will:

- provide for the introduction of a mandatory Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors (“the Code”)
- impose a requirement for councillors to observe the Code; and
- establish mechanisms for the investigation and adjudication of written complaints by the Commissioner of Complaints (NI Ombudsman)

The mandatory code of conduct will be consistent with the seven Nolan principles of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership, as well as the four additional principles of equality, promoting good relations, respect and good working relationships that are already adopted by the Northern Ireland Assembly code.

The code will detail the standards of conduct that are expected when acting as a councillor and conducting council business, including, very importantly, the discharge of the council’s new planning functions.

A draft of the code must be laid before and approved by resolution of the Assembly before it can come into force.

It is intended that the ethical standards framework should be reviewed after three to four years to assess how it is working and to consider whether any modifications are needed, such as the setting up of standards committees in councils.

1.4 Role of the Commissioner (investigation and adjudication processes)

The Bill makes provision for the investigation and adjudication processes that should be undertaken by the commissioner, and it applies relevant provisions of the Commissioner for Complaints (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 to the ethical framework. The Commissioner may investigate any written complaints from any person that a councillor (or

former councillor) has failed, or may have failed, to comply with the Code.

Where, following an investigation, it is found that a person has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct; the Commissioner may decide to:

- censure the person found to have failed to comply with the Code;
- suspend or partially suspend the person from being a councillor for up to one year
- disqualify the person from being, or becoming, a councillor for a period of up to five years
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In addition, the Commissioner may make recommendations to a council about any matter relating to the exercise of a council's functions.

The Code states that it is the responsibility of each councillor to ensure that they are familiar with the provisions of the Code and that they comply with those provisions accordingly. It is therefore essential that all Councillors to be fully cognisant of both the contents of the Code in relation to the standards of conduct required and the role of the Commissioner in relation to investigations, adjudication and the imposition of any sanctions as a result of a breach of the Code.

It is envisaged that all Councillors will receive dedicated training in relation to the Code of Conduct and that the Department, in conjunction with the Commissioner for Complaints, will issue detailed guidance in support of the Code.

1.5 Appeals Mechanism included in Local Government Bill

The Local Government Bill has been amended to include the provision of an appeal to the High Court as part of the ethical standards framework.

The DOE Minister has indicated that he intends to bring forward a further Bill which will establish an independent body with responsibility for adjudication within the ethical standards framework, which will be outside the remit of the Commissioner for Complaints. The Commissioner will still retain responsibility for receiving all complaints and undertaking all investigations.

1.6 Given the mandatory nature of the Code and the need to revert to the NI Assembly to make any changes, it is important to ensure that local government is satisfied with

the structure and the content of the Code prior to its introduction in the Assembly.

2.0 KEY ISSUES

Summary of draft response to the Department of the Environment

2.1 Officers have carried out a review of the draft Code of Conduct and a detailed response is attached at Appendix 2 for the Committees' consideration and comment.

2.2 An initial summary of the priority issues for the Council as identified by officers is set out below for information. Officers are aware that the Code of Conduct for Councillors will be subject to political consideration and individual Party Groups may wish to express their own views.

It is recognised that there are a number of queries around processes and definitions and that it is likely that these will be addressed in the supporting guidance.

2.3 General points

- On a general point, the Council would note that the guidance in relation to the Code of Conduct has not yet been issued. It is therefore difficult to give proper consideration to the Code in the absence of the supporting guidance.
- The Council welcome the amendment to the Local Government Bill which provides a right of appeal to councillors who are deemed to be in breach of the Code. However, the draft Code contains many high level principles against which members might have a difficulty in discerning if a particular course of conduct is, or could, amount to a breach. There are accessible English standards cases that could have provided a reference point to give greater clarity.
- The Council would be concerned that paragraph 15 of the introductory text refers to "a body of precedent". This in effect means that there is acceptance that the Commissioner will establish the benchmark for conduct as opposed to the Code. A principle of law is that law should have some degree of certainty thus an individual may judge with some certainty what type of conduct falls short or transgresses the required standard.
- The Council note that grafted into the code are certain legal duties which exist independent of the Code. The Council would seek clarification as to whether the Code therefore provides for individual sanction to be imposed

in relation to those legal duties that exist independently from the Code.

Comments on the draft Code

- Requirement to comply with the Code (p.14) – the Council welcome the provision in Part 2 to apply the Code to all councillors, including councillors of existing councils until those councils are dissolved in April 2015.
- Enforcement of the Code (p.16) – the Council are supportive of the role of the Commissioner but would recommend that the supporting guidance provides clarity around the enforcement process, including: the making of a complaint; target timescales for resolving complaints; the investigation process; dealing with malicious complaints and whether or not fees will be chargeable if a complaint is found to be vexatious.
- Rules of General Conduct (p.20) – under 4.14 - duty to have regard to advice – the Council feel that the Code should also reference the power of surcharge which has been retained.

Under paragraph 4.16 disclosure of information - the code duplicates a legal duty under Data Protection Act (DPA) which also has a sanction/penalty for disclosure. Perhaps rather than creating a freestanding further obligation, the code should reference the existing legal duty.

Under paragraph 4.18 (p.23) “Dealings with your council” – it is unclear as to what “substantial land, property or other interests” means in practice. How would a Member decide if any such interest is substantial? In addition, what does “friend or associate” mean in relation to planning applications? As it currently stands, this could result in a high degree of uncertainty. Will this section apply only if it is the Councillor themselves who make the application on behalf of such a person and does it not apply if the person themselves make the application?

- Registration of Interests (p.24) – paragraph 5.2 (vii) identifies a personal interest in respect of “*any land where the landlord is your council and the tenant is a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a body of the description specified under sub-paragraph (iv) above*” - would this also apply to outside bodies to which Members are appointed by the Council? An example may be a waste management group appearing before a committee.

In respect of paragraph 5.2 (ix) – this would impact when Trade Unions address Council or Committee if any Members are also in the Union. The Council would recommend that the Department further examine the potential impact of that instance.

The section on sensitive information (5.6 to 5.8) places a responsibility on CEOs that might in practice present them with some difficulty. More discussion is required in relation to this issue. It would be helpful if either the Code, or the associated guidance gave a few examples of what would be regarded as ‘sensitive information’.

- Lobbying and Access to Councillors (p.28) – paragraph 7.5 could have serious implications for Councillors in dealing with planning and licensing applications. It must be ensured that Councillors are fully aware of how some present practices will not be able to be replicated in the new arrangements. There must be a thorough communication exercise with the public and agents as the current system *encourages* lobbying of elected members.

3.0 Resource Implications

3.1 No resource implications attached to this report.

4.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 No equality or good relations implications attached to this report.

5.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- (i) note the contents of this report
- (ii) consider the draft Council response attached at Appendix 2;
- (iii) agree that the draft Council response, subject to any changes made by Members, be submitted to the Department of the Environment

**BELFAST CITY COUNCIL RESPONSE
APPENDIX 2**

Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors

General

- On a general point, the Council would note that the guidance in relation to the Code of Conduct has not yet

been issued. It is therefore difficult to give proper consideration to the Code in the absence of the supporting guidance.

- The Council note that grafted into the code are certain legal duties which exist independent of the Code. The Council would seek clarification as to whether the Code therefore provides for individual sanction to be imposed in relation to those legal duties that exist independently from the Code.
- The Council welcome the amendment to the Local Government Bill which provides a right of appeal to councillors who are deemed to be in breach of the Code on the basis that the absence of an appeal would be unlawful. In light of the draft Code this will be important - much of it is high level principles against which members might have a difficulty in discerning if a particular course of conduct is, or could, amount to a breach. There are accessible English standards cases that could have provided a reference point to give greater clarity.

Background

- Paragraph 15 refers to “a body of precedent”. This in effect means that there is acceptance that the Commissioner will establish the benchmark for conduct as opposed to the Code. A principle of law is that law should have some degree of certainty thus an individual may judge with some certainty what type of conduct falls short or transgresses the required standard.

Penal provisions are construed in their narrowest context as a general rule. It appears that the draft Code is capable of giving rise to sanctions but which does not of itself give clarity - a point that is tacitly acknowledged in paragraph 15 of the introductory text.

Comments on the draft Code

- Requirement to comply with the Code (p.14) – the Council welcome the provision in Part 2 to apply the Code to all councillors, including councillors of existing councils until those councils are dissolved in April 2015.
- Enforcement of the Code (p.16) – the Council are supportive of the role of the Commissioner but would recommend that the supporting guidance provides clarity around the enforcement process, including: the making of a complaint; target timescales for resolving complaints; the investigation process; dealing with

malicious complaints and whether or not fees will be chargeable if a complaint is found to be vexatious.

- Rules of General Conduct (p.20) – under 4.14 duty to have regard to advice – the Council feel that the Code should also reference the power of surcharge which has been retained
- Under paragraph 4.16 disclosure of information - the code duplicates a legal duty under DPA which also has a sanction/penalty for disclosure. Perhaps rather than creating a freestanding further obligation, the code should reference the existing legal duty. The worst cases would be picked up by the disqualification route following conviction.
- Under paragraph 4.18 (p.23) “Dealings with your council” – it is unclear as to what “substantial land, property or other interests” means in practice. How would a Member decide if any such interest is substantial? In addition, what does “friend or associate” mean in relation to planning applications? As it currently stands, this could result in a high degree of uncertainty. Will this section apply only if it is the Councillor themselves who make the application on behalf of such a person and does it not apply if the person themselves make the application?
- Registration of Interests (p.24) – paragraph 5.2 (vii) identifies a personal interest in respect of “*any land where the landlord is your council and the tenant is a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a body of the description specified under sub-paragraph (iv) above*” - would this also apply to outside bodies to which Members are appointed by the Council? An example may be a waste management group appearing before a committee.
- In respect of paragraph 5.2 (ix) – this would impact when Trade Unions address Council or Committee if any Members are also in the Union. The Council would recommend that the Department further examine the potential impact of that instance.
- The section on sensitive information (5.6 to 5.8) places a responsibility on CEOs that might in practice present them with some difficulty. More discussion is required in relation to this issue. It would be helpful if either the Code, or the associated guidance gave a few examples of what would be regarded as ‘sensitive information’.

- **Lobbying and Access to Councillors (p.28) – paragraph 7.5 could have serious implications for Councillors in dealing with planning and licensing applications. It must be ensured that Councillors are fully aware of how some present practices will not be able to be replicated in the new arrangements. There must be a thorough communication exercise with the public and agents as the current system encourages lobbying of elected members.”**

The Committee approved the draft Council response for submission to the Department of the Environment.

Community Planning - Procurement of Support

The Committee approved the commencement of a tendering exercise for the procurement of the specialist support required to develop the Council's community planning processes at a city and local area level and noted, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, the Chief Executive (Designate) would be awarding the contract to the most advantageous tender received.

Corporate Plan and Performance Management

Corporate Plan 2014/2015: Year 3 Update

The Committee was reminded that in June, 2012 it had agreed a three year corporate plan to cover the period from April, 2012 till March, 2015. The Corporate Plan was the key strategic planning document for the organisation which had been agreed and was overseen by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. It was a high level document which contained key actions across all the Council's strategic work programmes, including Local Government Reform, Leisure Transformation, the Investment Programme and other significant corporate projects and programmes. Those actions were incorporated within the estimating process and had been contained in the estimates of expenditure which had been approved by the Committee at its meeting on 10th January. They had been included also, together with other key departmental actions, in the departmental plans which had been agreed by each of the Standing Committees in March, 2014.

The Draft Corporate Plan for 2012-15, Year 3 update contained the following information: Introduction; About the Council; Our Services; Our vision and strategic themes; Our values ;Strategic Themes (actions and indicators); Our city; Our finances; Our Councillors and Our Departments.

The Chief Executive explained that the current version of the document would undergo further editing as part of the design and production process before being published on the Council's website.

The Committee approved the draft Corporate Plan 2012-15 Year 3 Update.

Finance/Value-for-Money

Minutes of Meeting of Budget and Transformation Panel

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel of 11th April.

Request for Funding

The Committee was advised that a request for financial assistance had been received from the City of Belfast Youth Concert Band towards the cost of a tour to Italy. The Director of Finance and Resources reported that, under Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the Council had a discretion to consider exceptional requests for financial assistance. A small, special expenditure budget (Grants and Subscriptions) within the Finance and Resources Department made provisions for such requests providing:

- The Council had the statutory authority to make such payments; and
- Assistance was not available from the remit of another Committee.

He pointed out that the request for funding met the criteria previously agreed by the Committee and it was recommended that a contribution of £5,000 be made.

Accordingly, it was

Resolved – that expenditure of £5,000 in respect of the aforementioned event be approved under Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, it being the opinion of the Committee that the expenditure would be in the interest of, and would bring direct benefit to the District, and the inhabitants of the District, with the Committee being satisfied that the direct benefits so accruing would be commensurate with the payment to be made.

Belfast City Council Reserves Position as at 31st March, 2013

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Following the release of information by the Environment Minister, Mark H Durkan, in response to an Assembly Question, the Belfast Telegraph on the 22 April 2014 published an article on the reserves of local councils at the 31 March 2013.**
- 1.2 The article specifically referred to Belfast City Council’s total reserves position of £20.6m at the 31 March 2013.**
- 1.3 Belfast City Council’s total reserves positions includes ‘specified reserves’ (£7.3m) approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for non recurring purposes and**

these avoid such expenditure being added to the District Rate. The use of specified reserves has assisted the Council in setting a Zero increase in the District Rate for the past two years.

- 1.4 These specified reserves, all of which have been agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, include items such as Local Government Reform £2m, Tall Ships £1.3m, Giro d'Italia £400k, Advice Consortia £426k, Area Interventions £436k, Boxing Strategy £600k, Recycling £568k and Renewing the Routes £645k.
- 1.5 In addition the Council maintains general reserves (£13.3m) to safeguard the Council from unforeseen, or unquantifiable financial risk.
- 1.6 It should be noted that the Council's reserves position at the 31 March 2013, including analysis of the total of specified and general reserves, was reported to the Audit Panel and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in June 2013. This information was also published on the Council's external web site as part of the financial statements of the Council.

2.0 Key Issues

- 2.1 A number of controls are in place within Local Government to ensure that councils maintain an adequate level of general reserves. These include:-
 - Under the Local Government Finance (Northern Ireland) Act 2011, the Chief Financial Officer is required to submit a report to the Council on the robustness of the revenue estimates and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves. The Act also requires that during the financial year the Chief Financial Officer must keep the financial position under review.
 - The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance on Local Authority Reserves and Balances requires councils to establish a level of general reserves based on the advice of their Chief Financial Officer taking into account all the relevant local circumstances.
 - As part of their work, external Auditors consider whether the financial position of councils is soundly based.
- 2.2 As the CIPFA guidance on reserves and balances requires each Council to assess local circumstances when agreeing the appropriate level of reserves, there is no prescriptive formula assessing the preferred reserves position.

- 2.3 However in December 2009, the Department of the Environment issued guidance suggesting that councils should plan to have minimum general reserve levels of between 5% and 7.5% or just less than one month's net expenditure. This would suggest a minimum level of reserves of up to £10.8m for Belfast City Council as compared to the reported level of £13.3m.
- 2.4 It should be noted that when reporting the level of reserves to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in June 2013, the Director of Finance and Resources recommended that the general reserves should remain at £13.3m to cover the financial risks associated with the uncertainty around the future rate base in the context of local government reform and potential one-off resources required to support the delivery of the leisure transformation programme.
- 2.5 A briefing note highlighting the key issues regarding the council's reserves position at the 31 March 2013 has been circulated, which if agreed by the Committee will be distributed to all Elected Members.

3.0 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

At the 31 March 2013 the Council had specified reserves of £7.3m and general reserves of £13.3m.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Committee is asked to:-

- ·Note the contents of the report and
- ·Agree that the Briefing Note be distributed to all Elected Members.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that the Chief Executive, on behalf of the Council, write to the editor of the Belfast Telegraph regarding the article outlined in the report.

Human Resources

Living Wage

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update Members on progress towards becoming a living wage employer and propose how this can be implemented.

2.0 Relevant Background Information

- 2.1** Members will be aware that, at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 21 February 2014, a notice of motion was tabled regarding the Living Wage.

It was agreed that the council would take action:

- 1.** To become a Living Wage employer, in consultation with staff and their representatives, and to revise upwards payment to those employees currently receiving below the living wage level;
- 2.** To include a commitment to include the Living Wage in all new employment contracts;
- 3.** To review the extent to which the council’s Living Wage policy might be able to be applied to currently contracted-out services or as each contract comes up for renewal;
- 4.** To encourage other employers in Belfast to adopt a similar anti low-pay policy for their staff;
- 5.** To review the ratio between the lowest and the higher paid council officers; and
- 6.** To ensure that the appropriate Council Committee received reports on progress towards the above at least annually, and initially by April 2014.

This report deals with points 1, 2, 4 and 5 relating to the provision of a living wage for direct employees of the council. Point 3 is being taken forward by the Property and Projects Department.

3.0 Key Issues

Organisation pay structure and equal pay

- 3.1** To meet Single Status and equal pay obligations, a fair and non-discriminatory pay structure applicable to all staff in the council, was introduced in July 2007. An equality-proofed job evaluation scheme was used to determine the grade of each job and the pay structure, based on narrow pay scales, each consisting of three or four spinal column points (SCPs), was developed. Each SCP has an associated salary value in keeping with the recognised National Joint Council (NJC) Local Government Services Scales. However, following the transfer of both local and central government staff into the

council for local government reform there will be different pay and grading structures in operation.

- 3.2 Work will now start on organisation design and restructuring and it is proposed that a review of the pay structure is carried out as part of that organisation work for the new council and supports future work to reduce and manage staff costs effectively as part of the efficiency programme.
- 3.3 Best practice recommends that an equal pay review is conducted jointly between management and a trade union representative every three years. A joint review of basic pay was conducted during 2011, with an agreement that the next review would take place 2014/15. In order for the next equal pay review to be meaningful, it is proposed that this is delayed and carried out as part of the overall pay structure review when relevant employees will have transferred employment to the council on protected terms and conditions. A pay review conducted at this time would enable the council to identify and take steps to address equal pay issues which may arise as a result of different terms and conditions applying to different groups of staff.

Living wage

- 3.4 The current living wage hourly rate is £7.65. Two pay grades on the current organisation pay structure have spinal column points (SPCs) which fall below the living wage hourly rate. These are grades 1B and 1C. Appendix one sets out the grades and hourly rates for these grades, the types of jobs affected and the number of staff currently in those roles. Staff on pay scale 1B will not have the potential to earn £7.65 per hour. Thirty-six staff, currently on scale 1B will be earning below the living wage at 1 April 2014. All staff on pay scale 1C have the potential to earn more than £7.65 per hour as the top point on this scale is £7.71 per hour and thirty-four have already reached SCP11. The remaining six will still be paid below the living wage at 1 April 2014. It should be noted that some staff are required to work weekends and at night and as a result receive additional allowances on top of their basic pay, increasing their overall wage to above living wage.

Casual workers and trainees

- 3.5 A number of casual workers are currently paid at a rate below the living wage. Many of these casual workers work in Leisure and the Waterfront Hall and Members will be aware that both services are currently under review. It is therefore proposed that the implementation of a living wage for casual workers is considered as part of these reviews and as part of the overall pay structure review proposed to take as a result of the forthcoming organisation design work. (Members will

also be aware that work is ongoing to develop a casual workers policy, which will include general principles on the use of casual workers, a procedure for the use of casual workers, their recruitment, terms of engagement and rates of pay etc).

- 3.6 It is also proposed that Industrial Placements and Apprentices are excluded at this time due to the trainee nature of their employment status.
- 3.7 Therefore forty-two staff in the council will earn less than the Living Wage at 1 April 2014.

Proposals on how to deal with the forty-two staff are outlined below:

- 3.8 In order to deal effectively with this issue it is proposed to redesign and re-evaluate grade 1B posts to grade 1C, assimilate all forty-two staff to SCP 11 and base weekend enhancement and night work where applicable, on the revised hourly rate. Approximate costs will be £56,000 per annum.
- 3.9 The cost has been calculated at a point in time and may change as people are newly appointed to the affected jobs. Figures will need to be verified by the Payroll unit and annual pay negotiations may also impact on these figures and decrease costs. Any voluntary redundancies resulting from ongoing reviews may also have an impact.
- 3.10 This proposed approach is in keeping with the Council's Single Status Agreement and will ensure that the value of the job reflects the duties of the post and is in line with the NJC local government scales. It will however, create a single point pay scale until the pay structure is fully reviewed and will require the job holders to agree to additional duties. A number of comparable jobs are already evaluated at grade 1C in other departments and the expected change in duties will be minimal.
- 3.11 The trade unions have agreed this approach in principle and if the approach is agreed by Members it is proposed that the increases should be implemented from the date of Council ratification.

4 **Resource Implications**

- 4.1 This initiative will involve additional annual expenditure of approximately £56 000 and can be funded from existing budgets.

5 **Equality Implications**

- 5.1 The approach recommended offers the most equitable solution for all staff and is in keeping with current pay agreement and policies.

6 **Recommendations**

Members are asked to:

- agree to a review of the pay structure aligned to the new organisation structure
- agree to delaying the equal pay review to be carried out in conjunction with the full pay structure review
- approve the above recommendations to progress implementation of the living wage for council staff .

7 **Key to abbreviations**

LGR - Local Government Reform

SCP - Spinal column point

NJC - National Joint Council

Appendix One

Grades and hourly rates for grades 1B and 1C

Current grade	Spinal column point	Hourly rate
Scale 1B	5	£6.45
	6	£6.54
	7	£6.69
	8	£6.90
Scale 1C	8	£6.90
	9	£7.11
	10	£7.26
	*11	£7.71

- *the SCP 11 hourly rate is above the living wage rate
- post holders progress through the scale via annual pay increments

Jobs currently paying scale 1B and 1C and numbers of staff currently in post

Jobs in Scale1B (paying less than living wage)	Number currently in post
Cleaners in leisure centre	35
Cleaner in a play centre	1
Jobs in Scale 1C (40 staff) (with potential to pay less than living wage, i.e., SCP 8-10)	Number currently in post
Street sweepers	4
Refuse Collector	1
Messengers	2
Housekeepers	2
Car park Attendant	1
Zoo Crew	6
Cleaners in Facilities	24

NB At 1 April 2014, only 6 staff on Grade 1C will be being paid below the living wage rate as others have already reached SCP11.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Standing Order 55 – Employment of Relatives

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

Contractor to undertake interim Manager Director duties at the Waterfront Hall

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request permission to deviate from Standing Orders and to accede to Standing Order 62a exceptions in relation to contracts by direction of the Council acting on a recommendation of a Chief Officer that the exception is justified in special circumstances.

2.0 Background

- 2.1** Members will be aware that the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment recently announced funding support from the Northern Ireland Tourism Board (NITB) and the ERDF Programme of £18.5m towards the development of new conference and exhibition facilities at the Belfast Waterfront Hall. The Council is now in receipt of a Letter of Offer from NITB, which sets out a series of conditions associated with the projected economic benefits set out in the Economic Appraisal submitted by the Council in its application for the above funding.
- 2.2** The Director of Development previously reported to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it was anticipated that the Letter of Offer would require the Council to fully examine a range of operating models and would require the Council to deploy an operating model which provided the maximum economic return to the City.
- 2.3** At its meeting on 24th August, 2012 the Committee agreed that the Director conduct a soft market testing exercise to establish any potential private sector interest. Four companies subsequently responded to this exercise expressing an interest in operating the new facility.
- 2.4** In parallel with this, a consultancy firm, Excellence in Work, were engaged to provide recommendations on the future operational structures should the operation ultimately remain in-house. This work will be completed by the end of April 2015 and a report will be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee on this work.
- 2.5** Given the uncertainty around future funding and the future operational model the Development Committee agreed to the recruitment of an Interim Head of Waterfront Hall to oversee operations during any interim operational period. Despite 2 recruitment exercises it has not been possible to appoint a suitable candidate with the necessary commercial experience to fill the post.

3.0 Key Issues

- 3.1** As stated above, the Council is now in receipt of the NITB's Letter of Offer. The conditions therein require the Council to 'fully test a range of operating options for the Project to ensure

the operating model deployed gives the greatest return to the economy in line with the targets set out in the Business Case.' These options range from enhancing the current operating model through to the outsourcing of the operator to an established private sector operator.

- 3.2 In addition the Council is required to 'provide a transition plan acceptable to NITB outlining the operational and management arrangements within the transitional period'.
- 3.3 The project plan projects the new facilities being open for business in May 2016. It is important that we immediately develop a sales strategy to build on the business already secured for 2016 and in future years.
- 3.4 Successful achievement of the sales targets is essential to meet the targets set out in the business case, but is also central to our objective of reducing the operating deficit at the Waterfront Hall.
- 3.5 Geoff Fenlon, the principal consultant from Excellence in Work, has a proven track record in successfully delivering and managing large-scale conference facilities including the International Conference Centre in Birmingham, the Edinburgh International Convention Centre and the Dublin Convention Centre.

In developing the internal operating model he has secured the co-operation and respect of both staff and the trade unions.

- 3.6 It is recommended that in the absence of a Managing Director that the Council enter into a contract with Excellence in Work to procure Geoff Fenlon's services to act as Interim Head of the Waterfront Hall for a period of 4 months during which time he will support the Director of Development develop the necessary sales strategy, support the development of the options appraisal and the development of the transition plan as set out in the condition of the Letter of Offer from NITB. He would also assist the Waterfront Team and Project Team prepare operational plans to facilitate the ongoing business of the Waterfront whilst construction takes place.
- 3.7 Support will also be given to the Director of Development and the Assistant Chief Executive in preparing job descriptions and person specifications for a permanent Managing Director for the new facility and on other changes to the job description, as may be required to meet the future business needs of the Conference and Exhibition Centre.

3.8 It is believed that this exception from the Standing Orders is justified in the circumstances, given that the recruitment exercise has failed twice. Given the time constraints, it would not be possible to conduct a procurement exercise for this service.

4.0 Resource Implications

Human

The Director of Development and the Assistant Chief Executive will work closely with the appointed contractor over a period of 4 months from 1st May, 2015.

Finance

The expected costs associated with undertaking this type of project are in the region of £30K and will be met from the Development Department's revenue budget. This will extend the commission of Excellence in Work to a total budget of £60K.

5.0 Equality Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment in relation to this appointment of the contractor.

6.0 Recommendations

Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and –

- Agree to accede to Standing Order 62, (a) exceptions in relation to contracts by direction of the Council acting on a recommendation of a Chief Officer that the exception is justified in special circumstances for the appointment of the Contractor Excellence in Work.
- Agree to the development of an options appraisal for the operation of the Waterfront Hall and a transition plan, as required by the Letter of Offer from NITB.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Organisational Development and Design

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 The Council is facing an unprecedented agenda of significant HR and organisational development (OD) challenges, many of which are currently being managed through individual projects. These include:

- **Local Government Reform – service convergence (transfer of staff, harmonisation of terms and conditions), transfer of functions (organisation design, capacity building of staff and members), new powers and legislative requirements (organisation/member/officer capacity), revised role for members, new governance and shadow governance arrangements and related programme of capacity building. In particular the new place shaping powers will require a transformation of the entire organisation.**
- **Governance and the future shape of committees in the new Council will also set the context for future organisational design and development work.**
- **Leisure Transformation Programme – TU negotiations, new operating model, transfer of staff, TUPE, communication issues and organisational design implications.**
- **Investment Programme – job opportunities and work placements and staff implications of Waterfront Hall extension and operating model**
- **Efficiency Programme – staff costs including management of absence, agency staff and overtime. Efficiency reviews including review of Security, Fleet and Procurement.**
- **Diversity and equality - Review of Good and Harmonious Working Environment; Equal Pay Review; Article 55, Equality Framework and Action Plans; and Gender Action Plan.**
- **Best Practice Employer – Living Wage; Casual Workers protocol; Corporate liP; Health and Well Being Strategy and employee engagement.**

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 Organisational Development and Design

While the aforementioned HR and OD issues are progressing well within these individual projects, Members are aware that there are only 12 months to the formation of the new Council and there are still considerable challenges ahead.

Members are also aware of the following recent or imminent developments:

- **The Governance report which was presented to the STC suggested that from June a process is put in place to develop a future organisational development and design and to identify the timeframes for implementation, bearing in mind that the imperative will be to deliver the new functions and to provide services to the new areas on day one of the new Council;**
 - **The Chief Executive of the new Council has been recruited;**
 - **The leisure transformation programme decision will be ratified at the next Council meeting;**
 - **The recommended new/shadow governance arrangements and high level capacity building needs have been agreed by STC;**
 - **A notice of motion relating to the early development of a planning resource was referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee from the last Council meeting.**

Members have expressed a desire for a timely piece of work in relation to organisation development to ensure the council is fit for purpose in terms of organisation design and capacity. This needs to be far reaching, joined up, planned and resourced and led by Members.

This programme of work will be a crucial element of the Corporate Plan to be presented to Members in June and will cut across each of the shadow committees' work; it will need to integrate all of the aforementioned HR and OD issues and Members' organisation design priorities and will ensure independencies are highlighted. The programme will be broken down into manageable phases of work and will also be included in the council's programme management arrangements; it will need a detailed, resourced and prioritised action plan; it will be aligned to the Council's other strategic priorities and business as usual; and progress will be reported to Members on an ongoing basis.

It is proposed therefore that a draft Organisational Development Strategy for taking forward this significant programme of work will be presented to Members in June 2014 in order that an overall strategic approach may be agreed with initial priorities identified. A detailed programme of work developed thereafter.

2.2 Immediate Issues

As the strategy and action plan are developed, immediate OD issues will arise that will need Member decisions in advance of the overall programme. At this point in time there are two HR/OD priority actions that Members need to consider before then – preparation for the transfer of planning functions to Belfast City Council and the need to deal with the void created by the promotion of the Director of Health and Environmental Services to Chief Executive. Key issues and proposals on these matters are set out below.

2.2.1 Preparation for the transfer of planning functions to Belfast City Council

Members have been updated previously on the transfer of a wide range of functions and statutory duties to Belfast City Council on 1st April 2015, the most significant of which are planning and urban regeneration. It is imperative that Members achieve assurance that the Council will be ready to discharge its responsibilities on 1st April 2015 in these areas. The Council will need to develop strategic, tactical and operational capability.

Planning and urban regeneration need to be closely interwoven so that the Council can maximise its 'place shaping' opportunities and whilst the recommendations below relate primarily to the planning function, they are made with this inter-relationship in mind.

In respect of Planning, the Council must be prepared and ready to determine planning applications and enforce planning decisions from 1st April 2015 – functions referred to collectively as Development Control. It will also need to start the detailed process of developing the local area plan.

The Council currently has limited capability in Development Control or local area planning and whilst resource will transfer from DOE, there is an urgent need to assess the gaps and ensure that the design of the Council's future planning team is fit for purpose and will support strategic city planning and regeneration and deliver the aspirations of the new Council. The Council therefore urgently requires external assistance to carry out this assessment and provide expert support in the transition period.

It is likely that a range of skills will be needed to support the Council in this transition period and that these would best be sourced through a procurement process. A budget has already been set aside for this through the transitions fund.

A further report on legal support which will include specific legal support for planning functions will be brought to Committee at a later date.

behind that preference is as follows:

2.2.2 Director of Health and Environmental Services Role

Given the complexity of the post of Director of Health and Environmental Services, the level of organisational change already ongoing within the Council, the planned organisation redesign and the scale of local government reform, it is proposed that the primary duties of the post of Director of Health and Environmental Services and the additional LGR duties associated with this role are split into two strands:- (i) strategic and change management responsibilities and (ii) oversight and co-ordination of the four service operations of the Building Control, Cleansing Services, Waste Management and Environmental Health services.

Strategic and change management responsibilities

The degree of change needed within the Health and Environmental Services Department and within the various partnerships on which the department leads, will require both experienced leadership and the continued utilisation of all existing resource to support that change and to manage business as usual. The capacity of the department is currently stretched in meeting these challenges and it is therefore recommended that this aspect of the duties is provided via external support. Key aspects of this role will be:

- Strategic planning
- Change management
- Development of the Belfast Strategic Partnership, Good Relations Partnerships and PCSPs in light of community planning
- Oversight of the transition of service delivery in the new areas coming in from Castlereagh and Lisburn
- Strategic waste responsibilities
- Oversight of the transfer of relevant functions related to Health and Environmental Services
- Building capacity, organisational processes, partnerships and negotiations to shape and implement the outcome of Local Government Reform

Externally sourced interim management solutions are increasingly being used in local government to obtain highly experienced managers with strategic skills and a track record at crucial times of change. There would also be minimal 'lead-in growth time' and it would enable significant flexibility for future re-design.

Internal oversight and co-ordination of service operations

In terms of the oversight and co-ordination of service operations it is proposed that this is covered by a designated officer from the next tier of management within the Health and Environmental Services Department on an interim honorarium basis.

As there is more than one next tier manager within the department and as this is considered a development opportunity, it is proposed to seek expressions of interest from them to undertake the additional, higher-level duties. Should more than one officer express an interest in these additional duties, a merit based selection process will take place, involving elected members.

3.0 Resource Implications

3.1 The procurement of external planning consultancy services has been allowed for in the Transition budget.

3.2 In relation to the arrangements to cover the Director of Health and Environmental Services role, given the proposed interim approach, remuneration would be made in the form of consultancy and honoraria payments. It is proposed that, to ensure the budget is not exceeded, the interim professional manager would cover the strategic and LGR responsibilities of the post on a two or three day per week basis for an interim period of 9 -12 months, subject to review.

4.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 None.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to:

- 1.** Agree the suggested approach to a Council Organisation Development Strategy and associated programme of work: to include Members' organisational design priorities and the significant HR/OD and capacity challenges the Council is facing
- 2.** Agree to initiate a procurement process for external planning expertise to support the Council in its preparation for the transfer of planning and urban regeneration functions and to give the necessary delegated authority to the Chief Executive

(Designate) to award the contracts to the most economically advantageous tenders; and

3. Agree to the suggested interim arrangements for the Director of Health and Environmental Services role (in accordance with Council HR policy and procedures) and to the procurement of an interim professional manager for 9 – 12 months (in accordance with Council procurement procedures).”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Asset Management

Belfast Public Bike Share Scheme

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

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The SP&R Committee agreed at its meeting on the 21st March 2014 to proceed to awarding the contract for the Design, Build, Operation and Maintenance of the Public Bike Share Scheme, subject to additional resources required for the capital construction being secured from DRD.
- 1.2 The development of a Public Bike Share scheme is identified as a partnership project in Belfast City Council's Investment Programme 2012-2015. The primary objective of the Belfast Public Bike Share scheme is to provide a sustainable low cost transport system for the citizens of Belfast and for visitors as well as benefits such as improved health and reduced congestion.
- 1.3 Phase 1 of the Public Bike Share scheme aims to create a network of up to 30 docking stations supporting 300 bikes with associated infrastructure in the city centre to be implemented by March 2015. The locations of the docking stations were agreed by the Development Committee on 19th March 2013 and ratified in the Council meeting on 3rd April 2014.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Members were asked to note last month that the submission from the preferred bidder for Lot 1 to Design, Build, Operate and Maintain indicated that the capital cost for Phase 1 will

be £1,140,000. The original Council grant award was £698,700 therefore indicating a deficit of £441,300.

- 2.2 A supplementary application had however been made to DRD for an increase in grant support to cover the additional capital cost for Phase 1. DRD has considered the Council's request for £441,303 further capital funding and in a letter to the Chief Executive on 10th April 2014 they have confirmed that they will meet the full amount of the capital costs of the Public Bike Hire Scheme of £1,140,000.
- 2.2 Ownership of the proposed bike docking station sites (as listed in Appendix 1) falls into the following categories:
- Private Ownership
 - Department of Social Development
 - Belfast City Council
 - Department of Regional Development, Road Service
- 2.3 Definitive locations will need to be agreed between the operator and the Council in line with the contract requirements for a total 30 no docking stations.

Legal Arrangements/Agreements

- 2.4 Sites in Private and DSD Ownership
It is proposed that the Council shall take a licence of the lands required for the docking stations from private landowners and DSD. Whilst DSD assets are due to transfer to the Council in April 2015 under LGR the public bike hire scheme needs to be implemented by March 2015. A Licence Agreement will therefore be required with DSD for the period pre LGR transfer.
- 2.5 The Licence Agreements will permit the Council to use and occupy the sites for the purpose of a Public Bike Share Scheme and the landowners contractual arrangements will be with the Council rather than with the Scheme Operator. This is the preferred approach insofar as it satisfies the landowners and provides the Council with control over the use and development of the sites. The terms of the licence are summarised as follows:
- i. A term of 6 years renewable for a further 3 years.
 - ii. An option in favour of the Council to renew at the end of the 9th year.
 - iii. A licence fee of £1.00 per annum, if demanded and without review
 - iv. Use restricted to bike docking stations only
 - v. Council right to terminate

2.6 Following the grant of licences, the Council will enter into 'back to back' Agreements with the Operator in relation to the development, use and occupation of the bike docking station sites. These will be known as 'Land Access Agreements' by which the Operator is bound to perform the obligations imposed on the Council under the terms of the Licence and all development and operational rights will be conveyed to the Operator. In addition, the Land Access Agreements will indemnify the Council against any legal action arising out of the Operator's use and occupation of the sites.

2.7 Sites in Council Ownership

The Council shall grant a licence on BCC held sites to the Operator on similar terms and conditions as above.

2.8 Sites in DRD/Roads Service Ownership

The DRD has confirmed that the construction and maintenance of bike share docking stations shall be by way of a Street Works Licence(s) to be granted by DRD to the Council. The Council will subsequently enter into Agreement(s) with the scheme Operator in relation to the installation, maintenance management and operation of the bike hire scheme on DRD lands. DRD has advised that this is permissible but the Council is not permitted to contract out or assign its legal responsibility for any offences under the Street Works (NI) Order 1995.

2.9 However, the Council will protect its position by ensuring that the obligations imposed on the Council under the Street Works Licence are passed, as far as they can be, to the Scheme Operator. This will be achieved by a condition imposed on the Operator making compliance with the Street Works Licence and the relevant legislation a condition of the operational contract. Further, the Council shall have the right to terminate the Agreement in the event of a breach of the Street Works Licence. In addition, the Operator will be obliged to provide a warranty to the Council ensuring compliance with the Street Works Licence and the Council will be permitted to monitor the use and occupation of the lands.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

The licence agreements are on the basis of a nil rental. Capital and revenue financial implications were included in the report to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 21 March 2014. As noted above, DRD has now confirmed that they will meet the full amount of the capital costs of the Public Bike Hire Scheme of £1,140,000.

3.2 Human

Staff resource from Estates, Urban Development and Legal Services required to progress the land access and licence agreements.

3.3 Assets

Occupation of the docking station sites by way of the legal agreements as detailed above represents effective asset management.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 There are no equality or good relations implications connected with this report.

5 Recommendations

5.1 The Committee is asked to approve that the appropriate Licences, Land Access Agreements and Street Works Licences are entered into in relation to the Public Bike Share Scheme docking stations, as outlined above and subject to detailed terms being agreed by the Estates Manager and Legal Services.

6 Key to Abbreviations

BCC – Belfast City Council
DRD – Department of Regional Development
DSD – Department of Social Development

Appendix 1 Schedule of Sites and Ownership

No	Area	Location	Ownership
1	City Hall	Footpath in front of City Hall, Donegall Sq North/West	DRD Roads Service
2	Victoria Square	Footpath Victoria Street close to the entrance Victoria Square Shopping Centre	DRD Roads Service
3	Custom House Square	Public open space on the east side of Donegall Quay, close to the Big Fish	DSD
4	Central Station	Mays Meadow, rear of Central Station	DRD Roads Service
5	St. George's Market	Cromac Square	DRD Roads Service
6	Gasworks	Close to the entrance of the Gasworks at Cromac Street/Ormeau Road	BCC
7	Waterfront Hall	Open space area close to the entrance of the Waterfront Hall	DSD
8	Shaftesbury Square	Footpath at the corner Botanic Avenue/Donegall Pass	DRD Roads Service
9	Europa Bus Centre 1	Public open space at Blackstaff Square	DSD
10	Europa Bus Centre 2	Footpath Great Victoria Street/Hope Street	DRD Roads Service
11	Castlecourt	Footpath at the entrance to the Castlecourt Shopping Centre	DRD Roads Service
12	Smithfield	At Smithfield Market	DRD Roads Service
13	St. Anne's Cathedral	Public space at Cathedral Gardens, close to the University of Ulster	BCC
14	St. Patrick's Cathedral	Footpath at the corner Carrickhill/Donegall Street	DRD Roads Service
15	Yorkgate/City North	Only potential site, depending on future plans for contra-flow bus lane	DRD Roads Service
16	Dunbar Link	Footpath in the area Dunbar Link/Dunbar Street	DRD Roads Service
17	High Street	Open space North Street/Waring Street	Private

18	BBC/Dublin Road	Footpath at Bankmore Square	DSD
19	Wellington Place West	Traffic island on College Square East	DRD Roads Service
20	Millfield	Open space on the grounds of Belfast Met	Private
21	Odyssey Arena	Open space in front of Odyssey Arena	Private
22	Harbour	Open space at entrance of new Harbour development	Private
23	St. Malachy's	Footpath opposite St. Malachy's in Alfred Street	DRD Roads Service
24	Bradbury Place	Footpath at King William Park	DRD Roads Service

Note: definitive locations for 30 no docking stations are to be agreed between the operator and the Council in line with contract requirements; any additional locations are likely to be on BCC, DSD or DRD land”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Leases and Licences

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 **Relevant Background Information**

(i) St Teresa's GAC, Glen Road: Proposed Sublease:

1.1 The Council lease land (approximately 10 acres) at Glen Road to the Trustees of St Teresa's GAC for a term of 99 years with effect from January 1993 for the purpose of developing and using playing pitches, clubhouse and ancillary facilities.

1.2 St Teresa's GAC have requested consent for the granting of a sub-lease to a third party (Ms Nuala McCusker t/a Teach Mhamo) for the development of an Irish Language childcare facility on the land leased from the Council. Whilst located within the St Teresa's demise the childcare facility will be run and managed wholly independently from the Club itself. A variation of the existing Lease that St Teresa's GAC have from the Council would be required to provide for a change of use.

(ii) Grosvenor Recreation Centre – Proposed New Lease with Roden Street Community Development Group Limited

1.3 Roden Street Community Development Group Limited (the Group) occupies Grosvenor Recreation Centre under a ten year Lease from 1 April 1999. A five year extension to the

Lease was approved by the Development Committee on 20 April 2009. During their tenancy the Group have successfully managed the Centre and worked in partnership with the Council, local community organisations and a range of statutory agencies to enhance the facilities. The lease extension has now expired and the Group are seeking a new lease for ten years from the 1 April 2014. The Development Committee at its meeting on 18 February 2014 agreed to this new lease subject to the negotiation of the revised terms by the Council's Estates Management Unit and the drafting of an appropriate legal agreement by Legal Services.

- 1.4 Roden Street Community Development Group have also secured £250k funding from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure to refurbish and extend the existing toilets, changing area and weights room in the Centre. A report seeking approval to these works is being brought to the Development Committee on 15 April 2014.

(iii) Proposed Subleases and Wayleaves to NIE at Cliftonville Playing Fields & Woodlands Playing Fields

- 1.5 At its meeting on the 8 November 2013 the SP&R Committee approved the terms of a disposal to the Trustees of Bunscoil Bheann Mhadagain in respect of approximately 0.85 acres of land together with shared access over approximately 0.49 acres at Cliftonville Playing Fields. The land at Cliftonville Playing fields is held by the Council on a 10,000 year lease granted by the Department of Education (DE) and Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB).
- 1.6 The Council propose to develop a 3G pitch facility together with changing facilities and flood lighting on the southern portion of the Cliftonville Playing Fields site. Consultants working on the design of the school and the pitches have identified that the existing electricity supply has insufficient capacity to cater for the school, pavilion and pitches. Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) will, therefore, need to construct a substation to provide a new supply for the proposed development. NIE will require an area of 4.5M x 4.5M with a palisade fence and direct vehicular access.
- 1.7 In addition, at its meeting on the 11 October 2012 the Parks and Leisure Committee received a progress report on the delivery of the Pitches Strategy, namely the provision of third generation pitches and changing pavilions at Council Parks throughout the city including Woodlands Playing Fields. The land at Woodlands Playing fields is held by the Council on a 10,000 year lease granted by the DE and BELB.

- 1.8 Consultants working on the design of the new 3G pitch, pavilion and associated flood lighting have identified that there is insufficient capacity from the existing electricity supply to Woodlands Playing Fields. NIE will, therefore, have to upgrade the supply and in order to meet the increased capacity NIE will require a new substation.

(iv) Lenadoon Millennium Park - Assignment of Lease

- 1.9 The Parks and Leisure Committee at its meeting on 16 January 2014 approved the transfer of the existing Facilities Management Agreement in respect of Lenadoon Park in West Belfast from Lenadoon Community Forum Limited to Lenadoon Amateur Sports Community Interest Company.

- 1.10 Lenadoon Community Forum has previously secured funding from Sport NI to construct a changing pavilion known locally as the Lenadoon Sports Centre on land adjacent to the Park. In order to construct the building a strip of Council owned land, which formed part of the Lenadoon Park was required. The Strategic Policy and Resource Committee agreed on 15 April 2011 to lease the strip of ground to the Forum under a 99 year Lease from 20th June 2011. The Forum has requested that the Council consent to the assignment of this lease to the Lenadoon Amateur Sports Community Interest Company and the Parks and Leisure Committee have recommended the transfer of the Lease subject to approval by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

(v) Permissive Path Agreement at Ligoniel Park

- 1.11 At its meeting on the 23 August 2013 the SP&R Committee agreed to enter into a 10 year Public Path Creation Agreement with Northern Ireland Water to utilise an existing path located on NIW land at Ligoniel, subject to information being provided to residents living in the vicinity of the proposed path.

(vi) Ulster Hall – Ulster Orchestra Proposed Licence Agreement

- 1.12 At its meeting on 25 October 2013 the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee approved a 6 month licence to the Ulster Orchestra for office accommodation and storage at the Ulster Hall. The Ulster Orchestra have now made a request to license an additional office on the third floor of approximately 400 sq ft adjacent to their existing accommodation.

(vii) Signage at Lagan Valley Regional Park – Proposed Licence Agreement

- 1.13 At its meeting on the 24 January 2014 the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee approved a 10 year licence agreement to Lagan Valley Regional Park (LVRP) to allow access to the Council sites listed in the report for the installation and future maintenance of approved visitor signage. LVRP have now requested that a further sign be located at the entrance to the Council's Lagan Lands East Site.

2 Key Issues

(i) St Teresa's GAC, Proposed Sublease Glen Road

- 2.1 It is proposed to develop an Irish Language childcare facility to cater for up to 50 places for children from the age of 6 weeks up to pre-school age. The facility will be located within a dedicated compound area of approximately 0.123 acres of the land demised to St Teresa's GAC under the 99 year lease with shared access and car parking facilities. The facility will consist of a single storey sectional construction, at a cost estimated by Teach Mhamo of £50,000, to include fencing. Separate servicing of the facility (electricity, drainage etc) will be provided.
- 2.2 The terms of St Teresa's GAC's Lease require that the written permission of the Council is obtained to permit any construction on the demised land with a further requirement to obtain/comply with all necessary statutory consents. Notwithstanding the need for the Council's approval to any construction, St Teresa's GAC also require express written consent from the Council to enter into any sub-lease. .
- 2.3 The current user restrictions reserved in the Lease with St Teresa's GAC restrict use of the demised land to playing pitches, clubhouse and ancillary facilities. A legal Deed of Variation will be required to provide for the use now proposed on part of the site as an Irish Language childcare facility.
- 2.4 St Teresa's GAC have sought the Council's consent to grant a 5 year sub-lease to Ms Nuala McCusker t/a Teach Mhamo and charge an initial rent of £1,500 per annum. In order to reflect the wider use permitted for this land in a Deed of Variation and subject to Committee approval, provisional agreement has been reached with St Teresa's for the Council to receive 50% of the annual rent reserved in the sub-lease.

(ii) Grosvenor Recreation Centre – Proposed New Lease with Roden Street Community Development Group Limited

- 2.5 A rental figure of £18,050 per annum from 1 April 2014 has been assessed for a new lease for the existing Premises. This is an up lift from the existing rent of £17,350. Should the refurbishment and extension of approx 53 m² proceed, then an increased rental figure of £18,525 would apply from the date of completion. The Group currently receive a grant from Belfast City Council which is paid net of any rent payable.

(iii) Proposed Subleases and Wayleaves to NIE at Cliftonville Playing Fields & Woodlands Playing Fields

- 2.6 The options for the location of the substation at Cliftonville Playing Fields included:
1. Offsite as an upgrade to the existing substation at Linden Gardens.
 2. In the corner of the proposed school playground off Glenard Brook.
 3. On the corner of the proposed new car park area at the rear of the Spar Shop.
- 2.7 A plan of the location of the school site, the shared area, the proposed 3G pitch and the locations for options 2 & 3 has been circulated.
- 2.8 Option 1 was ruled out by NIE because the site at Linden Gardens is narrow and it was not considered feasible to decommission the existing substation while maintaining supply to customers.
- 2.9 Option 2 was not favoured by DE given the close proximity of the sub-station to school children on a daily basis although NIE did indicate that there is no health and safety risk associated with the output from the substation. DE argued that the constraints of the site mean that the school's play area will be significantly smaller than the area to which a school of that size is entitled and it would not be appropriate to further reduce the limited space available
- 2.10 Option 3 requires a sublease from the Council to NIE; a variation of the lease to DE, and wayleaves for cabling over the shared areas, all of which will require input from legal advisers for NIE, BELB, the Trustees of Bunscoil, DE and Council. For expediency purposes and in order to let the construction start on site as soon as possible, Council officers would have preferred Options 1 or 2 as they do not require the same level of level of legal agreements to be agreed between the 5 parties. NIE have indicated that they will not order the plant until the sublease is in place and they

thereafter have to wait to have the plant delivered. In addition, there may be technical issues with regard to the attenuation tank in the shared area and the cabling at the entrance to the site. The consultant engineer is currently liaising with NIE in this respect, in order to ascertain from them if this is still feasible.

2.11 NIE's position is that they can construct the substation at either the school site or the shared site but vehicular access is easier to the shared car park site. However DE are adamant that they need all of the space allocated for the playground and for that reason officers agreed to put the matter to the Committee. Council officers will endeavour to expedite the necessary legal agreements as quickly as possible from their end but it will also require the other parties doing the same in order to let NIE proceed.

2.12 At Woodlands Playing Fields the most appropriate site for the proposed electricity substation in terms of minimising impact on Council land has been agreed between Council officers and the NIE.

(iv) Lenadoon Millennium Park - Assignment of Lease

2.13 Part of the Lenadoon Sports Centre building sits on top of the land leased to Lenadoon Community Forum. The transfer of the building from Lenadoon Community Forum to the Lenadoon Amateur Sports Community Interest Company is subject to Sports NI approval (as previous funder). The assignment of the lease will only formally take place once Sport NI has given their approval to the transfer of the building.

2.14 The existing Lease provides for assignment of the Lease subject to Council consent which is not to be unreasonably withheld.

(v) Permissive Path Agreement at Ligoniel Park

2.15 Whilst the previous SP&R Committee approval was to enter into a Public Path Creation Agreement (PPCA), it has subsequently emerged that the agreement with NI Water is in fact a Permissive Path Agreement (PPA) not a PPCA. A PPA is made under the Recreation & Youth Services (NI) Order 1986, while a PPCA is made under the Access to the Countryside (NI) Order 1983. The PPA permits any member of the public the right to walk along the path for the purpose of open air recreation. The PPA is restricted to a certain time limit, in this case 10 years and unlike the PPCA does not have the effect of creating a public right of way.

- 2.16 The plan attached to the report to SP&R on the 23 August 2013 has been amended slightly to show the route of the path over the existing NI Water pathway.

(vi) Ulster Hall – Ulster Orchestra Proposed Licence Agreement

- 2.17 A month to month licence agreement at a rent of £385.25 per month plus service charge has been agreed with the Ulster Orchestra for the additional office. This is equivalent to the pro-rata rental rate payable under the existing licence. It has been agreed that all other terms will be as per the existing Licence with an anticipated commencement date in early May.

(vii) Signage at Lagan Valley Regional Park – Proposed Licence Agreement

- 2.18 As with the already approved signage, the additional signage at Lagan Lands East would be subject to compliance with Council standards, the requirements of the Council's title to the sites and any other statutory or regulatory requirements. Future maintenance of the signage will be carried out by LVRP at LVRP expense. The design and specification will be agreed by officers within the Parks and Leisure Department and will be incorporated within the proposed licence agreement.

3 Resource Implications
Finance and Assets

3.1 (i) St Teresa's GAC, Proposed Sublease Glen Road

- Provision of this Irish Language childcare facility will be at no financial cost to the Council.
- Ms Nuala McCusker t/a Teach Mhamo will be responsible for all outgoings arising from this development and use e.g. any rates liability
- The Council currently receive an annual rent from St Teresa's of £2,250 fixed for the next 21 years based on the current permitted sports use. An additional initial annual rental income of £750 will be secured from this asset which represents an increase of approximately 30% over the current rental income and will take the future benefit of any rent reviews instigated in the sub-lease.
- This additional asset will provide a further amenity for this area of West Belfast and provide scope for local employment opportunities.

- 3.2 **(ii) Grosvenor Recreation Centre – Proposed New Lease with Roden Street Community Development Group Limited**
- The rent payable under the proposed new lease would increase from £17,350 to £18,050 per annum. This would then rise to £18,525 per annum should the proposed extension go ahead. The rent payable would also be subject to review after 5 years.
 - £250,000 investment by Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure to extend and partially refurbish the Centre.
- 3.3 **(iii) Proposed Subleases and Wayleaves to NIE at Cliftonville Playing Fields & Woodlands Playing Fields**
- The cost of the sub-station at Cliftonville Playing Fields will be split 50/50 with the Department of Education. NIE will pay a nominal rent for the sublease. The siting of the substation on the shared area reduces the area available for car parking. The positioning of the cables routes from the substation to the school, pavilion and floodlighting will be agreed with NIE in order to minimise their impact on future development at the site. NIE normally require a 999 year lease.
 - NIE will pay a nominal rent for the sublease at Woodlands Playing Fields. The substation is essential in order to provide the power supply for the changing room pavilion and flood lighting for the 3G pitch. The proposed site for the substation on the north western boundary of the Woodland Playing fields minimises the impact on any future development at this location.
- 3.4 **(iv) Lenadoon Millennium Park - Assignment of Lease**
- None
- 3.5 **(v) Permissive Path Agreement at Ligoniel Park**
- No capital resources required.
 - Council will become responsible for on-going maintenance of the stiles and/ or way marking and for approximately 90 metres of tarmac path from within existing Parks and Leisure budget provision for a period of 10 years.
 - The path will benefit users of the Council's adjoining Ligoniel Park, Cavehill Country Park and the wider Belfast Hills.
- 3.6 **(vi) Ulster Hall – Ulster Orchestra Proposed Licence Agreement**
- The proposed licence agreement would operate with the Ulster Orchestra paying £385.25 per month and a pro-rata service charge. This represents additional rental income for the Council.

- The Ulster Orchestra would increase their office accommodation at the Ulster Hall from approx 1,470 sq ft to approx 1,870 sq ft.

3.7 (vii) Signage at Lagan Valley Regional Park – Proposed Licence Agreement

- No Council financial resources are required in the construction of the signage or in its installation or maintenance. As the signage is designed to benefit Council facilities no licence fee is appropriate in this case.
- The introduction of this new installation is designed to enhance the attractiveness of the Park by providing welcoming and informative signage which encourages users to develop their interest in the Council's facilities and the LVRP in general.

3.8 Human Resources

Staff resources from Parks and Leisure Department, the Estate Management Unit and Legal Services will be required to complete all agreements.

4 Recommendations

4.1 It is recommended that members agree:

4.1

- (i) To the request from St Teresa's GAC and permit the granting of a sub-lease at their Glen Road site for the construction and operation of an Irish Language childcare facility subject to St Teresa's GAC entering into an appropriate Deed of Variation with the Council to provide for wider user provisions, access and provision for payment of additional rent.

4.2

- (ii) To a new lease with the Roden Street Community Development Group Ltd for a further ten years from 1 April 2014 at a rent of £18,050.00 per annum subject to review after five years, and also agree to a further increase to £18,525 per annum should the Centre be extended as planned.

4.3

- (iii) To the granting of a sublease to NIE for a new sub-station on the proposed shared car park adjacent Cliftonville Playing Fields, together with the wayleaves as required over retained Council land for cables providing the electricity supply to the school, on terms to be agreed between NIE, Estates and Legal Services. It is also recommended that Committee approve the granting of a sublease and wayleave to NIE at Woodlands Playing Fields on terms and conditions to be agreed between NIE,

Estates and Legal Services for a new substation and cables.

4.4

(iv) To the assignment of the Lease at Lenadoon Millennium Park from the Lenadoon Community Forum Limited to Lenadoon Amateur Sports Community Interest Company subject to the terms as outlined above.

4.5

(v) To authorise a Permissive Path Agreement with NI Water at Ligoniel Park on the terms and conditions as reported to the SP&R Committee on the 23 August 2013 in respect of the slightly revised location of the path.

4.6

(vi) A further temporary licence agreement at the Ulster Hall with the Ulster Orchestra on a month to month basis subject to an additional licence fee of £385.25 per month plus service charge.

4.7

(vii) To the inclusion of additional signage within the proposed 10 year licence agreement to Lagan Valley Regional Park.

5 Key to Abbreviations

- 5.1 GAC – Gaelic Athletic Club
NIE – Northern Ireland Electricity
DE – Department for Education
BELB – Belfast Education and Library Board
NIW – Northern Ireland Water
PPCA – Public Path Creation Agreement
PPA – Permissive Path Agreement
LVRP – Lagan Valley Regional Park”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Connswater Community Greenway

The Committee was reminded that, as part of the City Investment Strategy, it had agreed to co-ordinate the acquisition of lands to enable the Connswater Community Greenway Programme to proceed. It was reported that the following actions had been identified as being required to complete the Greenway route and associated landscaping which officers had agreed to the following arrangements, subject to the Committee's approval;

- To acquire an easement from the Crown estate over the Connswater river bed, following the replacement of a new pedestrian bridge from Bloomfield Parade to Flora Street Walkway, for a premium of £1,000;
- A management and maintenance agreement with the Belfast Education Library Board for Elmgrove and Belfast Metropolitan College at Montgomery Road to allow the Council to upgrade the entrances to Elmgrove Primary School and Belfast Metropolitan College at Montgomery Road as part of Phase Two of the contract;
- To grant a license to the Rivers agency for the use of lands at Greenville Park and Dixon Park for a contractor's compound and working area for the purposes of constructing a new culvert at across Grand Parade; and
- The making of accommodation works agreement has required to facilitate the construction of Phase Two of the Connswater Community Greenway/Flood Alleviation Scheme.

The Committee granted the approvals sought.

Good Relations and Equality

Minutes of Meeting of Joint Group of Party Group Leaders and Historic Centenaries Working Group

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Group of the Party Leaders' Forum and Historic Centenaries Working Group of 4th April and adopted the recommendation of the Group as follows:

WW1 Centenaries Event

To approve a request for hospitality which had been received from Jeffrey Donaldson MP and Chair of the Northern Ireland WW1 Centenary Committee, for the hosting of a reception at Belfast City Hall and a candle Light vigil at the Cenotaph on the evening of Monday, 4th August, 2014 to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War.

Minutes of Meeting of Good Relations Partnership

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Good Relations Partnership of 7th April and approved the following:

Peace III – Implementation Update

The decision of the Partnership to request that funding of £1,000 be made available to fund an event to publicise the work which had being undertaken by projects being funded under the Belfast PEACE III Plan.

International Day of Peace 2014

Authority for the expenditure of a sum of £1,500 for the holding on 19th September of an appropriate event in the City Hall to mark the International Day of Peace 2014.

Community Relations Week 2014

The decision of the Partnership to request that funding of up to £2,500 be made available for the hosting of a “Living Library” event and the launch of a Transition Guide which would take place during Community Relations Week 2014.

Meeting of Forum for Cities in Transition

Authority for expenditure of funding of £25,000 for the 5th meeting of forum for Cities in Transition which would be held in Belfast during October, 2014.

Request for Funding – Yad Vashem

The decision of the Partnership to request that funding of £5,000 be made available to the Yad Vashem organisation, which had been established in 1953 in order to document the history of the Jewish people during the Holocaust period, as a financial contribution towards the cost of the exhibition “No Child’s Play” which would relay the personal stories of the children who had experienced the Holocaust.

Cross-Cutting Issues

Active Ageing Strategy 2014-20 Consultation Response

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Members will be aware Belfast, like other communities across the world, is facing the challenges of an aging population. Currently 19% of the population of Belfast is over 60 and this is expected to rise to 36% by 2050.**
- 1.2 Members will also recall the Council has identified older people as a priority within its current corporate plan, and Belfast became the first area in Northern Ireland to join the World Health Organisation Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities. At the Council’s request, Belfast**

Strategic Partnership has developed a 3 year Age-friendly Belfast Plan which it will implement 2014 -2017.

- 1.3 The Council's work programme in this area is directed and overseen by the All Party Reference Group on Older People, currently chaired by Councillor Bernie Kelly.
- 1.4 On 21st February 2014 the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister launched their Active Ageing Strategy 2014 -2020 for public consultation.
- 1.5 The strategy is designed to make a real difference to the quality of life for older people and to enable as many people as possible to enjoy the benefits and rewards of life for as long as possible. The strategy seeks to recognise the diversity of older people and challenge the negative stereotype that they are a cost to society when they are actually an asset.
- 1.6 The aims of this strategy are closely aligned to those within the Age-friendly Belfast Action Plan and it is anticipated its implementation will significantly contribute towards Belfast becoming a more Age-friendly City.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 The Active Ageing Strategy sets a vision that "Northern Ireland is an age- friendly region in which all people, as they get older, are valued and supported to live actively to their fullest potential; with their rights and dignity protected". To help achieve an Age-friendly Northern Ireland the action plan proposes to assist the eleven new Councils becoming members of the WHO Age-friendly Cities and communities network. This would appear to endorse the approach taken by Belfast joining the network in 2012 and producing its 3 year plan in 2014. Age-friendly Belfast should significantly benefit from such support.
- 2.2 The strategy sets out 5 strategic aims based on UN principles for older people, to promote:
 1. Independence: choice and control in their lives through the co-ordinated delivery of good warm housing in safe neighbourhoods, accessible transport, adequate income and standard of living, access to social networks and good user friendly information and equal access to participation in the workplace.
 2. Participation: active participation of older people in all aspects of life, including social participation which helps address isolation and loneliness and ensures that older

- 3. people are properly integrated, valued and included in society; to promote the active participation and citizenship of older people in decision making on policies, the provision of services and volunteering opportunities.**
 - 4. Care: equal access to high quality health and social care services, which promote and maintain physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing, and support those with long-term conditions. Health and social care services should conform to best practice and be informed by continuous professional development, research, individual preference and need.**
 - 5. Self-fulfilment: To support older people to develop to the fullest of their potential through promoting education, training, leisure and arts opportunities which will support the development of life skills, positive mental, emotional and physical health and wellbeing.**
 - 6. Dignity: protect the human rights of older people here; to uphold dignity and respect for older people in all areas of life; to promote equality, address inequality, challenge ageism and outlaw discrimination, recognising the additional challenges faced by older people with multiple identities such as gender, age, religion, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation and the locality that they grew up in.**
- 2.4 It is envisaged that these aims will be delivered by Government departments, agencies and health and social services. They will be used to direct their own policies, programmes and services to improve the lives of older people.**
- 2.5 The Strategy also includes a wide ranging action plan of additional programmes to help address issues such as fuel poverty, benefit uptake, decision making, dementia services, safer homes, carers support, education, transportation and legislation.**

Members are asked to consider and agree the draft response to OFMDFM which includes the following the key areas this committee may wish to highlight for consideration :

- The potential to simplify the strategy so it is clearer and more concise,**
- The need for the strategy and action plan to have clear outcomes and indicators against which it can be monitored and evaluated,**

- The need for the strategy to recognise the importance of strong partnerships at regional and at local level to effectively deliver aims,
- The need to recognise the essential role of Councils, particularly through leading the Community Planning process, this will give older people the opportunity to influence the shape of local services
- The need to further emphasise the important role community planning has for the other Government Departments and agencies at the table who will need to develop and deliver targeted resources for agreed outcomes,
- The need consider to establishing an regional Age-friendly forum including the Public Health Agency, DOE and the eleven new Councils to collaborate, share information and resources,
- The need to consider developing a regional positive ageing campaign, involving local Age-friendly Partnerships, to promote the value of older people, to encourage respect and improve intergenerational relationships,
- The need with reflect the current proposals published by the DSD in February 2014 to roll out the affordable warmth scheme across Northern Ireland and to work with all Councils to target the 33,000 households who are spending more than 25% of their income on fuel. The Action Plan should seek to clarify the full extent of actions planned to tackle fuel poverty over the next 6 years.
- To support the proposal for the DHSSP/Public Health Agency to extend and enhance the home safety check scheme, currently delivered by Councils, to promote the health and wellbeing of older people and reduce accidents through a home visitation scheme which will also make small home improvements and fit equipment. Councils may be ideally placed to manage such a scheme provided it is fully funded by DHSSP/PHA

3 Resource Implications

3.1 HR Implications

None

3.2 Financial implications

None

3.3 Equipment Implications

None

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 Equality screening has been carried out.

5 Recommendation and decision

5.1 Members are asked to consider the consultation response to the Active Ageing Strategy and agree the response to OFMDFM.

6 Decision Tracking

6.1 Belfast City Council response will be forwarded to OFMDFM by member services.

Key to abbreviations

World Health Organisation (WHO)

Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP)

Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP)”

The Committee approved the consultation response and noted that a full copy would be available on the Councils website.

Investment Programme

Update on job opportunities and employability aspects of the Investment Programme

The Assistant Chief Executive/Head of Human Resources submitted for the Committee’s consideration the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 In our Investment Programme we committed to the provision of 400 placement, apprenticeship and internship opportunities and the delivery of 200 job opportunities over its three year duration. This report is to update Members on achievements regarding the job opportunities and placement targets and to seek agreement to the targets and plans for year three, including the “ring-fencing” of two full-time permanent Recycling Operative job opportunities to the long term unemployed.

1.2 Members will be aware that within years one and two we successfully delivered targeted employability interventions through first piloting the ring-fencing of five Business Support Clerk posts to the long term unemployed, supported by a pre-recruitment and training programme. Building on the success of this in year two we delivered a pre-employment programme in partnership with Grafton

Recruitment, whereby five seasonal Cleansing Operative posts were ring-fenced to 30 long-term unemployed participants along with the delivery of a pre-employment programme.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 Update on job and employability opportunities

Year one and two targets for both job opportunities and placements were exceeded. The collective job opportunities target for years one and two of the Investment Programme was 170 and the Council has delivered 509 job opportunities (295 permanent and 214 temporary jobs). The collective work placements target for years one and two was 340 and 486 placements were provided. Please see Appendix One for a detailed breakdown of employability interventions and work placements provided. The year three targets for job opportunities and work placements (as previously agreed) are 30 and 170 respectively.

2.2 Our pilot initiative to ring fence five Business Support Clerk (BSC) posts to the long term unemployed and provide a pre recruitment and training programme was the first of its kind in the public sector in Northern Ireland. This was very well received by our partner organisations and the five successful candidates were appointed to permanent positions in May 2013. Based on the success of this pilot and applying the learning from the evaluation process we successfully implemented a joint pre-recruitment programme with Grafton Recruitment to recruit five long term unemployed people into seasonal cleansing operative posts last year.

2.3 Ten apprenticeship opportunities (for electricians, fleet technicians, painters and gardeners) were offered in March 2013 and successful applicants started employment with Belfast City Council in September 2013. Sixteen paid one-year industrial placements were also recruited in year two through our ongoing university partnership arrangements.

2.4 Partnership Working

The Council has worked closely with a number of partner organisations on our employability initiatives in order to achieve the successes of years one and two. In particular in year two we have continued to work with the Department of Employment and Learning (DEL) and its lead contractors providing placements for its Steps to Work programme as well as with the LEMIS (Local Employment Intermediary Services) providers across the city, providing outreach

activities to help the long term unemployed and those furthest removed from the labour market apply for our job opportunities and prepare for our selection processes. In year two we have also built on existing partnerships with NIACRO and have been able to offer more placements to ex- offenders.

The Council will also host six managers across a range of disciplines from the Berlin Administration for a four week placement this summer.

2.5 Year three proposals and next steps

While we have already exceeded the targets set for the full three year programme, Human Resources wants to continue to stretch employability targets for year three. Having worked closely with NIACRO in year two we are also in discussions with the Prison Service to review placement and education initiatives. In addition we will continue to build relationships with all our existing partners.

Following the success of previous ring-fencing exercises, we are seeking Member approval to ring fence two out of seven Recycling Operative job opportunities in the Cleansing section. The same best practice model, agreed with the Equality Commission, the Local Government Staff Commission and with DEL, would be applied, including the delivery of a pre recruitment and training programme. The programme will consist of on the job work experience and classroom based training for twenty participants which will be selected by our existing employability partners; Steps to Work providers, LEMIS providers and disability organisations. It is also proposed that the Prince's Trust is brought on board as an additional partner as part of our focus on the employability requirements of the NEETS (Not in Employment Education or Training) group. It is anticipated that appointments will be made before the end of July 2014.

3.0 Resource Implications

3.1 Human Resources

Engagement in these employability initiatives requires ongoing support and supervision within departments.

3.2 Financial

There are no additional financial implications in this report.

4.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 The planned approach to the recruitment of permanent Recycling Operative posts is based on the previously implemented programmes and will be developed in accordance with the DEL, the Equality Commission and the Local Government Staff Commission.

5.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- note the progress in relation to job opportunities and employability targets set out in the Investment Programme
- support the continued approach to delivering year three targets
- agree the proposal to ring fence two Recycling Operative posts to the long-term unemployed and deliver a pre recruitment training programme

6.0 Decision Tracking

6.1 The Investment Programme activity in relation to job and employability opportunities and initiatives will continue to be reported to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee as appropriate.

Appendix One

Employability interventions and work placements from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2014

20 (year 1) and 32 (year 2) targeted 'Job Assist / Employability' Interventions e.g. pre-recruitment training programmes, targeted job assist interventions including:

Job Assist / Employability Interventions	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Pre-recruitment training programmes	1 (39 participants)	1 (30 participants)	-	2
Job assist outreach for LEMIS providers	19 (initiatives)	31	-	50

Placement Type	Year 1 1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013	Year 2 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014	Investment Programme 1 April 2012 - YTD
University	30	26	56
College	24	12	36
School	79	83	162
Disability	32	28	60
Young Person's Employment Initiative	12	12	24
Youth Employment Scheme	1	1	2
Steps to Work	22	20	42
Graduate Acceleration Programme	6	11	17
Training Orgs and Community Projects (including Belfast Met)	3	7	10
Youth Justice Agency	2	0	2
NIACRO	0	1	1
Programme Led Apprenticeships	2	3	5
Pre Recruitment Training Programme	39	30	69
Total	252	234	486

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that future reports include a breakdown in terms of the Section 75 categories.

Area Working Update

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

1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 Members are aware that since their inception the AWGs have played an integral role in recommending investment decisions in terms of LIF and Local Interventions to the SP&R Committee. It was also previously agreed at SP&R in November 2012 that the AWGs would play a central part in recommending decisions related to the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF).

2.0 Area Working Group Updates including LIF and Local Interventions

2.1 At the most recent round of AWGs, officers updated Members on the external meetings they have facilitated on the LIF proposals. In accordance with Council procedures, individual Members declared any conflicts of interest and this was noted in the minutes of the AWG. Members also had the opportunity to discuss potential reallocations of LIF monies for projects which are no longer progressing. On the basis of the information presented, the Shankill and East AWGs have made the following recommendations for the consideration of the Committee:

SHANKILL AWG - *Local Investment Fund*

2.2 The Shankill AWG has made the following recommendation for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their Local Investment Fund money. This is from the reallocation of monies from LIF projects which are no longer proceeding (see 2.4 below)

Project	Ref No.	Up to £	AWG Comments
Welcome Community Centre	ShLIF022	£99,320	
St Matthew's Parish Church Hall	ShLIF030	£15,000	

EAST AWG - *Local Intervention Fund*

2.3 The East AWG has made the following recommendation for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their Local Intervention Fund money. Members are asked to note that this is out of the original budget allocation of £100,000

Proposal	£	AWG Comments
East Belfast Partnership Board	£5,000	To assist the East Belfast Partnership Board to undertake work and research on the Physical Renewal Strand of the Inner East Neighbourhood Action Plan. The project will develop viable plans to transform key derelict sites within East Belfast, complementing the significant developments already underway including the Connswater Community Greenway, the Skainos Centre and the Civic Square at the Holywood Arches. This funding is a contribution towards the costs to be incurred by the Partnership in employing a project officer

Local Investment Fund – Projects no longer proceeding

2.4 Members will recall that it was highlighted that a number of LIF projects which had received in principle recommendations for funding had made limited progress in terms of going through the due-diligence process and it was likely that a number would no longer be able to proceed for a variety of reasons 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 SIF. It was also highlighted that even projects which have gone through due-diligence may still not complete due to a range of external factors including planning and match funding. It was agreed in November 2013 that the Director of Property & Projects would write out to all projects and that the AWGs would then have the opportunity to reallocate monies to alternative projects or existing LIF projects which require additional funding. Members are asked to note that the following projects which had previously received in principle funding commitments are now no longer proceeding and AWGs have either reallocated these monies and/or are considering further projects for funding.

Project no longer proceeding under LIF	Ref No.	In principle funding to be reallocated	Comments
Cairn Lodge Amateur Boxing Club	ShLIF008	£100,000	
Cliftonville Community Residents Forum	NLIF047	£100,000	North AWG have recommended that this project is now considered under BIF
St Mary's church, Crumlin Road	ShLIF027	£24,320	
Community Garden at Tildarg Street	ELIF022	£15,000	
St. Mary's Star of the Sea	NLIF052	£47,000	
Malachians FC/ Grove Utd	NLIF031	£100,000	
Cairn Lodge Boxing Club	ShLIF008	£100,00	
Antrim Road Regeneration Community Interest Company	NLIF049	£100,00	

The North AWG is currently looking at the potential reallocation of a number of other projects which are not likely to proceed. A further update on these will be brought back to committee if required.

- 2.5 Local Investment Fund – projects which have changed scope
Members are asked to note that the following LIF projects have changed scope from the original proposals recommended by the AWGs. The relevant AWGs have agreed the change in scope to these proposals. Members are asked to note that the amount of funding has not changed and the main outcomes of the projects have not changed.

Project	Ref.	Amount	Change of scope
LOCA Children's Development Centre	ShLIF017	£50,000	Project to be relocated into a temporary structure in the car park adjacent to the existing building.
Belfast South Community Resources	SLIF056	£51,000	Funding to be used to address a shortfall in funding for a SIF funded project.

3.0 Current status – BIF projects

- 3.1 Members are aware that BIF 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 previously agreed an approval process for all BIF projects which reflects the Stage Approval process for all Council capital projects. 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. The SP&R Committee has already agreed that 19 projects progress to Stage 1. Committee further agreed last month to move 3 of these (St. Comgall's, St. Mary's CBS pitches and Stranmillis Gateway) to Stage 2 and the development of an Outline Business Case.
- 3.2 The North AWG has now recommended that an additional project, the development of business incubation units by Cliftonville Community Forum, be added to the emerging BIF list. As highlighted above, this project had previously received in principle commitment of funding for £100,000 under LIF. However the project was dependent on receiving match funding from SIF which is now not progressing. The North AWG is therefore recommending that the funding under LIF is de-committed and the project is instead progressed under BIF.

3.3 Members are asked to be asked to consider if they wish to progress the project as recommended by the North Area Working Group to be moved to Stage 1 (i.e. the development of an SOC) which will test its feasibility in the first instance. Members are asked to note that this does not constitute a final decision to invest in any project. Members are also asked to note that officers are continuing to work with groups to progress the development of the remaining BIF projects to help bring these up to a state of readiness where Members can take informed investment decisions to a later stage.

4.0 Equality Implications

Emerging equality implications to be considered as further details emerge of projects

5.0 Recommendations

Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and -
Local Investment Fund and Local Intervention monies

- agree the Local Investment Fund and Local Intervention recommendations as proposed by the East and Shankill AWGs
- note the Local Investment Fund projects which are no longer proceeding. AWGs are considering the reallocation of monies from projects which are no longer proceeding

Belfast Investment Fund

- agree if the suggested BIF project as outlined in 3.2 above (Cliftonville Community Forum) is progressed to the next stage and completion of an Outline Business Case. Members are asked to note that this does not constitute a final decision to invest and that further detail will be brought back to Committee in due course for Members to make the final investment decision.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Heritage Lottery Fund – Approval to proceed with a Stage 1 Application for the restoration of the City Cemetery

The Committee was reminded of a recent successful application by the Council to the Heritage Lottery Fund’s Heritage Grant programme for the restoration of the Tropical Ravine in the Botanic Gardens which had secured funding of £2.32 million. The Heritage Lottery Fund had acknowledged the quality of that application and had reiterated its wish to receive further applications from the Council, particularly under its “Parks for People” programme which had funded many local authority projects across the United Kingdom, including projects in Lisburn, Larne, Derry and Armagh.

The Director of Parks and Leisure reported that the “Parks for People” programme provided grants from £100,000 to £5 million. He pointed out that a project must contribute to a range of outcomes for heritage, people and communities through physical development and programming activities. The programme, which previously only funded projects in parks, had recently been expanded to include cemeteries. The Council, through the Parks and Leisure Department and in consultation with the Heritage Lottery Fund, had identified three potential suitable sites for the programme, that is, the City Cemetery, Alexandra Park and Victoria Park. However, following feedback from visits with representatives from the Heritage Lottery Fund to each of the sites it was apparent that, whilst all three had potential, the City Cemetery currently presented the greatest opportunity. Due to the significance of the Cemetery, its design, heritage features and current condition and widespread public interest in the site and its history, a City Cemetery project would appear to meet the following key strategic factors cited by the Heritage Lottery Fund:

- There should be a definable heritage in design and history;
- There should be a ‘heritage need’, that is, definable actions which would put the heritage in better condition; and
- There should be a community/public appetite for the project.

The Director reminded the Committee further that the City Cemetery was currently an Emerging Project at Stage 1 on the Capital Programme under the wider Falls Park Masterplan project.

It was proposed that the Council apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant under the “Parks for People” programme for a project based at the City Cemetery, taking into account the context of the aforementioned Masterplan and with a view to developing a longer term plan for further applications for projects in other areas of the City. The Director pointed out that the application would follow a similar route to the Tropical Ravine Heritage Grant application, that is, a two stage process, with a maximum of 24 months between the first round and final submission and with the opportunity to apply for development grant to fund the intervening planning work. The next submission deadline was 31st August, with a decision anticipated in December, 2014. The final level of grant to be requested would be identified during the development of a first round application. The initial cost for the development for the first submission would be funded out of the Feasibility fund.

The Director explained that, if an application was successful, the principal cost to the Council would be in the form of a ‘partnership contribution’. For grants of £1million or more the Heritage Lottery Fund required a minimum 10% contribution, however, it was likely that a higher level would be expected from the Council, would be determined through discussions with the Heritage Lottery Fund. He pointed out that the application would not constitute a final decision to invest in the project and that further information would be submitted to the committee in due course.

The Committee:

- Agreed to the submission of a Stage 1 application for the restoration of the City Cemetery under the Heritage Lottery Fund’s ‘Parks for People’ programme, in

the context of the wider Falls Parks Master Plan which is already an Emerging Project on the Capital Programme; and

- Noted that officers from the Parks and Leisure Department would look also at the development of a longer term plan for further applications for projects in other areas of the city.

Vandalism of War Graves at the City Cemetery

The Director of Parks and Leisure provided the Members with an update in relation to the damage caused to war graves at the City Cemetery earlier in the week. He reported that 1 headstone had been damaged and 14 headstones had been pushed over and the cross of sacrifice was covered in graffiti. He stated that the cross had now been cleaned and the 14 headstones re-erected and the one damaged required to be replaced. He informed the Committee that the War Graves Commission was responsible for the maintenance of this section of the graveyard and that they were in the process of making the necessary arrangements for its replacement.

During discussion, Members expressed concern in relation to the threats and intimidation of members of staff at the cemetery and the inaction of the Police Service. It was pointed out that the local community and visitors to the cemetery had been appalled at the vandalism and had sought to assist in helping to clean up and repair the damage.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed that a report on how to involve local communities in the clean up and maintenance of war graves be submitted to a future meeting of the Parks and Leisure Committee.

Leisure Transformation Programme

The Director of Parks and Leisure submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

"1.0 Relevant background information

1.1 At its meeting in February, the Committee agreed that its preferred business model was the Non Profit Distributing Organisation (also referred to as the leisure Trust). Authority was also granted to continue consultation with staff and the trade unions on the preferred business model and in particular a series of protections for transferring staff and the affordability of these options. It was also agreed by Committee that an Equality and Best Value consultation would be prepared for consideration.

This 'in principle' decision was ratified by Council at its meeting in March. At the same meeting, Council also decided to give the trade unions another six weeks to develop an in-house option, while preparatory work continues for the leisure Trust model.

2. Key issues

2.1 Purpose and structure of papers

There are a range of issues that need to be presented for Committee's consideration, in advance of formally initiating discussions on the business planning and the partnership agreements with the leisure Trust. The attached papers set out a series of issues for Committee's consideration. The issue papers are:

- Paper 1: Leisure Trust update
- Paper 2: Trade Union engagement update including APSE in-house model report
- Paper 3: Outcomes and performance management
- Paper 4: Legal, financial equality assurances

These series of papers will inform the development of the partnership agreement, and all of the associated agreements in relation to funding, staff transfer, leasing and management. These will subsequently be reviewed independently for due diligence purposes, prior to presentation to Committee in August/September.

2.2 LTP: Strategic Principles

In January 2013, Committee agreed a series of guiding principles for the LTP. In discussion with Members, these have been refined over the last 12 months:

- 5* service for 3* prices – an affordable and innovative 'best in class' customer and community-focussed service
- Focus on health and well-being outcomes: work with others to improve the health of the population by enabling more people to be more active, more often
- More than sport: contribute to wider social, environmental and economic regeneration outcomes, linked to the Council's emerging community plan
- Value for money: maximise efficiency and income generation opportunities, reducing dependency on Council rate-based funding
- Democratically accountable: working in partnership with the Council to deliver public benefit and accountable to elected Members to deliver real change in local neighbourhoods
- Well-connected: well-run, well used leisure facilities which are fit for purpose, attractive and welcoming, with proactive community outreach and marketing

- **People:** staff who are well-trained, customer-focussed and participate in the growth of the business
- **Balanced investment:** a hierarchy of facilities and services which are welcoming and safe, promoting access for all within each quarter of the city
- **Partnership:** flexible to maximise strategic opportunities in the city, working collaboratively.

It is recommended that these refined principles are used as parameters to inform the development of the partnership agreement and business plan with the Trust.

2.3 Capital programme

Phase I

Members will be aware that the SP&R Committee, at its meeting in June 2013, agreed a £105million capital expenditure affordability limit for the LTP. Members also agreed that as part of the programme that:

- there will be balanced investment across the city and that each city quarter will have wet, dry, health and fitness facilities that cater for a diversity of activity
- there will be no rates increase to support the financing of the programme and revenue savings will form a key element of the financing budget
- the programme will be phased over a 10 year period.

Members are aware that the plans for the new assets under phase 1 of the Leisure Transformation Programme are at an advanced stage with work already commencing on site at Girdwood, designs being finalised for Olympia and the design brief in development for Andersonstown. A separate report on the status of these projects is also on the agenda for consideration by Committee today.

Next phases of capital development

The anticipated savings from the transformed business model will be integrated into any funding agreement with the Trust. This will therefore contractually guarantee delivery of the savings by April 2016. Based on previous work undertaken by Deloitte in its options appraisal report, a reduction of £2m in the Council funding for 2016/17 will be included in the funding agreement with the Trust, thereby releasing approx £23.50m as required by the capital financing strategy.

Work will soon need to start to develop Phase II of the programme. As with all capital projects and in line with the projects progressing under Phase I, these will be subject to the council's agreed capital stage approval process where decisions on which projects progress are taken by SP&R.

Members are asked to note that consultation will be a key part of the development of these new facilities and that there will be further work with Members via the AWGs and party group briefings and with the public and other stakeholders. In discussion with Members, it has been noted that consideration is given to the potential to invest in a city centre facility, to increase the visibility of the Trust, as well as providing an invaluable revenue-generator to subsidise work in local neighbourhoods.

It is envisaged that further detail on these discussions, including seeking authority to move these projects to the next Stage (Stage 2) will be brought to Committee in the late summer/early Autumn. It is anticipated that decisions on Phase III will be taken subsequent to that.

Members are asked to note that the Trust has the potential to avail of alternative sources of funding for capital projects including Sport NI funding which the Council cannot access.

Proposed upgrade/refurbishment programme

While phases II and III are being developed, it is suggested that consideration may be given to an uplift/refurbishment programme at existing centres, including those transferring (e.g. Robinson Centre) in order to ensure their continued usage, positive customer experience and that the buildings remain at the required standards for health and safety. This may include essential M&E work, the installation of access controls, the refurbishment of reception areas, etc. and any such programme will be developed in consultation with the Trust and Members and will be subject to Committee's agreement.

Conditions surveys have just been initiated and a future report will be brought back to Committee with the appropriate business case for consideration.

2.4 Human resources implications

Members will note that there are considerable number of significant human resources issues in relation to the transfer of staff, many of which are dealt with in the attached paper on TU engagement.

Committee will recall that it approved a TU request to introduce a voluntary redundancy process in October 2013. This process is ongoing and 134 expressions of interest have been received. All staff who have expressed an interest in voluntary redundancy have now received details of their financial information and may now formally apply for voluntary redundancy (before 30 April 2014). It is anticipated that officers will be in a position to put a proposal to Committee regarding voluntary redundancies in August, based on an affordability and analysis of relevant criteria.

2.5 Next steps

There is considerable work to be undertaken over the next 8 months to mobilise the decision to transfer the leisure service to a trust operation. As an overview, this includes:

May 14	Formal establishment of Trust and preliminary governance arrangements
June 14	
July 14	
August 14	Conditions surveys Business planning and drafting agreements – management; funding; outcomes specification; leasing; transfer; etc. Staff/TU, equality and Best Value consultations
September 14	Due diligence testing – financial and legal assurance process
October 14	Committee/Council decision to transfer service
November 14	Pre-transfer planning initiated: – Staff training and development – Marketing planning and community outreach – Infrastructure upgrade e.g. reception ‘look and feel’; online and IT systems; gym equipment; performance reporting systems – Implementation of customer ‘quick wins’ e.g. children’s free swimming sessions and local employability initiatives
December 14	
1 Jan 15	Transfer of service and implementation of agreed business plan Commence performance monitoring

This will be supported by the resources already agreed by SP&R in August 2013.

Throughout this period, there will be intensive consultation and engagement with staff and trade union representatives.

2.6 Best Value considerations

Under the Local Government (Best Value) Act (Northern Ireland) 2002, the Council is under an obligation to make arrangements for continuous improvements in the way in which its functions are exercised. Therefore, there is an obligation to consult in relation to Leisure Transformation, and these consulting obligations will be met through the equality consultation process as well as specific engagement with end

users using media such as the Council's website and social media. Officers will continue to take legal advice on this matter to give the appropriate assurance to Committee.

2.7 Communications

A communications and engagement plan is already in place for both internal and external communications in relation to the decision to establish a trust. A key messages document has been appended to this report which sets out the themes for communication with the wider public, as well as employees. Multiple channels will be used including City Matters, staff engagement exercises and team briefings and the website.

3.0 Decisions required

Having considered this Overview paper, Committee is asked:

1. To review and agree the LTP strategic principles and, on this basis, authorise officers to draft the business plan and various agreements with the Trust for consideration by Committee in September 2014
2. To confirm the affordability limit for the next phase of capital development and agree the process for agreeing Phases II and III of the LTP capital programme
3. To authorise officers to develop an interim upgrade/refurbishment programme within existing resources, for consideration by Committee
4. To authorise officers to proceed with the work plan, as outlined at 2.5 above

Having considered Issues paper 1: Leisure Trust governance update paper, Committee is asked:

5. To agree the draft objects for the new leisure trust and authorise its establishment
6. To grant authority to take preparatory steps to transfer service, as per legal advice set out, including the issue of the contract award notice and to enter into a contractual relationship with the Trust to ensure the effective delivery of the service

Having considered Issues paper 2: Trade Unions engagement update paper, Committee is asked:

7. To review the recommendations of the TUs in-house model report and confirm the 'in principle' decision already made in relation to the Council's preferred business model option as the non-profit distributing organisation/leisure trust

- 8. To agree that the initial staff protections outlined be integrated into any partnership agreement with the Leisure Trust and authorise officers to continue engagement and negotiation on these issues**

Having considered Issues paper 3: Outcomes and performance management, Committee is asked:

- 9. To give feedback and agree the indicative outcomes framework for the purposes of preparing a partnership agreement and business plan with the Trust.**
- 10. To agree those services for inclusion in the transfer i.e. the operations of 10 leisure centres and facilities within their immediate curtilage e.g. adjacent 3G pitches as well as the leisure facilities at Girdwood Park**

Having considered Issues paper 4: Financial, legal and equality assurances, Committee is asked:

- 11. To approve the equality framework for integration into the business planning and agreements development process,**
- 12. To agree outlined consultation approach to include consideration of the Council's Best Value obligations**

4.0 Resource Implications

This is a major physical and service transformation process and the implications for resources (staff, assets and financial) will be fully scoped and assessed as part of the business planning process, with continuous engagement with staff and trade union reps.

5.0 Equality Implications

In line with Council policy the programme has been screened and an EQIA recommended including a consultation approach.

Prior to considering the report, the Committee was advised that representatives of the Trades Unions were in attendance and had requested permission to address the Committee. The Committee acceded to the request and Ms. A. McMillan (Full-time Official, NIPSA), Mr. D Edmont (Full-Time Official, UNITE), Mr. J. Dawson (Full-time Official GMB), Ms. S. Jordan (NIPSA Shop Stewart) and Mr. K Clayton and Mr. G. O Fachtna (Belfast City Council Trade Union Co-ordinators) were admitted to the meeting.

Mr O Fachtna advised the Committee that the Unions had some concerns over the legal standing of the Council agreeing to its preferred business model, that is, a non-profit distributing organisation.

Ms. Jordan referred to the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) report which had demonstrated that over £2 million in savings could be achieved with an in-house model and the best option in the opinion of the Unions was for the governance of leisure services to remain with the Council. She stated that the leisure services staff were highly qualified and had demonstrated that they were flexible and she provided some examples in that regard. She pointed out that the forgotten people in the process were the users of the centres and the proposals should not just be about making money.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Members of the deputation for attending and they retired from the meeting.

The Director of Parks and Leisure tabled for the information of the Members managements comments on the APSE report and he reviewed these in detail.

He pointed out that the overriding issue remained the ability to deliver the required significant changes which had been highlighted by both APSE and Deloitte. He stated that consideration would need to be given to Council's current context, particularly the substantial changes it faced with Local Government Reform and the new powers and functions; the continued delivery of the Investment Programme and the Efficiency Programme, as well as the need to change long standing culture and working practices within leisure. The Senior Solicitor outlined to the Committee the Council's legal position and advice which had been received from Trowers Hamlins Solicitors on the agreements and contracts which would be required between the Council and the Trust, and confirmed that the process the Council would undertake was in accordance with the law.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to consider each of the recommendations in turn.

Recommendations:

- 1) To review and agree the Leisure Transformation Programme strategic principles and, on that basis authorise officers to draft the business plan and various agreements with the Trust for consideration by the Committee in September, 2014.

On a vote by show of hands 10 Members voted for the recommendation and none against and it was accordingly declared carried.

- 2) To confirm the affordability limit for the next phase of capital development and agree the process for agreeing Phases II and III of the Leisure Transformation Programme capital programme.
- 3) To authorise Officers to develop an interim upgrade/refurbishment programme within existing resources for consideration by the Committee.

- 4) To authorise officers to proceed with the work plan, as outlined in paragraph 2.5 of the report.
- 5) To agree the draft objectives for the new leisure trust and authorise its establishment.
- 6) To grant authority to take preparatory steps to transfer service, as per legal advice set out, including the issue of the contract award notice and to enter into a contractual relationship with the Trust to ensure the effective delivery of the service.

The Committee agreed to adopt recommendations 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

- 7) To review the recommendations of the Trade Unions in-house model report and confirm the 'in-principle' decision already made in relation to the Council's preferred business model option as the non-profit distributing organisation/leisure trust.

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Councillor Attwood,

That the Committee agrees to adopt recommendation 7.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor McVeigh,
Seconded by Councillor Hargey,

That the Council continues to explore an in-house model on the basis of the Trade Unions submission.

On a vote by a show of hands, seven Members voted for the amendment and ten against and it was accordingly declared lost.

The original proposal standing in the name of Councillor Reynolds and seconded by Councillor Attwood was put to the meeting when ten Members voted for and seven against.

Accordingly it was agreed to adopt recommendation 7.

- 8) To agree that the initial staff protections outlined be integrated into any partnership agreement with the Leisure Trust and authorise officers to continue engagement and negotiations on those issues.
- 9) To give feedback and agree the indicative outcomes framework for the purposes of preparing a partnership agreement and business plan with the Trust.

- 10) To agree those services for inclusion in the transfer, that is, the operations of 10 leisure centres and facilities within their immediate curtilage, for example, adjacent 3G pitches as well as the leisure facilities at Girdwood Park.
- 11) To approve the equality framework for integration in to the business planning and agreements development process.
- 12) To agree the outline consultation approach to include consideration of the Council's Best Value obligations.

The Committee agreed to adopt recommendations 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

**Leisure Transformation Programme -
Phase 1 Update: Olympia Regeneration;
Andersonstown Regeneration; and Girdwood Hub**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 Members will recall that the SP&R Committee at its meeting in June, agreed a £105m capital expenditure affordability limit for the leisure transformation programme. This included £38m towards the Olympia and Andersonstown schemes under Phase 1. The purpose of this paper is to update Members on the current status of these projects.

2.0 Olympia Regeneration

2.1 Members are aware that there is a very tight timescale for the delivery of Olympia given the construction programme for the new Windsor stadium. Phase 1a (development of the new facility) is integral to this development because the project design involves sharing a new roof structure. In October 2013, approval was given to progress the Olympia project from Stage 2 to Stage 3 – Committed on the Capital Programme however it was highlighted that a number of outstanding issues remained to be resolved including the agreement of a mutually beneficial community benefits partnership with the IFA. Subsequently the Statutory Transmission Committee at its December meeting consented, subject to conditions to award contracts for the Olympia Regeneration Project. Members will recall that an update on these issues was taken to Committee last month and all outstanding issues in relation to Olympia were agreed by Members, subject to further information on the mutually beneficial community benefits partnership being brought back to Committee.

2.2 Members are asked to note that a cross party delegation from the Council met with the Minister for Culture, Arts and

Leisure and DCAL officials on Tuesday 15th April specifically to discuss community benefits to ensure the stadia developments deliver sustained city and community benefits and to ensure that the stadia, leisure facilities and associated public realm are shared, welcoming and safe spaces for everyone.

At this meeting it was highlighted that both the Council and DCAL agreed on the importance of sustaining community benefit and there is a need to further refine the specific detail in regard to a community benefits partnership with the IFA. The Minister noted that all three sporting codes were currently financially supported by DCAL to facilitate engagement with local communities and schools. It was imperative that any proposed longer term arrangements built on this work, as well as complemented ongoing work supported by the Council and agencies such as Sports NI. She also highlighted that community benefits proposals were not restricted to sporting activities and could include broader well-being proposals.

It was therefore agreed at this meeting that community benefit would be looked at across the three sporting codes (with the GAA, IFA and IRFU) and that the Council would convene a meeting between DCAL officials, the three sporting codes and the Council before the end of May to allow for a revised proposal to be brought back to Committee in June.

Members are asked to note that a final decision on this must be made by June in order to facilitate the development of the new facility.

3.0 Andersonstown Regeneration

3.1 The project at Andersonstown will provide new leisure facilities at the site of the existing Leisure Centre. It will also include regeneration of the wider site for uses such as recreation and commerce. Three proposed design schematics have been drawn up and a period of intensive public engagement was held between 20 March-12 April. This engagement process was extremely successful with over 1000 attendees at the different sessions and over 350 feedback forms filled in. These consultation responses are currently being analysed and will be presented to the next West AWG (29th April) and will be fed back to Committee in June. The results from this consultation process will inform the design brief.

- 3.2 Members will also be aware that discussions have been ongoing with other key providers in the area including the Health Trust to maximise the overall use of site and provide a centre that delivers the best outcomes for the local area. Members are asked to note that the Health Trust has been very receptive and positive about looking at the feasibility of locating a number of GP practices within the redeveloped centre. However the Trust have highlighted that at this stage that any relocation, either via a leasing arrangement or a capital build, will require departmental approvals and that this could take a minimum of 5 months for a lease or longer if it is a capital build.

Members are asked to note that waiting for any approved decision from the health trust will have a consequential impact on the timescale for the build.

- 3.3 This therefore presents Members with a number of options and Members are asked to consider:
- If they wish officers to continue to progress discussions with the Health Trust and to defer the design brief process for the new centre until the outcome of the discussions with the Health Trust is known and the decision goes through their departmental approval processes which will take at least five months or longer; or
 - if they wish to look continue to the current timetable for the design for the new centre and as part of the design process look at how the building could be flexibly designed, if possible, in order to accommodate any future provision for health/GPs.

4.0 Girdwood Hub

- 4.1 Members are asked to note that work commenced on the development of the Girdwood Hub on Monday 14th April and is anticipated to be completed by Summer 2015. Members will be kept up to date with progress.

5.0 Equality Implications

Phase 1 – Leisure Transformation Programme - A high level EQIA is currently being prepared for the LTP. This will include capital investments and will be presented to SP&R in due course for its consideration.

6.0 Recommendations

Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and -

Olympia Regeneration

- note that the Council has highlighted to DCAL that it is committed to the principle of community benefit subject to further refinement of the detail involved
- note that a meeting with all three sporting codes, DCAL and Council officials will be organised before the end of May to agree this detail and to facilitate a further update being brought back to Committee in June when a decision must be reached by Committee in order to ensure the successful delivery of the project

Andersonstown Regeneration

- agree if they wish to continue to progress discussions with the Health Trust in relation to the provision of health facilities within the redeveloped Andersonstown Centre. Members are asked to note that this may have an impact on the timescales for the development due to the Trust's decision making timescales. Alternatively as part of the design process officers can look if there is a possibility to flexibly design the new centre so that future provision for health/GPs can be accommodated

Girdwood Hub

- note that work commenced on the development of the Hub on Monday 14th April and is expected to be completed by Summer 2015

7.0 Abbreviations

**IFA – Irish Football Association
GAA – Gaelic Athletic Association
IRFU – Irish Rugby Football Union”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations in relation to the Olympia Regeneration and the Girdwood Hub.

With regard to the Andersonstown Regeneration, the Committee agreed that, as part of the design process, officers look at the possibility to effectively design the new centre so that future provision for health/General Practitioners could be accommodated and, without delaying the scheme, for discussions to continue at a senior level with the Health Trust and the Department and a meeting of the West Area Working Group be held during May to update the Members on any progress.

Future City Conference – Planning for Growth

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

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 In recognising that the core of the city centre is important to driving growth and investment in neighbourhoods, Committee will be aware that Urban Strategies (Joe Berridge), with Deloitte and ARUP as part of the consultant team, have commenced the development of a Belfast Core City Regeneration and Investment Framework which is due to be complete in September/October 2014. Urban Strategies have met with the Budget & Transformation Panel and as part of the programme of engagement a public city centre event is planned for June 2014 to make stakeholders aware of the approach, allow comparison with other cities and to test the direction of travel of the plan.
- 1.2 This is a key opportunity to reinforce the role of Belfast as the key regional driver and the importance of the city centre in planning for future economic growth and competitiveness. Members will be aware that the Council held the ‘Belfast: Future City’ Conference in May 2013 with around 170 attendees from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. This was designed to build on the State of the City Development Debates and begin the process of ongoing engagement around priorities for city development in the context of the return of regeneration and place-shaping powers to the Council. This was well received and a conference report was made widely available in the summer edition of agendaNI. This proposed public city centre event in June clearly aligns and progresses the discussion that took place at the Future City Conference last year.
- 1.3 Members have previously noted that while the focus of this work is initially on the core city and surrounding communities it is important that it is placed firmly within the context of the wider regeneration and planning context of Local Government Reform i.e. the development of the local development plan, the community plan, and area regeneration frameworks. This report therefore sets out the proposed approach to the event in June, which is provisionally scheduled to take place on 20th June 2014.

2 Key Issues

Budget & Transformation Panel

- 2.1 Urban Strategies have met with the Budget & Transformation Panel where Members highlighted a number of issues to be taken account of during their work. This included the need to ensure connectivity between the city centre and local

communities in terms of accessibility and mobility and in terms of ensuring that job creation and investment benefit local residents. The importance of incorporating social clauses into investments was also cited as important to promoting and securing local employment. The issue of housing in the city centre was noted as well as the importance of creating an attractive city for tourists and residents alike. Suggestions were also made about the benefit of a city art gallery and a casino in terms of attracting tourists and spend in the city.

- 2.2 In recognising the importance of ensuring connectivity of the city centre and local communities, a separate report on the agenda deals with the procurement of expertise to support the creation of a city vision as part of the community planning work programme agreed by Members. We will ensure that the work carried out on the city centre is connected to this city wide programme so that the impact of recommendations of this work impact across the city.**
- 2.3 Urban Strategies have planned a public city centre event to make stakeholders aware of the core city regeneration and investment framework and to test the direction of travel. There is merit in maximising this event to reinforce the city as the regional economic driver, This event, which will build on the positive feedback received following last year's Future City Conference will foster collaboration and engender support amongst key stakeholders for the emerging strategy.**
- 2.4 The preferred date for the Belfast conference is 20th June is as Urban Strategies are involved in a major International Festival of Business Conference which will take place in Liverpool (key dates are 18 -19 June 2014). Given the leadership role Members will play in taking forward the new Council's place-shaping responsibilities, it is proposed that Members attend this conference to hear the experience of world-class practitioners and provide an opportunity to meet with Members and officials from Liverpool and Manchester Councils. Leeds has also been suggested. This would allow Members to practically explore the challenges facing towns and cities as they continue to develop, how they can link their citizens to opportunities and play an ever stronger role in driving regional and national growth using regeneration and planning powers. There is also an opportunity for Belfast to align the Future City Conference with this through scheduling and engaging key speakers to attract a wide range of stakeholders in Belfast.**

Proposed Objectives for the 20 June Conference:

- 2.5 The core city regeneration and investment plan must be set within the context of the broader city planning agenda which will include the community plan, the local development plan and the Council's new approach to city-wide and neighbourhood regeneration. The conference objectives are proposed as follows:
- To launch the initial findings of the core city regeneration and investment framework and test the direction of travel
 - To agree 3-5 key projects/opportunities for growth for Belfast, particularly with the return of regeneration and place-shaping powers to council
 - To provide a focus for practitioners to share experience and ideas for Belfast's city centre development and growth
 - To provide a platform to inform stakeholders about the planned process to develop a city vision and community plan

There may also be an opportunity to make an announcement about a significant city infrastructure project.

2.6 **Proposed Conference Structure**

The following conference sessions are proposed:

Introduction to the regional city context – introduction from the First Minister and Deputy First Minister reinforcing the role of Belfast as a regional driver, noting the recovery in the economy and the importance of city centres in generating growth through employment, attracting business and as a key focal point.

Belfast's Future Growth – Professor Michael Parkinson OBE was a key speaker at the Future City Conference in 2013 and has reviewed Belfast's competitiveness and capacity to deliver at regular intervals since 2004. Drawing together a number of key pieces of work such as Opportunities for Investment in Belfast, the impact of anchor institutions as well as the preparations for the Investment Conference scheduled to take place in Liverpool, Professor Parkinson will highlight the critical steps for Belfast and challenge us agree shared city development priorities, consider alternative resourcing plans and commit resources to deliver and shape Belfast's future success.

City Competitiveness and Growth – Bruce Katz regularly advises federal, state, regional and municipal leaders on creating urban prosperity. Bruce Katz is known to Belfast

through his involvement in the State of the City Debates and the work on the Weak Market Cities. He is also a keynote speaker at the Liverpool conference. His recent work has focused on metropolitan cities and how networks of city leaders can work together to grow more jobs and make their communities more prosperous, by investing in infrastructure and equipping workers with the skills they need.

Shaping the Core City: the Regeneration and Investment Plan – Joe Berridge, Urban Strategies will outline the work to date and direction of travel for the Regeneration and Investment Framework. This will be driven by the economic vision for Belfast and will include an indication of the opportunity projects and possibilities as well as alternative financial arrangements to support investment in regeneration.

2.7 Practitioner focussed workshops

The final sessions will be informed by the work of Urban Strategies focussing on 4-5 key areas of opportunity for the core city; this is also likely to build on the city investments made through the Council's Investment Programme 2012-15. Workshop discussions would be led by a key speaker demonstrating good practice examples from elsewhere and a local practitioner to provide the Belfast context. Initial examples of workshop topics include:

- **University City** – maximising the regenerative impact of the University of Ulster relocation to the city centre, and reinforcing the mutual value created through building critical relationships between universities / educational establishments and their cities.
- **Waterfront Developments** – recognising the value and regenerative potential of the river in Belfast, this could refer to key projects/plans such as the Lagan Canals project.
- **Tech City/Hub** – focusing on the development of the creative hub, innovation centre and Superconnected Belfast. This would also enable us to build on the success of the recent Tech Mission to Silicon Valley which included 20 local private sector companies.
- **Tourism (Food/Music/Culture)** – creating a strong marketing offer to attract conference visitors, the food/music scene is particularly important to sustain and promote the city centre. This would support the work currently underway with the development of

- the new Integrated Tourism Strategy and could build on the recent relationship and comparisons that have been made with Bilbao. Members may also wish to consider a future follow-up visit to Bilbao.
- Transport/Connectivity – another theme within the Masterplan, this supports the development of Belfast Rapid Transit and reinforces the connectivity and mobility between neighbourhoods and the city centre.

2.8 Leading the city

Political input will be critical throughout the event. It is proposed that the Lord Mayor would introduce the event, providing the context for the city and the link with the Liverpool conference. It is suggested that specific input be provided by Chair of SP&R, to outline the challenges ahead and Chair of Development Committee, in providing an update on the Belfast masterplan and way forward. Key roles will be played by elected Members throughout the event.

2.9 Connecting to the broader planning agenda

In line with the proposals outlined to Members at Statutory Transition Committee and at the all-Member community planning workshop on 5 March, it is recognised that while there is a need to provide focus and clarity on the 'core city' developments it is important that this is viewed within the context of the broader community planning framework. While the discussions at the event will connect to the community planning work programme the event will also sign-post this process to a wider audience.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 The total cost of this event is estimated at £30,000 and has been budgeted for within 2014/15 Departmental estimates.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

- 4.1 Equality and good relations considerations will be taken into account in all aspects of this work.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to:

- Agree that a 'Future City Conference: Planning for Growth' event as outlined above should take place in June and the costs associated with the conference, its organisation and retention of expert contributors
- Agree that the First Minister, Deputy First Minister, Minister for Regional Development and Minister for

- Social Development should be invited to participate in the conference
- Agree to nominate party representatives to attend the International Festival of Business Liverpool event on 18-19 June 2014 which will coincide with meetings with Councils in Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Belfast Bursary Fund – proposed amendments to eligibility criteria

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 At the 15 April meeting of the Development Committee, members received an update on the Belfast Bursary and agreed to the allocation of £50,000 funding to Prince’s Trust to roll out year 3 of the bursary. The bursary scheme is an element of the Belfast Investment Programme.

1.2 Members were also updated on progress with the bursary being delivered on behalf of the council by Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC). They were advised that, at a previous meeting of the Development Committee, a number of recommendations were being made regarding the eligibility criteria for the scheme and the potential for these to impact on numbers applying. Members asked that a report be brought back to a future meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to consider the implications of changing the scheme criteria and to make recommendations on any changes required for the coming academic year.

2 Key Issues

2.1 In order to be eligible for the bursary at present, the criteria are as follows:

- First year, full-time student at BMC, resident in Belfast City Council area
- Aged 16-24
- Household income threshold not to exceed £23,820
- Students to be studying on one of priority courses focusing on new growth areas, course are at levels 2-5.

2.2 The aim of the bursary is to offer an incentive to young people to consider undertaking study in one of the areas in which we project future employment growth to be greatest, as opposed to those areas where new jobs are less likely to be created. Hence the courses eligible for bursary support cover IT,

multimedia, renewable energies, science and tourism and hospitality. The value of the bursary is £500.

- 2.3 In the current academic year, Belfast Met reported that 64 students availed of the bursary. Spend on the awards amounted to £32,000. A total of 120 students applied for the scheme, of whom 64 were successful and 56 failed to meet one or more of the eligibility criteria set. Participants were ineligible predominately because they lived outside the Belfast City Council area (principally in Castlereagh) or because the household income levels exceeded the £23,820 threshold.
- 2.4 One of the most significant challenges has been our ability to predict the number of students who will apply for and be eligible to take up the Belfast Met bursary, given that this programme is targeted at first year students on approved courses. While there is a pool of over 800 students undertaking the priority courses agreed by members, only around 8% of those students met all of the scheme's eligibility criteria last year.
- 2.5 Of the successful students, over a third of awards have been provided to young people who live in the top 10% of most deprived wards while over half of the awards have been taken up by young people who live in the top 25% most deprived wards.
- 2.6 Based on last year's figures, and assuming that the uptake levels and student profile will be broadly similar to last year, it is likely that around 70 students will avail of the bursary in the coming academic year, should the scheme go ahead in the same format as previous years.
- 2.7 Assuming an available budget of up to £50,000 in the coming year – in line with the budget for Prince's Trust bursary – the following options may be considered by members.
- 2.8 Extend the scheme to second year students
This would potentially double the amount of students availing of the bursary. As such, it could mean that the £50,000 allocation would be exceeded. Also, given that the bursary was intended to act as an incentive to get students to take up a certain course, the fact that they were going into year 2 would mean that they no longer needed that incentive and were simply completing their course.
- 2.9 Consider removing the upper age limit
At present, only students aged under 24 are eligible for the scheme. This criterion was established to take account of the

high levels of unemployment and economic inactivity among that group. Belfast Met advise that removing the upper age limit would enable access by a small number of additional students, particularly people studying on Access courses at level 3 which can lead to a study on a degree course. Based on last year's figures, this could lead to an uplift of 10-15 additional recipients.

2.10 Consider revising the household earning limits

As part of the consultations undertaken through party briefings last year, members were keen to see the earning cap pitched at a level that meant that a student living in a household where two people were earning minimum wage would still be eligible for the bursary. On that basis, the earnings threshold was set at £23,820. If this cap was lifted, considerably more students could benefit from the scheme. However it may mean that the initiative is less targeted than the current position, namely half of recipients resident in the top 25% most deprived wards. When the bursary was established, the minimum wage was £6.19; this has since been revised (October 2013) to £6.31 and will increase again in October 2014. Assuming uplift to around £6.50 per hour in October this year, this would mean that the earnings threshold could be increased to £25,000 for household income, and still be based on the assumption of two people working within the household at minimum wage.

2.11 Consider revising the priority courses

The courses of study were chosen based on the fact that they focused on areas of projected future employment growth. The Development Committee, at its meeting in December 2013, agreed the inclusion of a number of additional courses, still within the agreed priority areas. Applications were received from across all of the courses last year. It is therefore recommended that the same courses are eligible for bursary support in the coming year.

2.12 In addition to any changes in criteria, it is also proposed that additional work is undertaken in the coming months to promote the bursary, using council networks and outreach facilities. This includes promoting the scheme to the following key conduits:

- Welfare rights advisors in advice sector to ensure those who need help the most have an opportunity to apply
- Targeted engagement through existing community networks and outlets, including the council's community centres and community development staff

- Organisations on the Council's Section 75 consultee list. This is particularly important in widening participation among younger people's groups and disability specialist groups
- Targeted use of both the Council's and on Belfast Met's website (including on the online prospectus and at open days and via media)
- Schools' career advisers in order to ensure that young people are aware of the financial incentive when making their choice of course.

2.13 Members have previously raised the potential of making the bursary available to Belfast City Council residents who were studying at other institutions, principally Northern Regional College. While it would be possible to identify how many students with a Belfast City Council postcode studied at the college last year, it would take some work to set up the relevant administration systems with the college as well as identify priority courses available in the college. It is unlikely that this could all be in place to allow for promotion of the bursary for the coming academic year. However members should be aware that these students would potentially be eligible for the council bursary provided through Prince's Trust (open to all Belfast residents aged 16-25 who are not currently undertaking training but who would want to do so, if the relevant financial support was available to cover fees or course materials). Officers will work with members in the coming months to promote this scheme to interested young people and to encourage take-up, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

- 2.14 Taking account of all these considerations, it is proposed that:
- The bursary continues to be available to first year students only
 - The age cap is removed, in order to support adult returners and those undertaking access courses
 - The household earnings cap is set at £25,000
 - The priority courses previously agreed by the Development Committee are maintained.

3 Resource Implications

Based on the recommendations, it is anticipated that the budget required will not exceed £50,000 (i.e. covering up to 100 bursaries at a value of £500).

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

No specific equality or good relations considerations.

5 Recommendations

It is recommended that the following changes to the scheme eligibility are agreed:

- The bursary continues to be available to first year students only
- The age cap is removed, in order to support adult returners and those undertaking access courses
- The household earnings cap is set at £25,000
- The priority courses are maintained.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Communications Issues

The Committee discussed a number of the issues which had been raised and agreed throughout the meeting in relation to the Leisure Transformation Programme, the update on job opportunities and employability, and the living wage and agreed that press releases in the name of the Chairman and the Party Group Leaders be issued in this regard.

Standing Order 12

In accordance with Standing Order 12, the Committee agreed that the minutes of the meeting be submitted to the Council on 1st May for approval.

Chairman