

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Tuesday, 27th March, 2018

SPECIAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Garrett (Chairperson);
Aldermen Browne, Convery, Haire, Rodgers and Spence;
Councillors Attwood, Beattie, Carson, Campbell, Corr,
Craig, Graham, Hargey, Hutchinson, Long, McDonough-
Brown, O'Neill, and Walsh.

Also attended: Councillors Dorrian, Dudgeon, Magee and McGimpsey.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. M. McBride, Head of Finance and Resources;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

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

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Restricted Items

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

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion of these items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

Report on the Investigation of the Collection and Storage of Bonfire Materials by Belfast City Council and other Bonfire Related Matters

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 3rd July, 2017, had approved the Terms of Reference for the investigation and review on the issue of the collection and storage of bonfire materials by the Council and the future approach to

bonfires across the City. The Chief Executive explained that the final report had now been completed and was being submitted for the Committee's consideration. She also pointed out that the Terms of Reference agreed by the Council included a specific reference to staff details, namely: "Any report of the investigation identifying individuals will be restricted and the information treated therein will be treated as confidential".

It was reported that Dr. Tom Frawley, who had been appointed as the independent investigator, was in attendance to present the report and he was welcomed by the Chairperson.

Dr. Frawley proceeded to review, in detail, the main findings and recommendations contained in the report, following which himself, the Chief Executive and the City Solicitor answered a number of questions which had been raised by the Members.

After lengthy discussion it was

Moved by Councillor Hargey,
Seconded by Councillor Craig,

That the Committee agrees that the full report should be published and made publicly available, subject to the redaction of any references to staff or the ability to identify staff; and, in addition, a summary paper of those two sections of the report which contained that information be prepared and signed-off by the independent investigator.

On a vote by show of hands thirteen Members voted for the proposal and two against and it was declared carried.

Bonfire Governance Arrangements

The Chief Executive tabled for the Committee's consideration a paper which outlined possible future Bonfire Governance arrangements. She stated that the paper was a work in progress and that a further report on this would be brought back to the Committee for approval.

The Committee noted the contents of the paper and agreed that authority be delegated to the appropriate Council officers to undertake a number of specified "Interventions" in line with the July/August, 2017 arrangements.

Options for the Delivery of Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme 2018

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services tabled for the Committee's information a proposed option for the delivery of a Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme in 2018.

After discussion, the Committee agreed the following:

“The Council will deliver a Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme which seeks to promote positive cultural expression through better bonfire management and cultural celebrations.

Constituted groups can access funding for community events and activities that promote engagement on issues of cultural expression and diversity.

Those who are awarded funding will agree to take practical steps to ensure that sites which are linked to funded events would be managed in accordance with the following criteria:

- 1. No collection of materials before 1st June 2018.*
- 2. Tyres or other hazardous materials should not be collected or burnt on the bonfire.*
- 3. Groups should not display paramilitary trappings such as flags or symbols on bonfires or at any funded activities.*
- 4. Bonfires should be sited in a clear unenclosed space at a safe distance from buildings and overhead cables and should conform to a 1:5 ratio. Safety risks should be assessed and managed, and appropriate advice and guidance sought from the NIFRS and other relevant agencies.*
- 5. Groups should not burn or display any items such as flags, emblems or election posters which are likely to cause offence or could be considered a hate crime.*
- 6. Groups must comply with Council health and safety and events management guidance, as well as meeting relevant licensing and insurance requirements.*

The Council will provide the following resource through the programme:

- 10 bonfire beacons which will be allocated on agreed criteria (or more if requested subject to availability/deliverability)*
- Up to £1,750 for community events and activities that promote engagement on issues of cultural expression and diversity. (£500 will be ringfenced for engagement activity)*
- Introduce a revised application process which will include the need to meet safety and good relations outcomes with strict opening and closing dates.*
- Convene a review panel to consider the participation of groups on the programme.”*

The Committee agreed also, in line with its decision in 2017, to approve an incentivised approach for the delivery of the Programme.

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Limited
Catering Contract

The Committee considered a report on the current position of the Catering Contract at the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall and agreed to the recommendations in the report.

Chairperson