

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Thursday, 5th July, 2018

SPECIAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Rodgers (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McDonough-Brown);
Aldermen Browne, Convery, and Spence; and
Councillors Attwood, Beattie, Campbell, Carson,
Garrett, Hutchinson, Long, McAteer, O'Donnell and Walsh.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman Haire and Councillors Craig, Graham, McAllister and Reynolds.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Audio Recording of Meeting

The Committee agreed that the meeting be audio recorded.

Alderman Convery

Alderman Convery drew the Committee's attention to the fact that, as an Independent Member, he was not a member of the Bonfire Panel and had not, therefore, been briefed on the issues which were to be discussed at this meeting.

He confirmed that he wished to ensure that he was not associated with any information arising from the meeting which might be reported in the media and, accordingly, he withdrew from the meeting.

Restricted Item

The information contained in the report which was tabled in relation to the following item 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 this item as, due to the nature of the item, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

**THE COMMITTEE DEALT WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEM IN PURSUANCE
OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO IT UNDER STANDING ORDER 37(a)**

Contingencies Relating to the Summer Months

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services provided the Committee with an update on a number of high profile bonfires across the City, on both Council and non-Council land.

The Chief Executive drew the Committee's consideration to a report which had been tabled, which provided details around the Bloomfield Walkway bonfire in the east of the City. She reported that the Department for Infrastructure, which owned the land on which that bonfire was situated, had requested that the Council make its contractor available, as part of the Department's contingency arrangements, and had requested the Council to contribute to the costs of any works which were undertaken as part of those arrangements.

After a lengthy discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Walsh,
Seconded by Councillor Carson and

Agreed unanimously - That the Committee agrees:

- i. to accede to the request from the Department for Infrastructure to secure access to the Council's contractor, as part of the contingency arrangements which it was putting in place around the Bloomfield Walkway bonfire;
- ii. that the Chief Executive negotiate with the Department for Infrastructure the apportionment of the costs of any works which were undertaken under the contingency arrangement;
- iii. to continue to support the community led initiative, up to the latest viable point, as determined by the Department for Infrastructure and other relevant agencies;
- iv. that the Chief Executive write to the Department for Infrastructure making the Council's position clear regarding the agreement outlined above and reinforcing the Department's legal responsibilities as the landowner and occupier of the Bloomfield Walkway;

- v. that the Chief Executive write to the Executive Office and to the Northern Ireland Office to raise concerns around the invidious position being faced by councils in dealing with bonfire issues; and
- vi. that a special meeting of the Committee be held at 12.00 noon on Saturday, 7th July to receive an update on this site and that a further meeting might be required on Monday, 9th July.

In addition, the Committee agreed that clarification be sought from the Strategic Inter-Agency Bonfire Group on which agency would be responsible for meeting the costs of putting in place measures to protect homes from bonfires and for the payment of compensation for any damaged caused to them.

Call-in

The Committee agreed further, in accordance with Standing Order 47 (2) (c), that the decisions would not be subject to call-in, on the basis that an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council's or the public's interest.

Chairperson