

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 17th February, 2017

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hussey (Chairperson);
The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire);
Aldermen Convery and Rodgers;
Councillors Attwood, Clarke, Corr, Craig, Graham,
Hargey, Hutchinson, Jones, Long, McAllister, McCabe,
McVeigh, O'Donnell, Reynolds and Walsh

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr .G. Miller, Director of Property and Projects;
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 6th, 20th and 25th January were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st February.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Restricted Items

The Information contained in the following five reports is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014

City Centre investment Fund

The Committee considered a report in relation to the next phase of the City Centre Investment Fund (CCIF) which had been set up in June 2015 to support projects which aligned with the principles and priorities set out in the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy. The previous parameters and pilot projects, including strategy acquisitions and investment in funds to leverage more private sector money were noted.

However, in the context of the urgent need to bring Grade A Offices forward in the city centre as soon as possible the Committee, after discussion, agreed the following:

1. That a proportion of the CCIF should be used to support the development of Grade A Offices, and potentially at a later stage private residential development, where market failure was identified;
2. The due diligence and decision making process;
3. The timetable for a call for sites; and
4. That a more detailed report on criteria, risk parameters and due diligence would be submitted to the March meeting.

Capital of Culture

The Committee considered a report in relation to the potential of the submission of a bid to become the UK host for the 2013 European Capital of Culture.

After discussion, the Committee:

- granted approval for officers to explore the potential of submitting a bid to become the UK host for the 2023 European Capital of Culture;
- approved the possibility of a joint bid with Derry City and Strabane District Council; and
- noted that the funding of Belfast City Council's contribution was included as part of the Quarter 3 Finance Report which would be considered at today's meeting.

Financial Reporting Quarter 3 2016-17

The Committee considered a report which presented the Quarter 3 financial position for the Council, including a forecast of the year end outturn. It included also a report pack which contained a summary of the financial indicators and an executive summary. It also provided a more detailed explanation of the each of the relevant indicators and the forecast outturn for the year.

The Departmental year end forecast was a net year end under spend of £2,152k which represented a variance of 1.6% of the annual net expenditure budget. The Committee had agreed, at its meeting on 18th November, 2016, to cap in year departmental cash limits at the Quarter 2 forecast levels to offset the rates clawback advised by Land and Property Services (LPS). The current LPS district rate clawback forecast was £2,024k which was a reduction of £130k at the Quarter 2 forecast.

After applying the rates clawback of £2,024k to the forecast departmental underspend of £2,152k, there would be a balance of £128k of the departmental underspend remaining. Given that that was a small balance based on a forecast position, it was recommended that that should not be considered for reallocation at this stage.

As previously referred to in the Quarter 2 report, the programming of the capital expenditure relating to the capital programme meant that there was a forecast underspend of £657k in the capital finance budget. That underspend would be available for reallocation as non-recurrent expenditure.

After discussion the Committee:

- noted the forecast departmental position, capital financing position and rates clawback position at Quarter 3;
- agreed to ring fence the forecast departmental underspend of £2,152k to finance the forecast rates clawback of £2,024k, with any balance being allocated to general reserves;
- agreed that the forecast capital financing underspend of £657k be re-allocated to specified reserves for the following purposes:
 - £294k for the Community Grants shortfall for 2017/18
 - £100k for the City Wide Tribunal Service for 2017/18. The payment of the £100k to the group would be subject to a further report to the Committee on the receipt and assessment of an application for funding which would detail the achievements to be delivered as well as the plans in place to attract levered funding; and
 - the balance of £263k to be used for a potential European Capital of Culture bid.

Leisure Transformation Programme- Assets Update

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the development and implementation of the £105m leisure assets capital programme.

After discussion, the Committee:

- (1) Olympia – noted the positive feedback which had been received in relation to the new Olympia Centre and the headline figures regarding the usage of the new centre as outlined at paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2 of the report, which evidenced the impact of the Leisure Programme and was a testament to the ambition of Members to transform the city's leisure estate;
- (2) Robinson/Clonduff - noted that, the previous month, it had agreed that *"consideration be given to the possibility of providing a temporary building in the locality following the demolition of the Clonduff Community Centre"* for groups who were due to be displaced following the closure of the centre.

Noted an update provided by the Director of Property and Projects which indicated that, since the time of writing the report, all of the Groups which used the Clonduff Community Centre had now been secured alternative provision within the surrounding area. It was agreed that engagement would continue with the Groups and that the arrangements would be kept under review.

- (3) Andersonstown – noted the proposed closure date, that is, 28th May, for the current centre, subject to planning, and that Council Officers were now working in partnership with GLL to develop a decant plan to ensure continuity of provision of existing centre users. A full communications and engagement plan was being drawn up and Members would be kept up to date on progress.

Noted that a settlement with the Ulster Bank had now been agreed in principle.

- (4) Templemore – agreed the proposed management and government arrangements for Templemore as outlined at s 3.11 - 3.14 of the report;
- (5) Avoniel – noted that discussions were continuing with the Education Authority, local Councillors and community services staff in relation to the interim location for the play centre and that updates would be brought back to the Committee in due course.

Giant's Park - North Foreshore

The Committee considered a report which sought approval to enter into appropriate additional legal agreements with the Council's existing joint venture partner, Renewable Power Systems Ltd (RPS), at Giant's Park, North Foreshore. The Committee was advised that RPS currently operated plant for the production of electricity from landfill gas at Giant's Park. RPS had submitted a proposal to utilise additional biogas fuel, imported from alternative landfill gas/anaerobic digestion projects in order to generate additional electricity that would augment income to the Council derived from the decreasing on-site methane fuel source created by the former landfill use.

After discussion, the Committee granted approval to the Director of Property and Projects to enter into such additional legal agreements with Renewable Power Systems Ltd, subject to detailed terms to be agreed by the Estates Manager and the City Solicitor, that would maximise returns to the Council whilst protecting the longer term requirement to attract other viable Cleantech developers to the Giant's Park, North Foreshore.

Matters referred back from Council/Notices of Motion

Notice of Motion - Donations to Political Parties – Response

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 3rd January, had passed the following motion on Donations to Political Parties, which had been proposed by Councillor Nicholl and seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown:

"This Council notes a motion passed in March, 2016, regarding the transparency of donations made to political parties, recognises the importance which the citizens of Belfast place on being able to trust their Elected Representatives to work for the common good, further recognises the corrupting influence which money can have on the political decision-making process and considers it unacceptable that donations to political parties continue to remain secret in Northern Ireland.

The Council notes correspondence which was received from the previous Secretary of State, dated 5th April, 2016, stating that the time was not appropriate to move to full transparency, however, given current low levels of public confidence in transparency of Government, it calls on the new Secretary of State to immediately lift the exemption to reveal all declared donations to political parties since January 2014 and calls also on all political parties to voluntarily publish donations from this time."

It was reported that a response had now been received on behalf of the Secretary of State. The response welcomed the Council's motion and confirmed that the Secretary of State had written to the Northern Ireland political parties earlier in January inviting their views on moving to full transparency and stating his desire to progress the matter.

The Committee noted the response from the Secretary of State.

Notice of Motion - Renewal Heat Incentive Scheme - Response

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 3rd January, had passed the following motion on the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme, which had been proposed by Alderman Ruth Patterson and seconded by Councillor Heading:

“This Council notes the serious public concern amongst our constituents in relation to financial squander around the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme.

The Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State, as public representatives, highlighting the huge public interest in relation to this matter and, accordingly, requests that he initiates a full public inquiry, pursuant to his discretion contained within Section 1 of the Inquiries Act 2005.

The Council agrees also to write to the Joint First Minister, Arlene Foster, expressing our belief, as a Council, that she should step aside pending a full public inquiry into this extraordinarily serious matter and the allegations of corruption which have been made by a former Government Minister from her own Party.”

The Council had agreed also “to write to the Joint First Minister, Arlene Foster, expressing its belief, as a Council, that she should step aside pending a full public inquiry into this extraordinary serious matter and the allegations of corruptions which have been made by a former Government Minister from her own Party.”

A response had now been received on behalf of the Secretary of State. The response affirmed the Secretary of State's view that the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme was a devolved matter and that it should be the subject of an independent inquiry established by the devolved institutions. The Secretary of State had welcomed the establishment of such an enquiry and considered it to be an important step in building confidence in the institutions.

The response stated also that the Secretary of State was encouraging full co-operation with the inquiry and hoped that it would quickly and effectively establish the facts around the Scheme. It added that the UK Government would do everything in its power to support the inquiry.

Noted.

Notice of Motion - Concessionary Travel Pass Response

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 3rd January, the Council had passed the following motion on the Concessionary Travel Pass, which had been proposed by Councillor Heading and seconded by Councillor McCusker:

"This Council notes the recent establishment of the Smart Pass Equality Campaign, endorses its call for the full fare concessionary travel pass to be issued to all people who are unable to drive for medical reasons and agrees to write to the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister for Finance urging them to implement this extension as soon as possible."

The Democratic Services Manager reported that responses had now been received by both Ministers. Minister Hazzard stated that, currently, anyone who had a driving licence refused or revoked on medical grounds could avail of a half fare travel concession and pointed out that everyone in Northern Ireland could avail of full fare concessionary travel once they reach age of 60. The Minister added that, whilst he was sympathetic towards extending the Concessionary Fares Scheme to provide fare concessionary travel for those people who are under the age of 60 and are unable to drive on medical grounds, there were already numerous competing priorities for resources across his Department. As such, an extension to the concessionary fares scheme could not be considered at this time.

Minister Ó Muilleoir had reiterated the comments which had been made by the Minister for Infrastructure, that a person who had a driving licence refused or revoked on medical grounds could avail of a half fare travel concession and that everyone in Northern Ireland could avail full fare concessionary travel once they reached the age of 60. He concluded by recommending that the Council should, in future, liaise with the Minister for Infrastructure around the concessionary fare scheme, as that issue fell within his area of responsibility.

Noted.

Governance

Consultation on a Revision of the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct

The Committee was advised that the Department for Communities had issued a consultation document in relation to some limited revisions to the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors. Responses to the consultation were to be submitted by the 28th February, 2017.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that, essentially, the proposed revisions fell into two categories:

Amendments to Part 3 – The Principles

1. It is proposed that the Principle of Conduct should be amended to better reflect the content and working of the MLA code.
2. The current principle of “Public Duty” has been removed and has been added as an additional rule under Part 4 of the code.
3. Paragraph 3.2 of the code is amended to clarify that the Principles are now considered to be aspirational not enforceable on their own, in line with the MLA code.

Amendments to Part 8 – Decision Making

Part 8 of the code has been amended to clarify that Rules 8.1 (a) to (h) will apply to all Council decisions and that, in addition, Rules 8.1 (i) to (l) will apply only to quasi-judicial decisions (for example planning and licensing) and to decisions on making appointments and the awarding of contracts.

He reported that the draft Council response, as set out below, welcomed those amendments to the code:

Appendix 3

**Draft Response to the Review of the Northern Ireland Local Government
Code of Conduct for Councillors**

Question 1

Belfast City Council agrees that all public representatives in Northern Ireland should be held to the same level of ethics with regard to behaviour in public office and therefore supports the changes to the proposed Principles contained in the Councillors’ Code, to bring them into line with those contained in the MLA Code.

Question 2

Belfast City Council supports the recommendation to make the current Principle of “Public Duty” an enforceable rule under the Councillors’ Code.

Question 3

Belfast City Council agrees that all public representatives in Northern Ireland should be held to the same level of ethics with regard to behaviour in public office and therefore

supports the changes to the Councillors' Code, to make the Principles aspirational rather than enforceable, in line with those contained in the MLA Code.

Question 4

Belfast City Council supports this recommendation in that it these rules relating to decision-making should apply to all decisions taken by Councillors in meetings or when reaching decisions regarding the business of the Council.

Question 5

Belfast City Council supports this recommendation in that it these rules relating to decision-making should only apply to quasi-judicial decisions, decisions in making appointments and decisions on awarding contracts. The Council believes that the proposed changes will assist Councillors in being clear when the more onerous rules regarding lobbying or advocating for a certain position should apply.

The Committee approved the draft response to the Review of the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Capital Programme Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The Council's Capital Programme is a rolling programme of investment which either improves existing Council facilities or provides new Council facilities. This report outlines highlights of current status of projects under the Programme; projects recommended to be moved/added to the Capital Programme and a number of project updates.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

General

- **Note the update in relation to the Capital Programme as outlined in 3.1 and that the Property & Projects Department is happy to arrange site visits for Members/ Party Groups to any capital project (see 3.1)**

Proposed movements on/additions to the Capital Programme

- **Agree that the City Cemetery – Permanent Memorial to mark Plot Z1 project is moved to Stage 3- Committed on the Capital Programme with a maximum budget of £50,000 to be allocated (see 3.3). The Director of Finance & Resources has confirmed that this is within the affordability limits of the Council. Members are also asked to agree that the necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate ‘framework’ arrangements) be initiated as required with contracts to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.**
- **Agree that the following projects are moved to Stage 2 - Uncommitted on the Capital Programme – in addition to the ongoing works to create a new exhibition space on the ground floor of the City Hall these projects will help to provide a seamless experience for visitors both inside and outside the City Hall**
 - **City Hall West Wing - Outdoor Space including the Cenotaph – Upgrade and Enhancements – OBC to be worked up and brought back to the Diversity Group and Committee for further consideration (see 3.6)**
 - **City Hall – Additional toilet provision, Changing Places Facility and Family Room - OBC to be worked up and brought back to Committee for further consideration (see 3.7)**
- **Agree that the following project is added to the Capital Programme as Stage 1 – Emerging Project - Berlin Wall Installation - SOC to be worked up and brought back to Committee for further consideration (see 3.8)**

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

- 3.1 The Council’s rolling Capital Programme is a significant programme with over £185m of projects recently completed or currently underway. Members are asked to note the updates under the Capital Programme since the last update report in June.**

Projects recently completed/in final stages of completion

- the new £21.7m leisure facility at Olympia which opened in January 2017

Projects currently on the ground

- Phase 2 of the £40million Connswater Community Greenway
- the £3.7million upgrade of the Tropical Ravine – it is anticipated that works will be completed early in 2017
- 2nd phase of the works at Olympia which will include the demolition of the existing centre which is well underway and the creation of the new Boulevard and playground and works to the pitches
- City Hall Works to create the new dedicated exhibition and visitor space which is due to open to the public in May

Projects at tender preparation stage

- Preparatory work is continuing on a wide range of projects including the remaining sites under the pitches strategy (Cherryvale and Falls), alleygating phase 4 with the installation of the gates due to commence in the summer, works at Skegoneil and Falls Park, Cathedral Gardens and the HLF bid for City Cemetery

Proposed movements on/additions to the Capital Programme

- 3.2 Members have previously agreed that all capital projects must go through a 3 Stage process where decisions on which projects progress are taken by SP&R. Members are asked to agree to the following movements on the Capital Programme.

Move to Stage 3 – Committed

Project	Overview	Cost
City Cemetery – Permanent Memorial to mark Plot Z1	Memorial to permanently mark Plot Z1 in the City Cemetery. This project has emerged out of the Falls Park Masterplan and has been requested to be added via the Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Working Group	Maximum of £50,000

- 3.3 City Cemetery – Permanent Memorial to mark Plot Z1 – Members will recall that there has been a request for a permanent memorial to mark plot Z1 in the City Cemetery

and the many babies that are buried within it. Members will appreciate that this is a sensitive and emotive issue and it should be noted that while there are no headstones or memorials in the plot there is a record of every baby buried. A public consultation has been undertaken which found overwhelming support for the installation of a permanent memorial. The Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development Working Group have requested that this project is progressed as quickly as possible given the age of the women whose babies are buried in the plot and that this is delivered in the short term. It was agreed in August 16 that this project was moved to Stage 2 – Uncommitted on the programme. An OBC for this project has now been worked up and it is recommended that that this project is now moved to Stage 3 – Committed on the Capital Programme with a maximum budget of £50,000. The Director of Finance & Resources has confirmed that these projects are within the affordability limits of the Council

- 3.4 In addition Members are asked to agree that the necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate ‘framework’ arrangements) be initiated with contracts to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver for the above projects as required.

Move to Stage 2 – Uncommitted

- 3.5 Members will be aware that works are currently underway on the development of the new Exhibition Area in the City Hall which is due to open on the ground floor in May 2017. This will represent a significant enhancement of the building’s tourism offer and is projected to attract more than 70,000 visitors annually. Members are asked to note that there are two City Hall projects which are recommended to be moved to Stage 2- Uncommitted on the Capital Programme which, in addition to the works above, will help to provide a seamless experience for visitors both inside and outside the City Hall therefore adding to the overall experience of the city’s key civic building and focal point. Members will however appreciate the limitations of the City Hall as a listed building and the need to ensure that any new facilities/upgrades are sympathetic to the building’s overall usage and design and this is being considered as part of the Stage Approval process.

Project	Project overview	Proposed Stage
City Hall	Provision of a Changing Places facility, Family Room and additional toilet provision	Stage 2- Uncommitted
City Hall	Upgrade and Improvements - West Wing Outdoor Space including the Cenotaph	Stage 2- Uncommitted

City Hall projects

- 3.6 Outdoor Space including the Cenotaph — Upgrades and improvements - Members will be aware that in 2012 the outdoor space at the East Entrance of the City Hall was significantly enhanced and upgraded. Coupled with the ongoing internal works this leaves the space outside the West Wing (which includes the Cenotaph) and the surrounding area to be upgraded. The area currently suffers from poor drainage, a number of the paving stones are no longer in good repair and a number of health and safety improvements are required. It is envisaged that the improvements will include drainage works, the installation of a new gate, paving and services (electrical), the provision of permanent ramps and softening the overall area with planting. The area will also be a key focal point for the end of World War 1 commemorations in 2018. Members are asked to agree that this project is now moved to Stage 2-Uncommitted on the Capital Programme to allow the full detail, design and costings to be worked up. It is also recommended that these are brought to the Diversity Working Group as it is appreciated this group is discussing many aspects of content in the grounds of City Hall.**
- 3.7 Additional Public Toilet provision including Changing Places and Family Room**

Members are already aware that the public toilets in the City Hall are under considerable pressure and at busy times can become extremely congested. There are no purpose built facilities for people with disabilities and the Council has frequently been requested to look at the potential of providing a Changing Places facility within the City Hall. In addition requests have also come forward in relation to the creation of a family room reflecting the Council's commitment to the Public Health Agency's Breastfeeding Welcome Here scheme and baby changing facilities accessible for males and females. Members are asked to agree that this project is now moved to Stage 2-Uncommitted on the Capital Programme to allow the full detail, design and costings to be worked up. It is also recommended that these are brought to the Women's Steering Group for further discussion.

Add to Capital Programme as Stage 1 – Emerging Project

3.8 Berlin Wall – Installation – the Council has been gifted a section of Berlin wall by the Senatskanzlei Berlin. The piece measures 3.6 metres high by 2.1 metres wide and weighs 3 tonnes approximately. The installation of the section forms part of the Tourism Action plan which has been agreed by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. It is recommended that this project is added to the Capital Programme with the options for the installation and interpretation worked up as part of the SOC with further detail to be brought back to the Committee in due course for consideration. At this stage there is no commitment to invest.

3.9 Financial & Resource Implications

***Financial* –The Director of Finance and Resources has confirmed that the City Cemetery project which is recommended to move to Stage 3 (see 3.3) is within the affordability limits**

Costs for the other projects will be worked up as part of the Stage Approval process and brought back to Committee for further discussion before any decision to invest.

***Resources* – Resources from Property & Projects and appropriate departments in working up proposals in conjunction with groups.**

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications

All capital projects are screened as part of the stage approval process.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Area Working Update

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

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To update Members on a number of area related issues for Members’ consideration.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

AWG minutes

- Approve and adopt the most recent round of Area Working Group (AWG) Minutes (*South – 23rd January; West – 26th January; North – 26th January; and East – 2nd February*) as attached at Appendix 1.

Local Investment Fund

- agree the recommended proposals as set out in 3.2 below from the South, North and East AWG in relation to the Local Investment Fund 1 and 2.
- note the LIF project (Section 3.3) which was previously been approved in principle which has been scored and has met the minimum threshold. Members are asked to agree that this is progressed to due-diligence.

3.0 Main report

KEY ISSUES

AREA WORKING GROUP UPDATES

- 3.1 Members agreed in June 2016 that the Area Working Group minutes would be taken into the SP&R Committee for approval going forward in line with the Council's commitment to openness and transparency and to ensure a consistent approach with other Member-led Working Groups. Members are asked to approve the most recent round of AWG Minutes (*South – 23rd January; West – 26th January; North – 26th January; and East – 2nd February*).

LOCAL INVESTMENT FUND UPDATE

- 3.2 SOUTH AWG – Members have been previously advised that the South AWG at its special meeting on the 25th May in relation to the discussion on Alleygating Phase 4 had proposed that *'once South Belfast's allocation of £140,000 under Phase IV had been reached, the remaining cost be met from the Local Investment Fund, subject to officers confirming that the installation of alley gates complied with the requirements of that Fund'*. Officers subsequently advised the South AWG that alleygates are Council assets. As such they could not be funded under LIF and could only be taken forward under the Capital Programme and that the South AWG could consider de-committing the amount required to fund the additional gates from their LIF monies and that the gates could then be taken forward under the Capital Programme (funded by the decommitted LIF monies). This was proposed by the South AWG and agreed by Committee in August 2016.

The South AWG was presented with an update on Alleygates Phase 4 at its meeting on 23 January and agreed to de-commit its remaining LIF1 and LIF2 budget (£47,900 in total) to fund the additional alleygates.

EAST AWG – The East AWG at its meeting on 2 February agreed to allocate an additional £20,000 towards Towell House (ELIF2-03), giving it a total allocation of £95,000.

Ref No	Project	£ Amount	Recommendation from AWG
ELIF2-03	Towell House	Additional	Underspend to be transferred from ELIF008 – Walkway Community Association

NORTH AWG – The North AWG, at its meeting on 26th January, made the following recommendations for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their LIF

Ref No	Project	£ Amount	Recommendation from AWG
NLIF2-08	Seaview Primary School	£40,000	To be withdrawn from the LIF programme with the monies to be re-allocated in the North AWG
NLIF2-18	Holy Family Parish Church*	£15,000	In principle funding
NLIF2-19	Women's Tec*	£31,667	In principle funding
NLIF073/ NLIF2-20	Jennymount Church	£40,000	Additional allocation to NLIF073 which had previously received £24k Re-allocation from NLIF2-08 - Seaview

*Members are asked to note that this proposal is subject to going through the LIF process with the project being assessed against the prioritisation matrix – the results of this assessment will be reported back to a future AWG and Committee. All projects will be subject to the full due-diligence process agreed for LIF projects

Projects recommended to proceed to due-diligence

3.3 Members are asked to note that 1 LIF2 project which had previously been agreed for in principle funding (*WLIF2- MMA Regional Centre of Excellence (Whiterock)*) has now been scored by officers (see Appendix 2) and has successfully met the minimum threshold. It is recommended that these projects now proceed to the Due Diligence stage of the LIF process **BELFAST INVESTMENT FUND**

3.4 **EAST AWG** – In January 2016, as part of the rates setting process, it was agreed that £5m would be ringfenced to support BIF projects in the areas of Lisburn and Castlereagh which transferred across under LGR with the monies to be shared equally as these areas had not had an opportunity to have any BIF projects considered. £2m of this allocation was ringfenced to projects in the Outer East and a number of projects have been put forward for consideration by the AWG. The East AWG has therefore agreed to commission an options appraisal which will help enable the relative prioritisation of the emerging projects and fully test their feasibility.

3.5 ALLEYGATES PHASE 4

All AWGs received an update on the progress of phase 4 of the Alleygates programme which included notice of technical and legal issues associated with prioritised gates. Members agreed a way forward on a list of reserve gates and agreed to continued engagement with the Safer City Manager. A report detailing the final list of gates will be brought to a future meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

3.6 Financial & Resource Implications

- Financial – LIF1 - £5million and LIF2 - £4million
- Resource - Officers time to deliver projects.

3.7 Equality or Good Relations Implications

No implications.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Assets Report

Belfast Bike Scheme

The Committee granted approval for the Council to enter into the appropriate land access, licenses or similar legal arrangements in respect of the bike docking

stations previously agreed by the Council and any future docking stations, subjects to any reports, as required, being brought to the Committee in respect of the funding arrangements.

River Terrace – Surrender of Licence

The Committee approved a decision by the People and Communities Committee, at its meeting on 13th September, 2016, to surrender a plot of land at River Terrace to the Department of Communities (DFC) by way of a 3 month written notice.

Belfast Wi-Fi Update

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an overview of Phase 1 of the Belfast Wi-Fi project (Public Buildings) and an update on the implementation of Phase 2 (City Centre Wi-Fi).

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Contracts for Award

The Committee:

- (i) approved the public advertisement and acceptance of tenders as listed in Appendix 1, table 1 below, through the Council's electronic procurement system; and
- (ii) granted delegated authority to the appropriate Director, using pre-agreed criteria, to accept the most economically advantageous tender, and allow extensions were contracts were under review as per table 2.

Appendix 1 - Schedule of tenders for consideration

Table 1 – New tenders

Title of tender	Senior Responsible Officer	Proposed contract duration
Tender for provision of portorage/storage services	G Millar	3 years plus option to renew for a further 2 years
Tender for development for Phase 1 of a public realm design scheme	Nuala Gallagher	12 – 14 months from appointment to submission of planning application
Tender for development of a work programme to assess the viability of a new visitor attraction for Belfast	Nuala Gallagher	18-24 months

Table 2 – Contracts for extension of contract period

Title of tender	Director Responsible	Proposed extension
Reception, treatment and recycling of mechanical street sweepings	Nigel Grimshaw	Month by month until new contract is in place

Belfast City Council discretionary policies under the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) Regulations and other related Regulations

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To seek approval for amendments to the Council’s Discretionary Pension Policies as required the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.

1.2 This report makes recommendations for Belfast City Council policies on discretions to be exercised:

- under the LGPS Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 from 1 April 2015 in respect of members of the Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme,
- under earlier LGPS Regulations (Northern Ireland) in respect of members of the LGPS who left prior to 1 April 2015, and
- under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 and earlier compensation regulations.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- to approve the policies on the discretions to be exercised under the LGPS Regulations in relation to those employees who are active scheme members after 31 March 2015 and members who cease active membership after 31 March 2015, as set out in the table and
- to approve the policies on the discretions to be exercised under the LGPS Regulations in relation to those scheme members who left prior to 1 April 2015 and

- to approve the policies on the discretions to be exercised under the Discretionary Compensation Regulations.

3.0 Main report

- 3.1** On 16 November 2007 the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed the discretionary policies Belfast City Council would operate under the provisions of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.
- 3.2** On the 19 June 2015 the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed the discretionary policies Belfast City Council would operate in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations applicable at that time.
- 3.3** In March 2011, the Independent Public Service Pensions Commission, chaired by Lord Hutton, published its final report of the review of public service pensions. The report made clear that change was needed to 'make public service pension schemes simpler and more transparent, fairer to those on low and moderate earnings'.
- 3.4** As a result, it was decided that the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in Northern Ireland should be reformed so that, from 1 April 2015, benefits accrue on a Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) basis rather than on a final salary basis.
- 3.5** The provisions of the CARE scheme, together with the protections for members' accrued pre 1 April 2015 final salary pension rights, are contained in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.
- 3.6** As a result of the changes, Belfast City Council is required to formulate, publish and send to the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee by no later than 31 July 2015 a written Statement of Policy on certain discretions under the LGPS which Belfast City Council has the power to exercise on and from 1 April 2015 in relation to members of the CARE scheme.
- 3.7** Belfast City Council is also required to (or where there is no requirement, is recommended to) formulate, publish and

keep under review a Statement of Policy on certain other discretions it may exercise:

- i. under earlier LGPS Regulations in relation to members of the LGPS who left prior to 1 April 2015, and
- ii. under the Discretionary Compensation Regulations 2003 and 2007 in relation to employees who are, or are eligible to be, members of the LGPS.

3.8 Any amended policy under paragraph 3.7(i) above must be published and sent to the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee within one month of the date the revisions to the policy were made.

3.9 Any amended policy under the paragraph 3.7(ii) above must be published and, in the case of a change to the policy under the Discretionary Compensation Regulations 2003, it must be published within one month of the decision to amend the policy.

3.10 Overall, Belfast City Council is:

- required to formulate, publish and keep under review a written Statement of Policy on certain discretions in accordance with:
- regulation 66 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014,
- paragraph 2(2) of Schedule 3 to the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014,
- regulation 62 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (in respect of leavers between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2015), and
- regulation 108 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2002 (in respect of leavers between 1 February 2003 and 31 March 2009)

3.11

- i. recommended to formulate, publish and keep under review a written Statement of Policy on one discretion under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 (in respect of leavers before 1 February 2003);
- ii. required to formulate, publish and keep under review a written Statement of Policy on certain discretions in accordance with regulation 6 of the

Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007, effective from 1 October 2006; and

- iii. required to formulate, publish and keep under review a written Statement of Policy on certain discretions in accordance with regulation 25 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003, operative from 24 March 2003 for terminations of employment on redundancy or efficiency grounds that occurred prior to 1 April 2007.

3.11 In formulating and reviewing its policies under the LGPS Regulations referred to in paragraphs 3.10 (i) and (ii) above Belfast City Council is required to consider whether and to what extent the policy might lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service.

3.12 In formulating and reviewing its policies under the Discretionary Compensation Regulations referred to in paragraphs 3.10 (iii) and (iv) above Belfast City Council:

- a. is required to have regard to the extent to which the exercise of its discretionary powers (in accordance with the policy), unless properly limited, could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service, and
- b. must be satisfied that the policy is workable, affordable and reasonable having regard to the foreseeable costs.

Consultation

3.13 Belfast City Council is not required to consult with the recognised trade unions when it intends to adopt new, or change existing, discretionary policies. However, it was considered appropriate to give advance notification to the recognised trade unions that this report would be considered by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Effective Date of Policies

3.14 The policies on discretions to be exercised under the LGPS Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 take immediate effect from the date Belfast City Council agrees the policies, or from 1 April 2015 (if later). Any change to the policies on existing discretions to be exercised under the LGPS Regulations in respect of pre 1 April 2015 leavers take immediate effect from the date Belfast City Council agrees the policies.

- 3.15 Any change to the discretions exercised under the Discretionary Compensation Regulations 2003 or the Discretionary Compensation Regulations 2007 cannot take effect until one month after the date Belfast City Council publishes a statement of its amended policy.

Non-fettering of Discretions

- 3.16 The recommendations contained within this report, if approved, will form Belfast City Council policies on pension and compensation discretions. It should be noted that:

- the policies will confer no contractual rights
- subject to paragraphs 3.14 and 3.15 Belfast City Council will retain the right to change the policies at any time without prior notice or consultation and
- only the policy which is current at the time a relevant event occurs to an employee / scheme member will be the one applied to that employee / member.

3.17 **Financial & Resource Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

3.18 **Equality or Good Relations Implications**

There are no equality or good relations implications associated with this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Equality and Good Relations

**Minutes of Meeting of the
Shared City Partnership**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership of 13th February and specifically the recommendations as follows:

Good Relations Action Plan 2017/18

The decision of the Partnership to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it approves the Good Relations Action Plan 2017/2017 for submission to the Executive Office (TEO). The Partnership also noted that the Action Plan submission would be subject to alteration and amendment during the assessing and scoring process which would be undertaken by TEO and that the Partnership would be notified of any changes in the final approved Action Plan at a later date.

Good Relations Grants 2017/18

The Partnership's recommendation to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to approve the use of delegated authority for grants administered by the Good Relations Unit and also to issue Letters of Officer to successful applicants at risk if necessary.

Update on the Mural Transformation Programme

The decision to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that funding of up to £5,000 be awarded to the following groups:

- St. Patricks F.C. to erect a mural at 43 Newlodge Road on a wall which was currently used for anti-community and negative political graffiti; and
- North Belfast Alternatives to support a reimagining project in the Ballysillan Road area that aim to address issues of demarcation in the local community.

Update on the Bonfire Programme

The decision of the Partnership to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that the options as outlined in the report be approved for 2017 programme.

The Partnership recommended also that the 3 suggested additions be included as follows:

1. *The review panel should be comprised of Members of the Shared City Partnership and include representation from the Independent Members and Elected Members. It was suggested that the review panel membership would be the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and an independent member of the Shared City Partnership.*
2. *A process would be created to recognise best practice in cultural programmes and events amongst participating groups; and*
3. *A complimentary process would be developed for hard to reach groups that were not currently in a position to sign up to the aims of the programme. This approach would operate through an expression of interest and would provide an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills particularly among young people.*

The Committee agreed that the three suggested additions agreed at the Partnership be amended as follows:

1. The review panel should include also an independent assessor, the role of which would be considered in the first instance by the Partnership and subsequently the Committee, and that the review panel would be able to receive additional information from the key statutory agencies;
2. No change to part two;
3. That the expression of interest approach be removed from the complimentary process to be developed for hard to reach groups that were not currently in a position to sign up to the aims of the programme; and, in addition to that complementary process, that cultural development

engagement be undertaken with the community and youth groups in areas where there is a Bonfire which is not in the scheme.

Review and purpose of the Diversity Working Group

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 For Members to agree the future and purpose of the Diversity Working Group.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Consider the background to the Working Group, as set out in this report, consider the options regarding its future and purpose, and decide on which option meets the current needs of the Council.**

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 Members will know that at an earlier meeting of the Diversity Working Group, some Members sought some clarification on the role of the group and its current purpose. Officers undertook to report back on this issue with options for the future and purpose of the Working Group.

3.2 Members will be aware that in 2011 the Historic Centenaries Working Group (HCWG) was established to support Members in considering how to navigate our way through the impending Decade of Centenaries that was about to begin. The Membership consisted of the Elected Members on the Good Relations Partnership (GRP) as well as an additional party nominee. The purpose of the group was to provide a space to discuss potentially sensitive and divisive issues in relation to the Decade of Centenaries, within a small group setting. It was to be separate to the GRP so as to be for elected Members only. The GRP has 16 external members and it was felt that space was needed for the political parties to have their own space to explore the issues that were coming down the line in relation to the Decade of Centenaries.

- 3.3 Throughout 2011, the HCWG considered numerous items in relation to the Decade of Centenaries, agreed a series of Principles under which the Decade would operate and also agreed on an outline chronology of events to be commemorated.
- 3.4 The group reported into the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and any resource allocation for events and activities was agreed at the SP+R stage.
- 3.5 In January 2012, it was agreed that the Party Group Leaders would meet with the HCWG over a defined period of time to undertake a wider exploration on the development of a more comprehensive Council Diversity Strategy. This Group was called the Joint Diversity Working Group. At that stage, the purpose of this was to undertake an intensive series of workshops to generate maximum consensus on a range of sensitive impending issues such as:
- The Queens Diamond Jubilee celebrations
 - The Equality Impact Assessment on the flying of the Union Flag over City Hall
 - The Equality Impact Assessment on memorabilia and displays within City Hall
 - Further work around the Decade of Centenaries
 - The marking of Operation Banner
 - Language issues
- 3.6 This group again reported up to SP&R and considered much of what has now been agreed in relation to the Decade of Centenaries programme and the City Hall Memorabilia project, both of which are now under way.
- 3.7 During most of 2014, the group did not meet, due to many factors including elections, Local Government Reform and changes in personnel. However in late 2014, throughout 2015 and this year there have been regular meetings of what is now simply referred to as the Diversity Working Group.
- 3.8 In this latter period, the Working Group has continued to support officers on the Decade of Centenaries programme along with other commemoration type events. However, the Working Group has also become the focal point for a variety of additional requests for commemorative activity including stained glass windows and other commemorations such as the Blitz, statues and other matters.
- 3.9 Members have expressed a desire that there needs to be a refocus on the decade of centenaries and highly sensitive

issues facing the Council and the City with adequate time allowed for discussion. They also expressed the view that the representation on the current DWG does not necessarily allow this to happen effectively.

Options for the future of the Working Group

- 3.10 Option 1: Continue with the Diversity Working Group in its current format, as a way of providing a space into which Members can raise issues to do with commemorations, historic issues and other related topics.

Option 2: That the resource intensive and highly sensitive areas facing Council and the City be discussed in the Party Leaders' Group and then taken to SP&R for a decision.

Option 3: That the Diversity Working Group is brought to a conclusion and a historic Belfast working group is established to prioritise historic events and related issues. This would mean it would move away from a Good Relations focus. Good Relations would be discussed by Party Leaders and SP&R.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.11 There are no financial or resource implications as a result of the contents within this report, however a space for Members to locate requests for additional commemorative activity will need to be clarified. This should be factored into the wider review of commemorations that will be developed in the near future.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

- 3.12 The purpose of this report is to deem whether it is necessary to continue with the Diversity Working Group and as such is a structural issue. There are no Equality or Good Relations implications as a result of this report. If anything it is a sign of strength that dealing with difficult issues can be achieved within existing Council structures."

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson,

That the Committee agrees to adopt option three.

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

Accordingly the Committee agreed to adopt option two.

Northern Ireland Equality and Diversity Gala and Awards 2017

The Committee was advised that the inaugural Legal-Island Northern Ireland Equality and Diversity Gala and Awards were due to be held in the City Hall on Friday, 31st March, 2017. The Council had submitted an application for the ethnicity award, which would be presented to the outstanding organisations which were pioneering new standards of equality and diversity practices and driving the diversity agenda in Northern Ireland. This year the focus of the award competition would be on ethnicity, nationality and race. The three award categories were the private sector (SMEs and large employers); charity/not-for-profit; and the public sector.

The Council had been short-listed for the public sector award, following the successful submission of the application form.

The Committee agreed to the purchase of a table at the Northern Ireland Equality and Diversity Gala and Awards 2017 and approved the attendance of:

- Councillor John Hussey, Chairperson of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
- Councillor Matt Garrett, Chairperson of People and Communities Committee (Community Services and Community Safety)
- Councillor Aileen Graham, Chairperson of City Growth Committee (Tourism, Culture and Arts)
- Councillor John Kyle, Chairperson of Shared City Partnership (Good Relations) or their nominees.
- A representative from each of the SDLP, Alliance Party and UUP; and
- Three Council Officers.

Operational Issues

Volunteering Policy

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present for Members approval the attached Corporate Volunteer Policy (Appendix 1) which, alongside our previously agreed Volunteer Charter, strengthens our recognition of volunteers and volunteering within Council and sets out the strategic direction with regard to volunteering for the organisation.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Formally adopt the Corporate Volunteer Policy attached at Appendix 1.
- Note the approach and time-frame for the development of corporate procedures to support corporate implementation of the policy

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 The Council currently offers volunteering opportunities across a range of services, the majority of which are now located in the City and Neighbourhood Services Department. Involving volunteers brings many benefits to both the individual involved and to Council. The Volunteering Strategy for Northern Ireland describes volunteering as ‘the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment or individuals outside (or in addition to) one’s immediate family. It is undertaken freely and by choice, without concern or financial gain.’

3.2 Community Services currently has a Volunteering Framework that outlines its intentions towards its own directly recruited and managed volunteers. Given the involvement of volunteers by other services and sections, and as part of the process to embed the principles in the Volunteering Charter, a cross-departmental working group has drafted the Volunteering Policy which sets out Council’s commitment to volunteering for the organisation. The policy will be supported and implemented by the development of robust procedures which will be developed as part of a cross service task and finish group action plan. To ensure best practice, this work will be supported by Volunteer Now.

Volunteer Charter

3.3 Following the agreement by Members to the Volunteer Charter a cross-departmental task and finish group (lead by Community Services in partnership with Volunteer Now) was established to develop an implementation plan in order to embed the Charter principles in the practice of those services involving volunteers.

- 3.4 In September 2015, the group undertook a scoping exercise to identify the extent of volunteer involvement across Council departments and the type of volunteer roles being provided. The recommendation from this exercise highlighted the need for Council to develop a Council policy on Volunteering which will give strategic direction and enable consistency in our approach to managing and recruiting volunteers.
- 3.5 It was agreed by the officer working group that the current Community Services Volunteering Procedures and Practice manual should form a base-line from which to develop the corporate policy. An initial review of this framework has been completed, and alongside a robust Health check by Volunteer Now, this has informed the development.

The draft policy covers:

- Vision and Values for volunteering within council
 - Volunteer Roles
 - Recruitment and Selection of volunteers
 - Management of Volunteers
 - Record-Keeping
 - Insurance
 - Expenses, and
 - Training
- 3.7 Following approval, an implementation plan will be rolled out by the task and finish group on the development of appropriate and robust corporate procedures.
- 3.8 It is intended that the staff guide on volunteering recently developed by Community Services will be used as a basis for the development of procedures as part of the policy implementation plan.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.9 Any financial resources associated with the policy development will be met within service budgets.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

- 3.10 There are no equality or Good Relations implications.”

Appendix 1

Belfast City Council Volunteer Policy 2016

Volunteering underpins the life of the city of Belfast in youth work, sports clubs, faith based groups, events, older people's work, community and environmental groups and much more. There is a long tradition of Belfast City Council supporting volunteering and involving its citizens in the work of the Council as volunteers. Volunteering in Belfast is about people choosing to give time to others and their communities so making the city a better place to live. This policy recognises and supports volunteering and works to enhance the positive contribution it has in reducing inequality and strengthening bonds between people across the City.

In producing this policy Belfast City Council seeks to create an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering within the Council in order to improve the quality of volunteering.

While the Council plays a key role in building community capacity and providing civic leadership this policy is about volunteers involved directly by Belfast City Council. Further work is planned to enhance the Council's role as an enabler of volunteering in partnership with other organisations.

Volunteering is defined as 'the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment, or individuals outside (or in addition to) one's immediate family. It is unpaid and undertaken freely and by choice'.¹

This policy development is an opportunity for Belfast City Council to reaffirm our vision for volunteer support, improve our practice and work in partnership with colleagues to extend this approach across the Council. It also outlines the principles on which the relationship between a volunteer and Belfast City Council is based.

"1.0 Introduction

1.1 The volunteering relationship is based on trust and involves no obligations associated with employment. No payment, other than the reimbursement of agreed out-of-pocket expenses is made.

1.2 Belfast City Council involves volunteers in its work. Volunteers add value to the work of paid staff and play an

¹ 'Join In, Get Involved: Build a Better Future. The Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan for Northern Ireland', Department for Social Development, March 2012

important role in delivery of the Belfast Agenda. Volunteering should be a mutually beneficial experience with the organisation, volunteers and service users all benefiting.

- 1.3 Individuals will be volunteering in an organisation that is committed to equal opportunities and diversity. This commitment is reflected throughout the organisation's policies and practices.
- 1.4 This policy and associated procedures are designed to embed good volunteering practice and contribute to its consistent application across the Council.
- 1.5 By providing a positive, high quality volunteering experience, Belfast City Council will be better placed to attract, involve and retain volunteers.
- 1.6 Volunteers involved with Belfast City Council have a direct impact on the life of the city as well as supporting the delivery of the Belfast Agenda through:
 - Delivery of programmes for children and young people;
 - Delivery of older people's services;
 - Community based activity;
 - The arts;
 - Sport and Leisure activities;
 - Parks and the environment ;
 - Events

2.0 Vision and Values

- 2.1 As already noted, Volunteering is defined as 'the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment, or individuals outside (or in addition to) one's immediate family. It is unpaid and undertaken freely and by choice'.²
- 2.2 Belfast City Council values volunteer involvement in its work as an expression of active citizenship. We recognise the integral role volunteering plays in delivery of the Belfast Agenda through supporting Living Here, Working and Learning, City Development and to a lesser extent Business Development.
- 2.3 We support and encourage volunteering that builds connected, cohesive, competitive and confident communities.

² 'Join In, Get Involved: Build a Better Future. The Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan for Northern Ireland', Department for Social Development, March 2012

- 2.4 **Belfast City Council values the involvement of volunteers in our work as they help reflect the interests, needs and resources of the communities we serve. Volunteers bring a unique perspective; they are part of our team, with a distinctive but complementary role alongside paid staff. Involving volunteers enables us to enhance the benefits we can offer to citizens.**
- 2.5 **We value volunteering across the community and recognise the important contribution volunteers make to all aspects of community life as well as the many vital services which they deliver. As a funder of community and voluntary sector organisations we seek to encourage a local environment which supports volunteering to grow.**
- 2.6 **Volunteering is a mutually beneficial experience. Belfast City Council benefits from the skills, experience and enthusiasm of volunteers. In turn we believe that volunteers should gain personal benefits, such as improved health and wellbeing and skills development from their volunteering experience. We are committed to managing volunteers in a way that ensures the needs of both parties are met.**
- 2.7 **Belfast City Council strives to be a diverse and inclusive organisation operating within a diverse and inclusive city. As part of this we are committed to ensuring equality of access to high quality volunteer opportunities and equality of treatment for our volunteers in all our policies and practices.**
- 3.0 **Volunteer Roles**
- 3.1 **Belfast City Council offers a range of roles for volunteers that bring added value to our work. Volunteers are involved at appropriate levels in roles which complement, but never substitute, the work of paid Council staff.**
- 3.2 **The role or task of the volunteer is identified prior to the placement of an individual at a given location. All volunteers are provided with a written role description, outlining the purpose, tasks and main expectations of their role. This role is reviewed with their immediate supervisor at least once a year.**
- 3.3 **Volunteers will not be asked to fulfil the roles of paid staff in times of industrial action. They may continue with their regular tasks but will not be asked to undertake additional duties.**

4.0 Recruitment and Selection of Volunteers

4.1 Belfast City Council is committed to making volunteering an inclusive process in which people from diverse backgrounds and with diverse skills can participate. We wish to see all sections of the community represented amongst our volunteers. Volunteering opportunities are widely promoted, and we will endeavour to make recruitment and selection materials available in formats accessible to any individual or group, upon request. We aim to review the make-up of our volunteers on a yearly basis to identify and target any under-represented groups.

4.2 Belfast City Council implements a fair, effective and open system in the recruitment and selection of volunteers and treats all information collected in this process confidentially. The acceptance of a volunteer is made on merit, the sole selection criterion being the individual's suitability to carry out agreed tasks.

4.3 All potential volunteers must complete the appropriate recruitment and selection process for the role they are applying for. Due to the range of roles available within Council this will vary but may include a registration form, a matching meeting, a reference check and a criminal records check in line with Access NI Guidelines.

4.4 The recruitment and selection process is conducted by an appropriately briefed/trained staff member and aims to ensure both parties give and receive sufficient information to assess whether the volunteering opportunities available match the potential volunteer's interests, skills, qualities and needs.

5.0 Management of Volunteers

5.1 All volunteers will be managed in line with Belfast City Council's volunteer management procedures. Belfast City Council aims to reflect the voluntary nature of its relationship with volunteers in all our policies and procedures for managing their involvement. This will involve the following:

- A written letter of welcome which outlines the expectations and responsibilities of both the volunteer and Belfast City Council.
- An induction which will begin prior to commencing their voluntary work and continue as required during the settling in period. For one off and short term volunteer role opportunities induction should take

place prior to the volunteer beginning the actual volunteer role.

- All relevant health & safety training will be provided before a volunteer begins their role.
- Appropriate written information on relevant legislation, organisational policies and codes of behaviour. Volunteers will need to provide written confirmation of receipt of this information.
- All volunteers are allocated a named member of staff as their supervisor with an alternative identified should the designated supervisor be unavailable. This person will provide day to day guidance on any issue related to the voluntary work.
- For longer term roles, there will be a settling in/taster period, the length of which will depend on the nature and hours of the voluntary work. Volunteers are given additional support during this period ending in a review meeting between the volunteer and his/her supervisor to ensure both parties are satisfied with the arrangements.
- Regular support to and supervision of the volunteer. The frequency, duration and format of this support and supervision are agreed between the volunteer and his/her supervisor at the end of the settling in/taster period.
- The volunteer's designated supervisor will deal with minor complaints or issues about or by volunteers or their work through the council's volunteer management support and supervision procedures in the first instance.
- However we recognise our duty to protect the well-being and interests of our volunteers, staff and service users and therefore operate a formal complaints procedure in the case of more serious complaints. In the case of particularly serious offences, as specified in the Code of Conduct, for example inappropriate physical restraint, this process may be bypassed and/or the subject of the complaint asked to leave. Where a criminal offence is suspected the matter will be handed over to the police.
- Belfast City Council will gather feedback and opinions from volunteers in appropriate ways and on a regular basis.
- Provision of adequate and appropriate facilities, equipment and resources to enable volunteers to fulfil their roles.

Record Keeping

- 5.2 In order to effectively monitor the work carried out by volunteers and how they are managed, a personal file is maintained for all volunteers. This will include contact details and other relevant personal information, the initial application forms, details of the recruitment and selection process, agreements made, hours worked, records of supervision, training undertaken and complaints or grievances received or made. Some of this information and other relevant information may also be recorded in computerised records. All such information is treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and volunteers are entitled to inspect all such information pertaining to them. Some information in relation to volunteering may be subject to Freedom of Information.

Insurance

- 5.3 Belfast City Council will ensure that appropriate insurance is in place to cover the activities of volunteers whilst carrying out their voluntary role as agreed with their volunteer supervisor and recorded in the written role description. Drivers should, however, check with their own insurance company to ensure they are adequately covered whilst using their cars in connection with their voluntary work
- 5.4 Belfast City Council reimburses volunteers' agreed out of pocket expenses following the Council's procedure for volunteer expenses. This will require claims to be submitted on a standard Expenses Claim Form and accompanied by proof of expenditure. Full details of rates and methods for claiming will be given at induction.
- 5.6 Belfast City Council staff required to recruit, select and manage volunteers will be provided with the necessary training.

6.0 Training

- 6.1 Belfast City Council is committed to encouraging volunteers to improve their personal and professional effectiveness in order to fulfil their potential.
- 6.2 In addition to induction training, volunteers and their supervisors will agree appropriate training that is relevant to their voluntary role. All requests will be subject to available funding.

7.0 Monitoring & Review of the Policy

- 7.1 This policy is regularly monitored and reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it reflects the nature of volunteering within Belfast City Council and any legislative requirements.”**

The committee adopted the recommendations.

IT Equipment Package

The Committee considered the following report on a revised IT Equipment package for members and adopted the recommendations:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 This report revisits the IT Equipment package currently on offer to Members in the context of the Council’s recent acquisition of Office 365.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to agree to the following:**

Recommendation 1: To provide a HP Elite x2 (or equivalent) as the hybrid device of choice for members.

Recommendation 2: To standardise the models of smartphones supported. Members will be provided with the option of choosing an iPhone 7 (128 Gb) or a Samsung Galaxy S7 in April 2017.

Recommendation 3: Removal of a separate camera from the IT equipment package as it is included with the Smartphone provided.

Recommendation 4: Removal of an external hard drive from the IT Equipment package as Office 365 will provide 1Tb of personal storage when OneDrive for Business is implemented.

Recommendation 5: To provide a wireless printer for home use.

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 15 April 2011, agreed to the standardisation of the IT equipment provided to Members. At the time, this**

delivered an annual efficiency of £13,000 and for a period resulted in a decrease in the resources required to support the varied IT estate.

3.2 The current IT equipment package for members includes:

- Desktop PC & Monitor or Laptop, Monitor, Docking station, Laptop case & lock;
- All-in-one printer, scanner and fax machine;
- 500GB External hard drive;
- Blackberry;
- Digital Camera (for those Members who do not require a Blackberry);
- Members were also supplied with iPads in October 2012

3.3 However, since 2011 the range of IT equipment supplied to Members has become increasingly more diverse as we aim to ensure Members can access information flexibly and from any location.

3.4 To ensure the Council continues to remain at the forefront of advances in technology, Digital Services entered into a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement. This provides access to the rich features of Office 365 which have the potential to deliver a more social, mobile, accessible and information-driven work environment.

3.5 Use of the BCC Office 365 account will provide access to all of the productivity features and benefits of Office 365. Some of the benefits include:

- The ability to install Office on 5 devices and phones,
- Exchange Online including provision of a 50 GB mailbox per user, 500 times the current limit,
- Skype for Business to connect with other Skype for Business users via instant message (IM), voice calls, and video calls, and letting people know your availability with your online status.
- OneDrive for Business providing each user with 1 TB of personal cloud storage (4000 times the current limit for 'My Documents') that can be accessed from anywhere and syncs with a PC/Laptop for offline access.

3.6 Digital Services is recommending the provision of HP Elite x2s (or equivalent) as a powerful lightweight portable device that can be used as either a notebook or a tablet. This provides the required level of mobility alongside business

grade warranty and support and will replace the need for a separate laptop and iPad.

One of the biggest issues for Members in relation to the management of their iPads is the co-ordination of multiple accounts. This includes windows accounts, Apple ids, email credentials and logon to personal apps. Moving to the HP Elite x2 will simplify business access through a centralised Windows account.

Recommendation 1: To provide a HP Elite x2 (or equivalent) as the hybrid device of choice for members. Which will result in iPads no longer being required.

- 3.7 9 different makes and models of smartphones are currently supported. We are proposing to rationalise the number of supported smartphones and are recommending the provision of either an iPhone 7 (128 Gb) or a Samsung Galaxy S7 to cover smartphone requirements for the remainder of Members' term of office.

Smartphone replacement is bound by in year revenue budget constraints, this means that Members' smartphones will be replaced in April 2017 in line with revenue estimates.

Recommendation 2: To standardise the models of smartphones supported. Members will be provided with the option of choosing an iPhone 7 (128 Gb) or a Samsung Galaxy S7 in April 2017.

- 3.8 The quality of cameras that come with Smart Phones removes the requirement to provide a separate camera.

Recommendation 3: The provision of a separate camera should be removed from the IT equipment package, as it is included with the Smart phone provided.

- 3.9 The requirement for external storage devices has been removed as Office 365 comes with 1Tb of cloud-based personal storage.

Recommendation 4: An external hard drive should no longer be provided.

- 3.10 A wireless printer will be supplied for home use. Printing is also supported through the provision of printing facilities in all of the Party Rooms.

Recommendation 5: A wireless printer will be provided for home use

*Note: A wireless printer has already been supplied to the majority of members.

3.11 Financial & Resource Implications

The proposed option will save £565 per Member.

The replacement of smartphones is bound by in year revenue budget constraints; this means that Members' smartphones will be replaced in April 2017 in line with revenue estimates

3.12 Next Steps

The roll out of the new ICT Equipment Package, if agreed, will begin in March 2017. An installation schedule will be drawn up with officers from Democratic Services.

Several options for training will be available including:

- Familiarisation on handover of equipment
- Scheduled drop-in clinics
- 1-2-1 sessions

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications

None.”

Minutes of the Meeting of the Active Belfast Limited Board

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting of the Active Belfast Board of 16th January, 2017.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel of 10th February, 2017.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Elected Member Development Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting Elected Members Development Working Group of 7th February, 2017.

Request for the Use of the Council Chamber

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from the President of the Queens’s University Belfast Students’ Union (QUBSU) to hold a meeting of the Student Council in the Council Chamber, City Hall on Thursday, 6th April at 6.00pm.

The Students’ Union Council was the governing body of Queen’s Students’ Union. It met seven times per year and its membership consisted of 112 students (Councillors), elected from across the student population in Queen’s University. The Council debated and approved Students’ Union policies, approved changes to the Rules of the Union, received reports from Union committees and was responsible for the democratic accountability of elected student officers.

It was expected that approximately 55 Councillors would be in attendance at the meeting scheduled for 6th April. The meetings usually commenced at 6.00pm and lasted for a maximum of three hours. The duration of the meeting could be flexible to meet scheduling requirements. The meetings were open to Queen’s students to attend and speak. The media and members of the general public might only attend with the consent of the Students’ Union Council. The Students’ Union Marketing Team “live Tweet” the events.

If there were any members of Belfast City Council, or staff members of the Council who wished to attend and observe any of the meeting, the Students’ Union would gladly offer an invitation.

The Committee approved the request from the President of the Queen’s University Belfast Students’ Union to hold a meeting of the Students’ Council in the Council Chamber, City Hall on Thursday, 6th April at 6.00pm.

Request for the Use of City Hall

The Committee adopted the recommendations in relation to the requests for the use of the City Hall as set out below:

Appendix 1

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Charge to be applied	Recommendation
Belfast Central Mission	Looking Forward to the Future - Volunteer and Awards Event 14th September, 2017 Approximately 100 attending	The use of the City Hall	This event will recognise the contribution made by volunteers over the past year, highlighting past successes and acknowledging the difference made to peoples’ lives by the volunteers. <i>This is an event organised by</i>	No charge to be applied. This is an event organised by recognised local community or voluntary sector group for non-profit and non-political purposes	Approve

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Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Charge to be applied	Recommendation
			<i>recognised local community or voluntary sector groups for non-profit and non-political purposes</i>		
British Institute of Cleaning Science (N.I. Branch)	Northern Ireland Cleaning Operative of the Year Awards 7th September, 2017 Approximately 50 attending	The use of the City Hall	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.	Non-commercial daytime rate - £115	Approve
Flax Trust	Flax Trust Inter-Community School Choirs Award (FISCA) 14th December, 2017 Approximately 550 attending	The use of the City Hall	This event will provide schools across North Belfast the opportunity to showcase their intercommunity choirs and to promote music and song as a neutral means of communication, and its ability to change perceptions and eliminate community tensions and religious prejudices. This event will culminate in the presentation of the award for best choir. <i>This is an event organised by</i>	No charge to be applied. This is an event organised by recognised local community or voluntary sector group for non-profit and non-political purposes	Approve

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Charge to be applied	Recommendation
			<i>recognised local community or voluntary sector groups for non-profit and non-political purposes</i>		
Open Arts	Open Arts at 25! 2nd November, 2017 Approximately 200 attending	The use of the City Hall	<p>This event will celebrate the 25th anniversary of Open Arts working with people with and without disabilities, engaging together in high quality arts activities which promote creativity, increase artistic excellence, and nurture and encourage participants to achieve beyond expectations.</p> <p><i>This is an event designed to celebrate or commemorate a notable achievement or significant anniversary (25, 50, 100 years, etc.) by an organisation or body with close links to the city or province;</i></p> <p><i>This is an event organised by recognised local community or voluntary sector groups for non-profit and non-political purposes</i></p>	No charge to be applied. This is an event organised by recognised local community or voluntary sector group for non-profit and non-political purposes	Approve