

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 12th April, 2019

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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

In attendance: Mrs S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Strategic Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. J. Greer, Director of Economic Development;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Attwood and McAllister.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 22nd March were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 4th March.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor O'Donnell declared an interest in relation to item 5(f) – Summer Community Diversionary Festivals Programme, in that she was employed by the Short Strand Partnership and left the meeting whilst this item was under consideration. Councillor Long declared an interest in the same item insofar as he was a member of the Eastside Partnership but declared a dispensation to take part in the meeting and vote for that item as he had been appointed to that organisation by the Council.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 3 items 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.

**Community Support Programme -
Letter of Offer 2019-20**

The Committee was advised that the Council was now in receipt of its formal letter of offer of funding from the Department for Communities, under the Community Support Programme, totalling £1,503,333.86.

The breakdown of the allocation was as follows:

• Community Support General	£829,405.44
• Advice Grant	£607,928.42
• Welfare Reform Support Payment	£66,000.00
Total	£1,503,333.86

It was reported that the level of funding awarded under the Community Support General and Advice Grant had remained static compared to the 2018/2019 allocation. It was pointed out also that an additional allocation of £66,000 had been included to support frontline advice services with increased workload, associated with Welfare Reform, including appeal representation.

The Committee:

- (1) agreed to accept the funding and conditions detailed in the Letter of Offer from Department for Communities in respect of the 2019/20 Community Support Programme; and
- (2) noted the provision of an additional allocation of £66k for Frontline Advice Services Welfare Reform Support Payment, which the Committee had previously agreed to use in support of the Belfast City Wide Tribunal Service.

Assets Management

i) Grove Primary School Site to Grove Housing Association

The Committee approved the disposal of the former Grove Primary School Site to the Grove Housing Association for the consideration of £370,000, with detailed terms to be agreed by the Estates Manager and City Solicitor.

ii) Wilmont House - Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park

The Committee approved the advertising for Expressions of Interest for the physical restoration and regeneration of Wilmont House, Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park, Belfast, on terms to be agreed by the Estates Manager and City Solicitor

iii) St Mary Magdalene Parish Church, Donegall Pass - Amendment to proposed Grant of Right of Way

The Committee approved an amendment to a proposed Grant of Right of Way to the Trustees of St Mary Magdalene Parish Church, Donegall Pass.

iv) Grazing Agreements at Roselawn and Beechvale Farm

The Committee noted the Expressions of Interest received for grazing and grass cutting at Beechvale Farm and Roselawn and granted retrospective consent to the leasing of land at Roselawn and Beechvale Farm to the successful bidders

v) Grant of Easement to Belfast City Council – Old Golf Course Road

The Committee approved acceptance of a Grant of Easement from the Department for Infrastructure to permit access to lands at Dunmurry Station Road.

vi) Facilities Management Agreement – Lenadoon Community Forum

The Committee granted approval for the Facilities Management Agreement with the Lenadoon Community Forum in regard to Lenadoon Park to be adjusted to meet the requirements of an Alpha Fund application for the upgrade of the pitch facility at Lenadoon Park.

Recruitment Update

The Committee noted an update which had been provided by the Chief Executive on recent and ongoing recruitment exercises for Senior Officer posts and that Cathy Reynolds had been appointed to the post of Director (Operational) of City Regeneration and Development.

Matters Referred Back from Council/Motions

Update on Motion - Community Pharmacies

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 3rd December, had passed the following motion on Community Pharmacies which had been proposed by Alderman Copeland and seconded by Councillor Mullan:

“This Council recognises the contribution to society made by Community Pharmacies and notes with growing concern the current financial crisis facing the sector, caused by a serious level of underfunding over the last decade.

The Council agrees to seek an urgent meeting between the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Health and an all-party delegation from the Council, along with representatives of the Pharmacies.”

It was reported that letters had been forwarded subsequently to Mr. G. Greene, Chief Executive of the Community Pharmacy NI (CPNI), and to Mr. R. Pengelly, Permanent Secretary of the Department of Health, in relation to the motion.

The Chief Executive of Community Pharmacy NI had confirmed shortly afterwards that he would be willing to meet with an all-Party delegation from the Council and with the Permanent Secretary to discuss the motion. A response was then received from Mr. Pengelly and was presented to the Committee on 22nd February.

The Committee was reminded that Mr. Pengelly had, within that response, provided details of substantial funding which had been made available in 2018/19 and 2019/20 to community pharmacies and had confirmed that a further £800k had been allocated within the current financial year. However, he had made no reference to the request to meet with an all-Party delegation from the Council and Community Pharmacy NI, as had been alluded to within the motion.

At that meeting, the Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed that a further letter be forwarded to Mr. Pengelly inviting him again to meet with an all-Party delegation from the Council and the Chief Executive of Community Pharmacy NI.

A further response had been received from Mr. Pengelly which again outlined the extent of funding which had been allocated to community pharmacies and pointed out that Departmental officials had ongoing contact with CPNI representatives on a wide range of funding issues. He stated that that represented the most appropriate forum for engagement on funding issues and the development of new contractual arrangements for community pharmacies. He did not, therefore, feel that a meeting with an all-Party delegation from the Council and with Community Pharmacies NI would be beneficial at this time.

Mr. Pengelly had then highlighted the difficult and challenging financial environment being faced across the public sector, and by the health service in particular, and concluded by assuring Members that his Department was committed to ensuring that there continued to be a sustainable community pharmacy network and effective contractual arrangements.

The Committee noted the further response which had been received from the Permanent Secretary, Department of Health, in relation to the Council's motion on Community Pharmacies and agreed that a press release be issued expressing the Committee's disappointment that the Permanent Secretary had refused to meet with an

all-Party deputation from the Council to discuss such an important issue.

Governance

Governance Arrangements for the new Council 2019-23

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 To consider the governance arrangements to apply for the new Council term commencing in 2019.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to;

Consider the issues and to decide on the preferred governance arrangements for the new Council.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

At the meeting of the new Council following the local government elections in May, it will be necessary to agree the new council's governance arrangements for the period 2019-23.

A report on this matter was submitted to the Committee at its meeting on 22nd March. The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the report until the April meeting. In order for the proper arrangements to be made, including meetings with the Nominating Officers of the Parties returned after the elections, in advance of the Annual Meeting of the new Council on 21st May, it is now necessary for decisions to be made.

3.2 Key issues

1. Council governance arrangements

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 provides for a number of types of governance arrangements, namely:

- Traditional committee arrangements (default position)
- Executive model

In 2014, the Council adopted a Constitution which, amongst other things, agreed the default governance arrangements prescribed in the 2014 Act namely:

- Traditional Committee system
- Positions of responsibility selected using the D'hondt model
- Committee places allocated using the quota greatest remainder model

It would have required a qualified majority vote (80%) in order to choose any of the alternatives.

Looking forward to the new Council term, should the Council agree to continue with the existing arrangements as set out in the Council Constitution, then the decision making process requires a simple majority vote to do so.

Decision required:

- Do members wish to continue with existing governance arrangements ie traditional committee system?

3.3

2. Standing Committees

The council currently has established seven Standing Committees which promote cross-departmental and thematic working across the organisation supporting the delivery of the Belfast Agenda and the developing process of Outcomes Based Accountability:

Committee	Number of Members	Responsibility
Strategic Policy & Resources	20	Responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Council through the development of its corporate plan and other key corporate and cross cutting strategies and policies and for setting the budget overseeing the appropriate use of Council finances

City Growth & Regeneration	20	Responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects directed to the regeneration and inclusive growth of the city
People & Communities	20	Responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes, services and projects aimed at improving life at a local level
Licensing	20	Responsible for the consideration of all matters pertaining to policy and legislation in relation to licensing issues
Planning	14	Responsible for all the Council's planning functions
Belfast Waterfront & Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders'	14	Responsible for making the decisions required by the Shareholders' Agreement and ensure that the Company complies with the contract for the operation of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Halls
Brexit	20	Responsible for researching, monitoring and reviewing the financial, resource or operational impact upon the Council and the district as a result of the UK's leaving the European Union

Decisions required:

- Do we wish to continue with these Committees?
- Do we wish to maintain the current remit of each Committee?
- Do we wish to continue with these Committees with the same numbers of members?
- Do we wish to retain the Brexit committee?

3.4

3. Annual review of Committee membership

In the current council term, members were appointed to the Committees for the full four-year term. It is considered that it would be better in the new term for the members to be appointed for one-year terms, and reappointed at each Annual Meeting. This would allow for any changes in political affiliation which can occur during a council term to be accounted for. The City Solicitor believes this to be in keeping both the spirit and intent of the 2014 Act.

Decision required:

- Would Members be supportive of a change to a one-year committee membership term?

3.5

4. Method of appointing positions of responsibility including PCSP and DPCSPs

The positions of responsibility include the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor, Committee Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons, some prescribed outside bodies and the Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) and the four District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (DPCSPs). In dealing with the appointments of members to the PCSP and DPCSPs, the Council needs to ensure that the appointments are made in accordance with not only the LGA 2014 but also the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and are considered as part of the allocation of positions of responsibility.

The solution, which was agreed by all parties in 2015, was that the appointments to the PCSP and DPCSPs were made by allocating those parties' D'hondt choices from the bottom up. Therefore, the parties' earlier choices for positions of responsibility were not adversely affected by the requirements of the Justice Act as to how the appointments to the PCSP and DPCSPs had to be made.

A separate decision is also required in relation to the size of the main Policing and Community Safety Partnership. The Justice Act provides that the Council may appoint 8, 9 or 10 Political Members to the PCSP. The number of Independent Members is then set at one less than the number of Political Members. The Justice Act also provides that each DPCSP must have 6 Political and 5 Independent Members so no decision is required with regard to the

DPCSP size. In 2015, the Council agreed to appoint 9 Political Members to the PCSP, resulting in a membership of 17 in total (9 political and 8 independent members).

Decisions required:

- Are we happy to again employ the solution with regard to the Positions of Responsibility in 2019?
- Are we happy to again appoint 9 Political Members to the PCSP?

3.6

5. Standing Orders

One of the first acts of business of the new Council at their meeting on 21 May will be to agree a new set of Standing Orders. It is recommended that an opportunity is taken to review some sections of the Standing Orders in:

Standing Order 47: Call-in

Following recent legal advice, it is recommended that Members consider some amendments to the process of call-in in order to more accurately reflect the legislation as it currently stands. Specifically this would add provisions:

- i. That on a procedural call-in authority be delegated to the City Solicitor, in consultation with the Chief Executive, to obtain legal advice, to be tabled at the meeting of the ad hoc committee, if it is their view that this will assist in addressing the issues raised within the call-in
- ii. That in suspending the operation of call-in on the grounds that the unreasonable delay that would be caused could be prejudicial to the Council's or the public's interests, the proposer will be required to give reasons as to why this is the case
- iii. In relation to call-ins submitted under Section 41(1)(b) of the 2014 Act, the Chief Executive will wait until the expiry of the period for valid call-ins to be submitted before determining if the required 15% threshold is still in place. If that is the case then the opinion of a practising barrister or solicitor will be sought.

Standing Order 37a: Duties of Committees

That to allow the timely implementation of decisions arising from the Contracts for Award report, delegated authority be given to SP&R for that purpose.

Standing Order 13: Notices of Motion

That Notices of Motion which fall within the remit of a Committee are automatically referred to the relevant committee for consideration without appearing on the Council agenda.

Standing Order 64: Amendments to the Standing Orders and repeals

That changes to the Standing Orders can be agreed at one Council meeting as opposed to two consecutive Council meetings as is the current requirement.

Decision required:

- Would Members be supportive of these proposed amendments to Standing Orders?

Other areas of political governance which Members are asked to consider relate to:

3.7

6. Appointment of Working Groups

The Council decided to appoint a number of Working Groups in 2015. These Working Groups are not specified in the 2014 Act and the Council is free to use whatever mechanism it sees fit to appoint members to them. It is suggested that some of the current Working Groups could be re-aligned to the most relevant thematic committee in order to make their decision-making process more efficient.

Current Working Group	Recommendation
Audit and Risk Panel	Retain
Budget and Transformation Panel / Party Group Leaders	Retain both and review individual Terms of Reference and the name of each group with the minutes being issued to any Independent members within two days of meeting

Current Working Group	Recommendation
North Foreshore Members' Steering Group	Matters could be considered by City, Growth and Regeneration
Reference Group on Older People	Matters could be considered by People and Communities although some consultation may be required with sector
Shared City Partnership	Retain
Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group	Matters could be considered by People and Communities and/or Strategic Policy and Resources Committees

Decision required:

- **Would Members be supportive of reviewing the current Working Groups as outlined above?**

3.8

7. Area Working Groups

Some consideration needs to be given to the terms of reference for the Area-Based Working Groups. Members are already aware that the financial position of the Council has changed significantly and there will not in the near future be a LIF3/BIF2 etc. This will significantly impact the role of the AWGs during this period. It is therefore recommended that there is a move to a more strategic area-based framework approach based on local needs encompassing:

- council service and facility provision
- external or multi-agency service and facility provision
- agreed local area plans to improve outcomes for local people
- longer term local regeneration and investment plans (including capital, revenue or other projects with multiple funding sources)

It is recommended that the AWGs are reviewed within this context and that, following holding a series of workshops with each Area Working Group, a revised Terms of Reference are drawn up (to be taken into Committee late summer / autumn).

Decision required:

- Would Members be supportive of this approach?

3.9

8. Process for nomination for High Sheriff

The current Council agreed to use a separate D'hondt process to decide which Parties would be entitled to nominate a person for consideration for appointment as High Sheriff for each year of the Council term. This process sits outside the positions of responsibility process as the appointment is made by the Secretary of State.

Decision required:

Do we wish to use this process again from 2019?

3.10

9. Appointment to Outside Bodies

There are a number of appointments to Outside Bodies. In 2015, the Council decided to use the Sainte Lague method to make these appointments. A report on the appointments to be made would be presented to the first meeting of the new SP&R Committee in June.

Decision required:

- Do we wish to use this method again or the more common D'hondt method?

3.11

10. Rate of Members' Allowance

The Council did not agree in 2017 and 2018 to increase the Members' Allowances by the rate of inflation as it was permitted to do. In the new Council, do we wish to increase the basic and special responsibility allowances to the maximum permissible (as all other of the 10 Councils do currently)?

Decision required:

- Do we wish to do so for 2019?

3.12 Financial & Resource Implications

None at this stage

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None at this stage.”

The Committee considered each of the issues in turn:

1. Council governance arrangements

- The Committee agreed to continue with the existing governance arrangements, that is, a traditional committee system, with
- Positions of responsibility selected using the D’hondt model; and
- Committee places allocated using the quota greatest remainder model.

2. Standing Committees

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Reynolds.
Seconded by Councillor Craig.

That the Committee agrees not to reconstitute the Brexit Committee.

On a vote by show hands, seven Members voted for the proposal and seven against. There being an equality of votes, the Chairperson exercised his second and casting vote in favour of the proposal and it was declared carried

The Committee agreed to reconstitute the following Committees:

Committee	Number of Members	Responsibility
Strategic Policy & Resources	20	Responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Council through the development of its corporate plan and other key corporate and cross cutting strategies and policies and for setting the budget overseeing the appropriate use of Council finances
City Growth & Regeneration	20	Responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects directed to the regeneration and inclusive growth of the city

Committee	Number of Members	Responsibility
People & Communities	20	Responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes, services and projects aimed at improving life at a local level
Licensing	20	Responsible for the consideration of all matters pertaining to policy and legislation in relation to licensing issues
Planning	14	Responsible for all the Council's planning functions
Belfast Waterfront & Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders'	14	Responsible for making the decisions required by the Shareholders' Agreement and ensure that the Company complies with the contract for the operation of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Halls

3. Annual review of Committee membership

It was agreed, in the new term, for the members to be appointed for one-year terms, and reappointed at each Annual Meeting.

4. Method of appointing positions of responsibility including PCSP and DPCSPs

The Committee agreed that the Positions of Responsibility be filled using the d'Hondt method and that the appointments to the PCSP and DPCSPs be made by allocating those parties' d'Hondt choices from the bottom up. Therefore, the parties' earlier choices for positions of responsibility would not be adversely affected by the requirements of the Justice Act as to how the appointments to the PCSP and DPCSPs had to be made.

The Committee also agreed to appoint 9 Political Members to the PCSP, which would result in a membership of 17 in total (9 political and 8 independent members).

5. Standing Orders

Standing Order 47: Call-in

The Committee agreed the following amendments to Standing Orders:

- i. That on a procedural call-in authority be delegated to the City Solicitor, in consultation with the Chief Executive, to obtain legal advice, to be tabled at the meeting of the ad hoc committee, if it is their view that this will assist in addressing the issues raised within the call-in.
- ii. That in suspending the operation of call-in on the grounds that the unreasonable delay that would be caused could be prejudicial to the Council's or the public's interests, the proposer will be required to give reasons as to why this is the case.

- iii. In relation to call-ins submitted under Section 41(1)(b) of the 2014 Act, the Chief Executive will wait until the expiry of the period for valid call-ins to be submitted before determining if the required 15% threshold is still in place. If that is the case then the opinion of a practising barrister or solicitor will be sought.

Standing Order 37a: Duties of Committees

It was agreed that, to allow the timely implementation of decisions arising from the Contracts for Award report, delegated authority be given to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for that purpose.

Standing Order 13: Notices of Motion

The Committee agreed that Notices of Motion which fall within the remit of a Committee are automatically referred to the relevant committee for consideration without appearing on the Council agenda.

Standing Order 64: Amendments to the Standing Orders and repeals

It was agreed that changes to the Standing Orders can be agreed at one Council meeting as opposed to two consecutive Council meetings as is the current requirement.

6. Appointment of Working Groups

The Committee agreed to retain the following Working Groups:

Audit and Risk Panel
Budget and Transformation Panel / Party Group Leaders
North Foreshore Members' Steering Group
Reference Group on Older People
Shared City Partnership
Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group

7. Area Working Groups

The Committee agreed that the Area Working Groups be reviewed and that, following the holding a series of workshops with each Area Working Group, a revised Terms of Reference be drawn up (to be taken into Committee late summer / autumn).

8. Process for nomination for High Sheriff

The Committee agreed to use a separate d'Hondt process to decide which Parties would be entitled to nominate a person for consideration for appointment as

High Sheriff for each year of the Council term and noted that this process sits outside the positions of responsibility process as the appointment is made by the Secretary of State.

9. Appointment to Outside Bodies

It was agreed that the Sainte Lague method be used to make appointments to Outside Bodies, with a report on the appointments to be made being presented to the first meeting of the new Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in June.

10. Rate of Members' Allowance

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the rate of Members' allowances and that a report, to include the special responsibility allowance, be submitted to the June meeting.

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

100RC Challenge- City Currency Update

The Committee was reminded that it had agreed previously that Belfast would apply to join a 100 Resilient Cities Challenge to explore opportunities to develop a city currency for Belfast. It had approved also a funding requirement of £25k, if successful, in applying to join the challenge. It was explained that a city currency was a payment and rewards app, working on a smartphone, through which people were rewarded for good behaviour, for example, for shopping locally, for using public transport or for recycling. Party briefings had taken place in February to brief elected Members on the challenge.

The Committee was advised that it had been successful in the application to join the city challenge. In March the Commissioner for Resilience had joined four other cities, Addis Ababa, Porto Alegre, Cape Town and Milan in the Headquarters of the company, Colu, in Tel Aviv, to plan the next steps in the development of a city currency pilot for each city. The visit also enabled officers to review how the company worked in practice and how the technology platform was supported.

The company was in the process of hiring three staff to work in Belfast to lead its operations here, and was currently securing a retail/community space in the city centre through which it would operate.

Officers had met with several city partners to encourage them to join the challenge and discussions were progressing well. Ulster University was exploring how it could use a currency to incentivise or reward students' behaviour, for example, use of public transport. Several large employers in the city were exploring whether to use the city currency to reward/encourage positive behaviour among their staff.

Belfast had already taken several steps to progress the city currency challenge, and was keen to announce the challenge in May, to help encourage new partners to come on board, including local businesses. Given the importance of students and young people to the success of the currency, officers were keen to launch the app in

August or September in time for the new academic year. It was aimed to ensure that at least 50 businesses and organisations had joined the challenge in advance of its launch.

The Committee:

- noted the progress in the development of the city currency challenge (pilot), which would run for a year from March, 2019 and that Belfast was successful in competing against other cities in the 100 Resilient Cities network to join a city currency challenge; and
- noted that an event to announce Belfast's City Currency Challenge would be held in May, involving the Lord Mayor and city partners, with the eventual launch of the Belfast Coin city currency in August/September, to coincide with the new academic year.

Draft Cultural Strategy 2020-2030

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to note the decision taken by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee to approve a formal 12-week public consultation on the draft Cultural Strategy 2020-2030 and agree to receive detailed draft implementation plans and financing strategy.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- Note the contents of this report and the commencement of a 12-week public consultation from 17 April 2019.
- Agree to receive further detail on draft implementation plans and financing strategy in September 2019.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Background

In December 2018 the City Growth and Regeneration Committee agreed for officers to progress with the development of a new 10-year cultural strategy for the city.

The timing of this work was in response to a number of important developments and milestones including:

- End of participation in the European Capital of Culture bidding process.
- Initial recommendations from a draft Festival and Events strategy.
- Current Cultural Framework due to end in March 2020.
- Current Tourism Strategy due to end in March 2020.
- Core multi-annual funding programme for arts and heritage organisations in the city due to end in March 2020.
- Tourism as a key strand in the Belfast Region City Deal including proposals for a new visitor attraction, the Destination Hub.

3.3 It was agreed that the strategy would build on the extensive public engagement carried out during the bid to become European Capital of Culture. Furthermore it would present an integrated approach to long-term cultural development in the city including:

- A citizen focussed approach
- Consideration of the long-term sustainability of the cultural sector
- A new approach to Events and Festivals
- Strengthen the tourism proposition in the city through greater understanding of the city's cultural narrative and international appeal.
- Integration of planned major developments such as the Destination Hub into citywide tourism.

3.4 Key Issues

The context

The global context for this strategy is the increasing recognition that cities of culture can drive transformation. Culture has a critical role in shaping great places through:

- Increasing cohesion and permeability
- Building identity and confidence
- Attracting investment
- Retaining talent and attracting talent back

3.5 The Belfast Agenda sets out a vision for 2035 that imagines a culturally vibrant city. The purpose of the cultural strategy is to present a series of priorities that have the potential to contribute significantly to all five outcomes of the Belfast Agenda:

- Everyone in Belfast benefits from a thriving and prosperous economy
- Belfast is a welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive city for all
- Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential
- Everyone in Belfast experiences good health and wellbeing
- Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally sustainable city

3.6 As well as supporting the Belfast Agenda, the strategy also responds to and helps to define the role of culture across other priority areas including:

- Local Development Plan
- City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy
- Good Relations Strategy
- Open Spaces Strategy

3.7 This work has also taken into consideration Council's involvement in 100 Resilient Cities. In addition, the strategy has considered the wider context including ongoing public funding cuts and the need for a long-term approach to support the sustainability and resilience of the cultural sector whilst setting ambitious growth targets. Belfast City Council will also be making a submission to the public consultation on the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's draft 5 year Framework to reflect the ambitions set out in this draft strategy.

3.8 The process

The approach to developing this strategy has strongly focussed on engagement with citizens and with city partners. This has included:

- Holding 62 civic conversations
- Engaging with 5361 citizens
- Supporting 625 creators
- Working with 106 artists
- Across 85 places
- Through 137 events

3.9 The approach has been shaped by two external bodies of work. The first is Agenda 21 for Culture – an international methodology that supports cultural development in cities and regions. The focus of Culture 21 is to embed culture as the fourth dimension of sustainable cities alongside existing economic, social and ecological pillars. Belfast's participation in the Culture 21 pilot cities programme has

already been approved and this programme will support the implementation of this strategy.

3.10 The second set of recommendations that have helped inform this strategy is the recently published Cultural Enquiry by the Core Cities network of which Belfast is a partner member. This enquiry presents a number of practical recommendations on investment and governance of culture in cities. This presents an opportunity for a collaborative model to be taken forward that complements the community planning process and sets shared priorities for culture along with a more effective approach to investment to maximise the overall return. This involves working closely to leverage new sources of finance including public-private models.

3.11 The strategy

The strategy, *A City Imagining*, opens with a cultural statement for the city shaped by the thousands of conversations that have taken place since 2017 as part of the ongoing public engagement programme. This is then taken forward through an overall cross-cutting thematic approach to the strategy with each theme having a particular area of focus as follows.

3.12 Theme 1: A City Belonging – focuses on supporting active citizenship and participation in cultural life.

Theme 2: A City Challenging – focuses on diversity through use of public and cultural spaces.

Theme 3: A City Creating – focuses on supporting innovation and creativity across the cultural sectors.

Theme 4: A City Exploring – focuses on Belfast's relationship to the rest of the world both inward and outward including support for cultural tourism.

3.13 Four strategic priorities are set out for each theme. The result is a strategic framework consisting of 16 key priorities to be delivered by 2030. Each of these priorities will be further developed in the next phase of the programme through detailed implementation plans.

3.14 The document also sets out a number of key strategic milestones throughout the ten-year period. These include:

- Launching a new approach to events and festivals in the city

- Producing an international year of culture in 2023
- Bidding for UNESCO City of Music in 2021
- Delivering a new visitor attraction in the city centre and local neighbourhood tourism programme to open in 2024

3.15 These specific initiatives are considered to be central to delivering on the city's overall targets for the period and to attract new forms of investment into the city with significant cultural, social and economic impacts.

3.16 Critically the strategy considers the governance and investment model required to deliver this type of long-term transformation clearly positioning Belfast as a regional driver.

3.17 The purpose of the strategy document is to present the overall approach and commitments over a ten year period. The next phase of work will give detailed consideration to how this will be delivered in line with the timeframe detailed below. This will include the development of initial three year implementation plans that as well as being cross-cutting will specifically address:

- Arts and Heritage
- Events and Festivals
- Tourism product development including neighbourhood tourism
- Major strategic initiatives

3.18 These will be supported by a proposed investment model, communications strategy and evaluation framework.

3.19 Next steps

The proposed timeline is as follows:

April – July 2019	Public Consultation on Strategy document
April – August 2019	Development of implementation plans and new funding model
September 2019	Committee approval for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final strategy - Draft funding model - Draft implementation plans
October 2019	Opening of new competitive funding programmes
Oct 2019 – Jan 2020	Public consultation on implementation plans

March 2020	Approval of funding recommendations and final implementation plans and finance strategy.
April 2020	Funding contracts in place and implementation plans operational

3.20 Financial & Resource Implications

There are currently no immediate financial implications to this report. The final strategy will be supported by implementation plans and a detailed finance and resource plan will be presented to Committee in September 2019 as part of the next phase of work.

3.21 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

Equality and good relations have been central to the development of the Cultural Strategy to date and will continue to be considered as the investment model and implementation programmes are developed.

3.22 Input has been sought from the Council's Equality and Diversity Officers to inform the strategic level assessment in terms of equality, good relations and rural needs. With a vision of cultural inclusivity and diversity in the Strategy and through the significant programme of engagement, the Cultural Strategy is likely to have a positive impact in terms of promoting equality and good relations in the city. There may be opportunities to increase levels of participation and engagement in cultural life in the city for certain groups such as older people, disabled people and those from minority ethnic backgrounds.

3.23 In line with the guidance from the Equality Commission and the commitment to engagement that has informed the Cultural Strategy; the strategic level equality impact assessment report will be subject to a 12 week public consultation period. This will accompany the formal consultation on the draft Cultural Strategy. The equality impact assessment will be updated as a result of this feedback. The information will be used to inform the final Cultural Strategy and the development of the investment model and implementation programmes."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Social Enterprise and Employment
Support Programme**

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

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to request Committee approval for the delivery of two pilot projects aimed at supporting social enterprise development, business start-up and employment for those with disabilities and/or health related conditions.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Note the ongoing work of the Economic Development Unit in supporting business growth, jobs creation, skills development under the Working and Learning and Growing the Economy pillars of the Belfast Agenda**
- **Approve the delivery of two pilot projects to be delivered in partnership with NOW Group and USEL (Ulster Supported Employment and Learning) aimed at supporting people with disabilities or health related conditions into work as well as helping new artisan food businesses including social enterprises to start up and grow.**
- **Agree to enter into a Licence agreement for an initial 12 months period to facilitate delivery of the pilot initiative in partnership with USEL (Ulster Supported Employment and Learning), subject to the advice and approval from the Council's Legal Services and Estates Management teams.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 As Members will be aware, the Council provides a range of activities to support business growth, help create jobs and enhance the skills levels of Belfast residents. This includes delivery of a suite of business start and development programmes including social enterprise support, as well as a variety of employment and skills initiatives including the sector-specific employment academies. Aligned to both the Working and Learning and the Growing the Economy pillars of the Belfast Agenda, these work streams support inclusive growth ambitions by addressing barriers to employment and progression.

- 3.2** The city continues to face persistent challenges relating to the high levels of economic inactivity and geographical deprivation, and whilst unemployment rates are decreasing, levels of economic inactivity remains high at 31% or 67,850 persons of working age across the city of Belfast. Of these numbers, around 35% (or 23,748 persons of working age) are known to have a disability or health-related condition. Council officers have been working with a number of organisations to explore opportunities for developing targeted initiatives to help some of those individuals to re-enter the labour market on a voluntary participation basis. For out-of-work individuals, long periods of inactivity can cause health conditions to worsen, work related skills and motivation deteriorate, and significant new barriers to work can arise. These individuals will require additional support to remove their particular barriers to employment.
- 3.3** In recent years, the Council's Hospitality Employment Academy has provided an ongoing pipeline of talent into this sector. Whilst efforts in this regard have been positively received, the challenge of low levels of unemployment, sector growth and the potential implications of the UK exit from the EU on the flow of migrant labour have highlighted the risk of labour shortages within this industry and underlined the need for ongoing interventions of scale.
- 3.4** The growth of the hospitality industry has been driven by both international brands and indigenous outlets. In the case of the latter, the uniqueness and the quality of the sector and individual businesses operating within it have recently been recognised through awards such as the Good Taste Awards. Importantly, Northern Ireland was announced as the 'Best Food Destination' at the prestigious International Travel and Tourism Awards in London at the end of 2018. This is a significant accolade and highlights the innovation and quality of both the producers and the hospitality outlets across the region. Through business start-up activities, the Council is supporting a growing number of artisan food producers. One of the key challenges that they face is the ability to access professional kitchen space and distribution outlets for their products. Officers are aware of at least 20 food production businesses who have outgrown their existing space, and have a requirement to utilise a commercial kitchen space to grow their business.
- 3.5** To address these challenges and support the development of the hospitality sector, officers are proposing to develop two pilot initiatives in partnership with two social enterprise

organisations, USEL and the NOW Group. Uniquely both organisations offer training and employment support to individuals with disabilities or health-related conditions and, in addition, support the employment of this client group through the operation of their social enterprises. Additionally both organisations have links with employers within the hospitality sector, providing access to a wider pool of employment opportunities. The pilot initiatives will also facilitate the establishment and growth of artisan food producers, including social enterprises. Further information on each of the proposed pilot projects is set out below.

3.6 Partnership with USEL: Hospitality Training Academy and Food Production Facility

This pilot will involve utilising a vacant city centre property (located in Bridge Street) to operate a social enterprise café, a training academy and provide professional kitchen space for artisan food producers. Previously operated by Barnados as Dr B's, the site is already fitted with a fully functioning café located on the ground floor with separate kitchen space located on the first and second floors of the building that can be used as preparation and training space. The scope of the site will allow for the following:

- Operation of a social enterprise café providing employment opportunities for up to 20 trainees
- Delivery of a hospitality training academy supporting workless individuals with a disability or health-related conditions (from USEL and partner organisations)
- Provision of professional kitchen space with the potential of supporting the creation and growth of up to 40 artisan food producers.

3.7 Each of the distinct elements are interlinked and complementary. For example, it is expected that academy trainees will progress into employment within the café as well as through a wider network of hospitality employers. Additionally, the café provides a potential retail outlet for artisan food producers, in addition to other outlets within the Council's responsibility, including St George's Market.

3.8 As an arms-length body of the Department for Communities (DfC), USEL is not in a position to enter into a lease agreement for this site. Therefore, the Council would be required to enter into a licence agreement with the landlord for a period of 12 months with the option of extension for a further 12 months (subject to legal services and estates review and final agreement on terms and conditions

including liability for rates payment). Additionally the Council would be required to provide £30,000 of funding against a total expected cost of £170,000 for the 12 month period, the remainder would be provided by USEL and income generated from the operation of the social enterprise café. Expected outputs from this pilot would include:

- A 12 week training programme for individuals with disabilities seeking to progress into employment within the hospitality industry with 40 participants to complete the training academy per annum
- Up to 20 trainees employed in the Café
- Up to 40 Belfast-based food production businesses supported to start or grow their business
- Re-opening of a currently vacant property in the city centre, operating as a café and providing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities to gain employment
- Provision of professional kitchen space for food-based start-up enterprises to test and produce food products with the potential to look at options for selling products produced through the commercial café and other outlets.

3.9 Now Group Catering and Hospitality Academy

The aim of this proposal is to support people with learning difficulties, disabilities and autism into sustainable employment through the delivery of a 12-week catering and hospitality academy. This academy will be distinct from the USEL academy in that it will focus on catering and food production skills development as an area that has been identified within the hospitality sector as having severe skills gaps. Training will consist of both theory and practical learning methodologies providing a holistic perspective of the vocation and develop well-trained, qualified participants ready for the exploration of employment opportunities. In addition to this, this pilot provides an opportunity to expand on the relationship that the NOW Group has developed with a number of employers in the hospitality sector through its wider services and products including the JAM card and food products, to create a self-sustaining social enterprise model to supporting people with disabilities into employment. The NOW Group respective JAM Card team have engaged with 83 employers across Belfast, with 68 becoming JAM Card friendly businesses/organisations. The NOW Group will utilise these connections to maximise placement and paid employment opportunities for the participants on the academy. Expected Outputs from this pilot would include:

- A 12-week training programme for individuals with a learning difficulty, disability and autism who have been out of employment.
- A minimum of 40 participants per annum
- A minimum of 20 full time employment outcomes per annum
- In work support for both participant and employer a minimum of 12 months

3.10 Additional detail on target groups, expected outputs, timescales and costs has been circulated.

3.11 **Financial and Resource Implications**

The proposed projects outlined in this report will be resourced from the 2019/20 Economic Development budget. Budget breakdowns detailed below:

	Category	Total Cost per annum
Hospitality Training and Food Production Facility	Capital (Licence)	£30,000 p.a.
Catering and Hospitality Academy	Revenue	£35,000 p.a.
TOTAL		£65,000 p.a

3.12 Both elements of the project will be for an initial 12-month period with the option to extend subject to satisfactory contract performance.

3.13 **Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment**

The projects referenced in this report have been informed by stakeholder engagement and statistical research. Officers will work closely with the Equality and Good Relations Team on this activity. No specific rural needs impact – engagement is open to all eligible Council residents and businesses.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**NI Affairs Committee Inquiry into
Tourism in Northern Ireland**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise the Committee of an inquiry by the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee of the UK Government on tourism in Northern Ireland and to seek approval for the key elements of a Council response. This response will be subject to engagement with other partner organisations in order to ensure alignment and consistency in support of the Belfast position.

1.2 The official deadline for submissions is 18 April 2019. However, the NI Affairs Committee has agreed to an extension until early May 2019 to allow time for additional liaison with our partner organisations.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Agree that a full response is developed along the lines set out in section 3.3. below**
- **Consider any additions or amendments that they wish to see incorporated in the final Council response**
- **Agree that officers should continue to liaise with our strategic partners including Tourism NI, Visit Belfast, ICC Belfast and Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency, to ensure consistency in our responses and to put forward the best case for Belfast**
- **Agree that authority is delegated to the Director of Economic Development to submit the final version of the response within the timeframe set out by the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 The Northern Ireland Affairs Committee has recently launched an Inquiry examining the importance of tourism to the economy and society of Northern Ireland more widely and to investigate ways in which the industry could be improved or further supported. Specifically, the Inquiry has invited written submissions pertaining to:

- The economic and societal impact of the tourism industry in Northern Ireland
- Transport links to Northern Ireland
- The promotion of Northern Ireland as a destination.

3.2 Officers are liaising with our strategic partners (ICC Belfast, Visit Belfast and Tourism NI) who have specific expertise and information relating to the areas set out in the scope of the inquiry. While each of the partners is working on their own individual responses, Council officers are engaging with them all to ensure that the response from the Council is consistent with the key messages and draws out the specific challenges and opportunities for Belfast.

3.3 In terms of headline commentary, it is proposed that the Council response covers the following key points:

The economic and societal impact of the tourism industry in Northern Ireland

- The growth of tourism has been critical to Belfast's improved economic performance, particularly over the last two decades
- Belfast is the key regional driver for tourism in the region. The last Local Government District tourism statistics published by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency in 2017 indicated that Belfast generated 30% of all overnight tourism trips to Northern Ireland (1.5m trips) and tourism spend on overnight trips amounted to £328m, 35% of Northern Ireland tourism spend
- The city's contribution to the region's visitor economy increases to 44% when analysing spend from visitors originating from outside Northern Ireland
- Jobs supported in the tourism sector in Belfast are 18,600 which is 30% of all tourism jobs in Northern Ireland
- Overnight business trips account for 15% of bednights compared with 9% for NI as a whole
- Belfast City Region Deal partners welcome the recent Treasury investment in tourism as part of the wider programme of investment for the city region. The inclusion of tourism as a key growth sector represents an acknowledgement of the importance of this sector to the city (and region's) future economic growth. This investment will both enhance productivity in the sector and provide opportunities for new product development, which can have positive economic and social impacts on local communities.

Transport links to Northern Ireland

- Belfast is directly served by two airports, George Best Belfast City Airport and Belfast International Airport
- Unlike other major UK cities, Belfast is only accessible by either air or sea – with the majority of passengers coming by air. Consideration needs to be given to ensuring that these modes of travel are not subject to policy change which could have disproportionate cost implications – and thereby impact on usage levels
- Direct air route access is critical to the success of any destination and whilst Dublin Airport is an important access point onto the Island of Ireland with direct access from over 170 destinations, it will be important to further develop direct access into Northern Ireland's airports
- The Council and Tourism NI have recently invested in a major conference and exhibition centre (ICC Belfast), at a cost of almost £30 million (drawing in EU match funding). The success of this investment is predicated on maintaining air route access to the city for national and international conference delegates
- Road and rail links in Belfast and the surrounding areas have been strengthened in recent years. This is important in helping tourists to access areas outside of Belfast if they wish. There are still gaps in the rail infrastructure to the two Belfast airports. This means that there is a disproportionate reliance on car travel to both airports.
- The introduction of the Glider service in Belfast helps visitors to move across the city in a way that they have not been able to do previously. The uptake by tourists has been significant and this is having a positive effect on enhancing the impact of tourism across the city and into communities
- The tourism and infrastructure investments in the Belfast City Region Deal will act as a catalyst for enhanced regional connectivity between Belfast and other key tourism destinations
- Belfast as a cruise destination has gone from strength to strength with recent commitment to investing in upgraded cruise facilities at Belfast Harbour.

The promotion of Northern Ireland as a destination

- The promotion of Belfast City and region is currently led by Visit Belfast, working in close collaboration with Tourism NI (for marketing in NI and RoI) and

Tourism Ireland (for campaign activity beyond the island of Ireland)

- The Council recognises and supports a collaborative, multi-agency approach to promoting the city and region
- The Council is in the process of developing a new cultural strategy. As part of that work, we have developed a new tourism narrative and will be working with our marketing partners to ensure that the unique and authentic Belfast narrative is carried as part of the wider partner campaigns and activities in the various markets
- Tourism growth figures from international visitors indicate that Tourism Ireland is having significant success in delivering new visitors to the island of Ireland. It is critical for all partners in the destinations to work together to ensure that the quality of the product is enhanced in order to attract those visitors and to ensure that they have a positive experience of their time in the destination. This underlines the need for collective action.

3.4 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no specific costs associated with provision of this response.

3.5 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None.”

The Committee agreed that:

- a full response to the NI Affairs Committee Inquiry into Tourism in Northern Ireland be developed along the lines set out in section 3.3. of the report;
- officers should continue to liaise with our strategic partners, including Tourism NI, Visit Belfast, ICC Belfast and the Northern Ireland Statistics Research Agency, to ensure consistency in our responses and to put forward the best case for Belfast;
- authority be delegated to the Director of Economic Development to submit the final version of the response within the timeframe set out by the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee; and
- reference be made in the response to the lack of investment in the International Airport.

**Update on the Development of the
Aquatics Strategy 2018 – 2030**

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is update Members' on completion of the final draft of 'An Aquatics Strategy for Belfast' and seek approval to move to a formal launch event as soon as is practicable.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note completion of the public consultation exercise;
- note completion of equality screening and the resulting 'screened out' decision;
- approve the final draft document 'An Aquatics Strategy for Belfast' and
- grant approval to prepare for a formal launch of the strategy as soon as is practicable

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

The proposal to develop an Aquatics Strategy was prompted by the Active Belfast Ltd (ABL) board at its meeting on 9th June 2016. A further report was presented to the ABL board on 31 August 2016 outlining a proposed development approach and a broad scope works. Approval to proceed was granted and a working group consisting of representatives from ABL, Belfast City Council (BCC) and Greenwich Leisure Ltd (GLL) was set up to deliver the project.

3.2 The Aquatics Strategy Working Group was made up of officers from BCC, staff from GLL and members of the ABL Board.

3.3 The Working Group met on ten occasions between 6th October 2016 and 26 October 2017 with numerous development sessions between formal working group meetings.

- 3.4 Aquatics Strategy update reports were presented to the ABL board and subsequently to BCC via SP&R on the following dates:

<u>ABL Board</u>	<u>SP&R Committee</u>
9 June 2016	24 June 2016
31 August 2016	23 September 2016
13 October 2016	21 October 2016
5 December 2016	16 December 2016
21 March 2017	21 April 2017
20 April 2017	19 May 2017
7 August 2017	18 August 2017
30 October 2017	24 November 2017
5 March 2018	23 March 2018
10 September 2018	21 September 2018

3.5 Pre-consultation

Pre consultation with key stakeholders was undertaken between 7 July and 10 August 2017.

- 3.6 The final Aquatics Strategy document (draft for consultation) was approved by the ABL board on 5th March 2018 and subsequently accepted by SP&R and full Council on 22nd June 2018 and 2 July 2018 respectively.

3.7 Public consultation on the draft strategy

A twelve week period of public consultation on the draft strategy took place between 24 July and 12 October 2018. A copy of the draft strategy and a response questionnaire were available to download from the Council's website.

- 3.8 The public consultation exercise yielded 58 written responses of which 28 were on behalf of organisations. The content of the draft document was positively received. Most comments received were of an operational nature and have been noted for consideration when a post launch action plan is being developed. No amendments have been made to the draft strategic document.

3.9 Equality Screening

Following review of the public consultation the draft strategy was subject to equality screening. Equality screening took place in March 2019 and resulted in the strategy being 'screened out'.

3.10 Next steps

The final draft document has been circulated. This is the final draft version agreed for public consultation which has remained unchanged following the consultation exercise.

3.11 Subject to Council sign off, a public launch will be scheduled as soon as practicable after the forthcoming Council elections. The intention is to launch the strategy in June to allow for the preparation of an implementation action plan during the summer months.

3.12 Having an agreed strategy and action plan in place by September 2019 will significantly support mobilisation and operational planning for the start of the 2019/20 aquatics season/term and will underpin programming principles for the Phase 1b of the Leisure Transformation Programme new build openings at Lisnasharragh, Brook and Andersonstown.

3.13 Communications & Public Relations

Subject to final approval, the Aquatics Strategy will be publicly launched in the Summer of 2019.

3.14 Financial & Resource Implications

Outside of the cost of a public launch of the strategy there are no financial or other resource implications.

3.15 Equality or Good Relations Implications

The strategy is subject to equality screening. 'Screened out' on 5th April 2019."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Summer Community Diversionary
Festivals Programme**

The Committee considered the following report:

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 At the Council meeting in January 2019 it was agreed to allocate £500k to a summer diversionary and festival programme, this was in context of the Revenue Estimates & District Rate report agreed as part of the rate setting process. The programme was advertised as an open call and officers have completed the preliminary assessment process.

1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with the detail of the preliminary assessments undertaken by officers and seek approval to award funding to those groups who have met the minimum standard required to receive funding.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- Make a recommendation that successful projects are awarded funding, totalling the amounts outlined in Table 1. Any funding awarded is subject to further engagement with groups and analysis of projects and associated budgets in line with Council due diligence procedures;
- Work with any unsuccessful groups to support, where appropriate, aspects of their application that can be delivered through the Council led Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

Process

Following approval by Council in January 2019 to deliver a £500,000 Summer Community Festivals Diversionary Programme (£250,000 for July Groups and £250,000 for August Groups), the following process has been followed;

- All applicants submitted an application form by an agreed date;
- Officers undertook due diligence exercise to ensure that only applications that are fully completed and meet the conditions of funding were considered for assessment;
- During the open application process, officers were available to advise groups on the necessary due diligence requirements that must be met to enable groups to be considered suitable for funding;
- Officers have undertaken a preliminary assessment of each application against the agreed criteria (see Appendix 1) and are seeking a recommendation from

the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on proposed successful applications.

3.2 July Programme

Five applications for the July programme were received with a total funding requirement of £354,229, (this was reduced to £311,729 following a reduction in the amount requested by the The Hubb.

One of the applications, Consensus Restorative Justice did not meet the minimum quality standard to receive funding. It is proposed, that officers will work with this group to offer support in delivering a community festival in the local area in the lead up to the 11 July, through the Council led Bonfire and Cultural Expression Programme.

Table 1 summarises the applications received for the July programme.

No	Group / Consortium (Project name)	Overview of project	Request £	Score out of 100	Proposed funding award £
1	Twadell & Woodvale Residents Association (Woodvale Festival 2019)	Delivery of an extensive and varied series of events in Woodvale park and other local venues from 5 th – 11 th July. These will include a community activity programme and large scale musical events at Woodvale Park on 9, 10, & 11 July	100,000	78	84,386
2	The Hubb Community Resource Centre (Community Shorefest)	Deliver of a number of diversionary and cultural workshops from 1 June, which will include music and community festival events in the local area in the lead up to and on 11 July	44,000 (original request £86,500)	57	44,000

No	Group / Consortium (Project name)	Overview of project	Request £	Score out of 100	Proposed funding award £
3	Greater Village Regeneration Trust (GVRT)	Delivery of a coordinated programme of cultural, family and diversionary events across South Belfast from June until 11 July. This project is being delivered with community partners who are based across south Belfast and work with local communities to address issues at bonfires.	37,229	48	37,229
4	EastSide partnership (Eastival)	Delivery of cultural, arts and diversionary workshops and programmes during June and July. The project will also deliver festival and music events at C.S. Lewis Square in the week leading up to 11 July.	100,000	41	84,386
5	Consensus Restorative Justice	Delivery of workshops with bonfire builders, culminating in a community festival and fun day on the 11 July.	30,500	18	0
Total			311,729		250,000

Following initial assessment of applications, officers are proposing the following funding for projects who met the minimum quality standard;

1. **Greater Village Regeneration Trust (GVRT)** – This was the only application for South Belfast, therefore due to the disproportionate amount requested, £37,229, it is proposed that they receive the full amount;

2. **The Hubb Community Resource Centre** – Initially, as part of their submission a major headline music festival was proposed to be held on the 31 May to 2 June, the total requested was £86,500. This has been amended to include a community festival 10 to 12 July, with a request for £44,000 in total. As part of their proposal a number of workshops and diversionary activities will also be held in the lead up to the 11 July. It is proposed that they receive £44,000.

3. **East Side Partnership and Twadell & Woodvale Residents Association** – Both applications requested £100,000, it is proposed that, if members agree to 1 and 2 the remaining funding available for July (£168,771) is allocated on a pro rata basis, £84,386 for each project.

3.3 August Programme

Three applications were received for the August programme with a total funding request amounting to £250,000. As can be seen from Table 2 below all three applications have been assessed to meet the minimum funding threshold. Officers are proposing that all three applications are allocated the funding requested.

No	Group / Consortium (Project name)	Overview of project	Request £	Score out of 100	Proposed funding award £
1.	Feile (Feile August Diversionary Dance Night)	Delivery of a free Dance music event as part of Feile on the 8 August. It is proposed that this event will be developed in partnership with local community groups across Belfast to provide an alternative event for young people who may otherwise engage in activities associated with 8 August bonfires.	100,000	78	100,000

No	Group / Consortium (Project name)	Overview of project	Request £	Score out of 100	Proposed funding award £
2.	Feile (South & East Summer Diversionary Intervention Programme)	Delivery of outreach and diversionary work during the summer, in the lead up to the 8 August. This project will also run a number of festival and community events across South and East Belfast in the lead up to the 8 August.	50,000	55	50,000
3.	Feile (North Belfast Summer Diversionary Intervention Programme)	Delivery of a number of diversionary outreach activities and community and sporting events in the lead up to the 8 August. This project will also deliver music festivals and community events in a number of locations in North Belfast.	100,000	52	100,000
Total			250,000		250,000

3.4 Future Process

Subject to council approval, an appointed officer will work with each successful applicant to support projects in terms of ensuring all relevant policies and procedures are followed including monitoring and evaluation procedures. This will include further analysis of the detail of the projects and associated budgets and may result in some changes to proposed programmes of works and if required a reduction in funds awarded to ensure relevant council policies and procedures are followed.

3.5 Financial & Resource Implications

Budget is included within this year's revenue estimates.

3.6 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

This programme is being included as part of an equality screening process for our overall approach to Bonfires."

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Long,
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor McDonough-Brown)

That the scoring criteria for the award of funding be set at a level of sixty points or higher and only those applications achieving that score be considered for the funding and accordingly the funding would be awarded to Twadell and Woodvale Residents' Association and the Feile (Feile August Diversionary Dance Night).

On a vote by show of hands, two members voted for the proposal and twelve against and it was declared lost.

Further Proposal

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Councillor Craig,

That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendations in relation to the proposed funding awards.

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

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Area Working Update

The Committee:

Area Working Group (AWG) Minutes

- approved and adopted the minutes of meetings of the North Belfast AWG on 19th March 2019 and the South Belfast AWG on 25th March 2019.

Project Updates

- agreed that the following project receive funding from the Social Innovation Challenge Programme: 15,000 for the New Lodge Arts Group Breakthrough project; and
- agreed the proposed movements of the BIF and LIF projects from North and South as set out below:

LIF Programme - LORAG – John Murray Lock House project (LIF2-13 - £40,000) had been scored and met the minimum threshold and agrees that this project is progressed to Due Diligence stage.

BIF Programme

Ref	Project	Current Stage	Proposed Stage
BIF33	Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC – maximum allocation of £250,000	Stage 2- Uncommitted	Move to Stage 3- Committed
BIF35	Knockbreda Parish Church Hall – maximum allocation of £250,000	Stage 2- Uncommitted	Move to Stage 3- Committed
BIF20	Malgrove – maximum allocation of £500,000	Stage 1 – Emerging	Move to Stage 2- Uncommitted

Finance, Resources and Procurement

Contracts Update

The Committee:

- approved the public advertisement and acceptance of tenders as listed in Appendix 1, Table 1 through the Council's electronic procurement system;
- granted delegated authority to the appropriate Director using pre-agreed criteria to accept the most economically advantageous tender;
- agreed to accede to Standing Order 55(b) - exceptions in relation to contracts by direction of the council acting on recommendation of a Chief Officer that the exception is justified in special circumstances for the contracts laid out in paragraph 3.6 and Appendix 1 Table 2;
- noted that the Council had an existing contract with Land and Property Services (LPS) for the provision of detailed property surveys and agreed to the LPS request that this contract be extended for another year; and

- noted the update on the City Revitalisation Programme:

Appendix 1 - Schedule of tenders for consideration

Table 1 - New tenders

Title of tender	Senior Responsible Officer	Proposed contract duration
Microsoft SQL Server	Ronan Cregan	Up to 3 years
Twilight Market (T1957)	Alistair Reid	Up to 2 years
Technical Procurement Support	Alistair Reid	Up to 2 years
Employment Academies – procurement framework	Alistair Reid	Up to 4 years
GCSE Revision Programme	Alistair Reid	Up to 4 years
City Youth Support Programme	Alistair Reid	Up to 4 years
Enterprise Pathway	Alistair Reid	Up to 4 years
Employer Engagement	Alistair Reid	Up to 4 years
City Deal: technical expertise	Alistair Reid	Up to 2 years
Employment Academy - Leisure	Alistair Reid	Up to 2 years
Graduate Enterprise Programme	Alistair Reid	Up to 3 years
Social Economy Programme	Alistair Reid	Up to 3 years
Accessibility Research	Alistair Reid	1 year
Service Evaluation	Alistair Reid	Up to 3 years
Local Tourism – capacity building programme	Alistair Reid	Up to 3 years
Event Management and Support Services for MIPIM 2021 (T1956)	Alistair Reid	Up to 3 years
Employee Counselling Service (T1953)	John Tully	Up to 3 years
Occupational Health Physician Services (T1954)	John Tully	Up to 3 years

Title of tender	Senior Responsible Officer	Proposed contract duration
Tender for treatment and recycling of carpets and mattresses (T1938)	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 4 years
Tender for the provision of Asset Management (T1916)	Ronan Cregan	Up to 7 years
Printing and Promotional Publications	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 5 years
Line marking products and equipment	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 5 years
Removal of litter and weeds from open spaces including water features	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 5 years
Supply and delivery of resale goods for Belfast Zoo	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 4 years
Supply and delivery of trees	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 3 years
Supply and delivery of Lucerne and Browse	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 4 years
Provision of services for kerbside recyclable materials	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 4 years
Receipt, stock control and delivery of waste containers	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 4 years
Collection and reuse/recycling of plasterboard	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 3 years
Removal, transportation and emptying of skips and hook lift containers	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 5 years
Supply and delivery of bedding plants	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 3 years
Supply and installation of summer plants and containers	Nigel Grimshaw	Up to 4 years
Corporate Health & Safety Management System	Ronan Cregan	Up to 7 years

Table 2 - Direct Award Contracts (Single Tender Action)

System/Product	Supplier	Annual estimate
Housing Benefits software and support (NIHE Managed Service Contract) (T1959)	Northgate	£230,000
Mapping Agreement LPS	LPS Ordnance Survey	£75,000
Premier Support (Gold)	Microsoft	£52,000
Oracle Site Licence	Oracle	£38,000
Clockwise Replacement	Softworks	£50,000
E-Bravo	Bravo Solutions	£30,000
Remote site connectivity – BT complete	BT	£35,000
Event Management and Support Services for MIPIM 2020	Lanyon Communications	£90,000
City Revitalisation Programme Marketing & Communication (approved in principle see 3.8)	TBC	£300,000

Equality and Good Relations

Draft Disability Action Plan 2019-2022

The Committee was reminded that, under Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (“The Act”), (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006) public authorities, when carrying out their functions must have due regard to the need to:

- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

It was reported that the Council's Disability Action Plan had expired in March, 2018. However, it had been arranged that a one year holding Action Plan from April 2018 – March 2019 would be put in place to allow time to develop the draft three year plan. The Equality Commission had advised that The Council would be resubmitting a DDO Disability Action Plan in 2019 which would cover a three year period.

The three year Plan items were now being presented as a draft document to proceed through the committee cycle and would also to go out for public consultation as required.

The Committee approved:

- the Disability Action Plan 2019-2022; and
- the document for consultation for a twelve week period, from 15th April, 2019 to 8th July, 2019.

**Regional event to Mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2020
and the 75th anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz**

The Committee considered a report which sought approval to to partner with the Northern Ireland Executive to host the Northern Ireland Regional Event to mark Holocaust Memorial Day and the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and to run a programme of events to supplement the main commemoration ceremony.

The Committee was reminded that Holocaust Memorial Day was the international day of remembrance for all the victims of the Holocaust and subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. The date, 27th January, marked the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau extermination camps. The purpose of the commemoration was to honour survivors and challenge ourselves to use the lessons of their experience to inform our lives today.

The Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services reported that the Good Relations Unit had been invited to partner with the Executive Office to run a regional event in the City Hall to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. In addition a programme of events would be organised to engage schools and a wider society in events to mark Holocaust Memorial Day. The costs for those events were estimated at £3,000 and would be covered through the existing Good Relations budget.

The Committee agreed that the Council partner with the Executive to host the regional event in the City Hall, to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day, and to run a programme of events to supplement the main commemoration ceremony.

Operational Issues

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

The Committee considered the following applications for the use of the City Hall and for the provision of hospitality which had been received up to 29th March, 2019:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2019 EVENTS						
Now Group	24 May 2019	Now Graduation Ceremony to celebrate the work of trainees supported by the Now Group and completion of the training programme. Numbers attending - 300	C & D	No (Charity)	No hospitality as annual event not one off	Approve No charge No hospitality
Allstate Northern Ireland	4 July 2019	20th Anniversary Gala Dinner – Celebration evening to recognize 20 years of All State operating in Belfast. Format of the evening is drinks reception, dinner and speeches. Numbers attending - 80	C	Charge £300	No commercial company as	Approve Charge £300 No hospitality
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	6 October 2019	A Time to Remember – Children’s Services of Remembrance for bereaved parents– Remembrance service for bereaved relatives and friends of children who have died at Royal Belfast Hospital for sick Children. Numbers attending – 350	C	No £300 waived given nature of the event	Yes, Coffee and Biscuits Tea and	Approve No Charge Tea and Coffee Reception
South Belfast Youth Invitational Football League	2 November 2019	Proudly celebrating 50 years of #lettingthemplay – Dinner event to celebrate 50 year anniversary of South Belfast Youth League, the biggest in NI with 600+ teams; aged 10 – 19 years; competing at weekends. Numbers attending – 350	C	No (Charity)	Yes, Wine Reception	Approve No charge Wine Reception

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NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
Polish Educational and Cultural Association	17 November 2019	Polish Independence Day 2019 – Celebration event to promote diversity and reflect on positive contribution of Polish community. Numbers attending - 160	C & D	No (Charity)	Yes, Tea, Coffee & Biscuits	Approve No Charge Tea and Coffee Reception
2020 EVENTS						
Association for Citizenship Teaching	January/ February 2020	Five Nations Network 20th Annual Conference Reception and Dinner – Opening reception with speeches, dinner and dancing as part of a 3 day conference taking place in Queens University Belfast. Numbers attending – 85	A & B	No (Charity)	Yes, Wine Reception	Approve No charge Wine Reception
2021 EVENTS						
British Geriatrics Society	29 April 2021	Welcome Reception for the BGS Spring meeting 2021 Conference Dinner– reception & dinner for international delegates as part of a 4 day conference taking place in Belfast. Numbers attending – 100	A & B	No <i>(£300 waived as linked to Visit Belfast)</i>	Yes, Wine Reception <i>(linked to Visit Belfast)</i>	Approve No charge Wine Reception

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Request re: USAF Memorial Commemoration

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members of a request from the Oldpark/Cavehill Royal British Legion Branch to lead on an event on 1st June 2019 at the USAF Memorial at Belfast Zoo. The event is being held to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the air crash involving an American B-17 crew in which all 10 members lost their lives.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked consider the request in the following context:

- The event on 1st June 2019 at the USAF memorial to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the air crash on Cavehill should be coordinated by Council.
- The level of support which Council can contribute bearing in mind there has been no budget set aside for this type of event and the SP&R Committee has previously agreed not to consider requests for ad hoc funding until the end of June 2019.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

On June 1st 1944, only five days before D Day B-17 Flying Fortress no 42-97862 had flown from the US via Reykjavik and was preparing to land at Nutts Corner and was due to fly onward to Anglesey in Wales in preparation for deployment in the Allied war effort.

3.2 The plane never managed to reach its destination due to fog shrouding Cavehill, obscuring its course with such fatal and tragic consequences for the aircrew on board, their comrades and their families.

3.3 A memorial at Belfast Zoo was unveiled by the then Lord Mayor, Councillor Wallace Browne on Thursday June 1st 2006. The service included a colour guard from US Military, a service conducted by Very Reverend Dr. Houston McKelvey, an address by the US Consul General and by an assistant air attaché at the US Embassy in London, Taps and a flypast by a WW2 aircraft.

- 3.4 Since the unveiling and dedication of the memorial, the Oldpark/Cavehill RBL branch have organised and held regular services and a wreath laying at the memorial on June 1st and the Friday preceding Remembrance Sunday of each year.
- 3.5 The Secretary of the Oldpark/Cavehill branch has written to Council to advise that he had recently met with Dawn and Alfie Montgomery. Alfie Montgomery was the person who found the wedding ring that belonged to the pilot. The ring was eventually returned to the deceased pilot's family and this story was subsequently made famous by Richard Attenborough in the film 'Closing the Ring.'
- 3.6 Permission has been granted under delegated authority for the regular service to take place on 1st June 2019, with arrival at 9.15am, the service taking place at 9.30am and finishing prior to the Zoo opening at 10am. Those taking part usually drive to the memorial given its location within the Zoo.
- 3.7 The organisers have been in touch with Alison Fleming from UTV who has agreed to cover the story and at the time of writing this report 12 family members of the crew are confirmed to attend.
- 3.8 In the meantime, the secretary of the RBL branch has written to advise the following:
- That the authorisation to access the memorial before the Zoo opens on June 1st is unrealistic from a number of points not least of all the fact this is five days before the 75th anniversary of the D Day landings.
 - The group have only been given from 9.15am until 10am before the Zoo opens. They wish to have the service at 10.30am which was the time that the plane crashed. They did ask if there was a possibility the Zoo could be closed for the duration of the service.
 - They have made a request for a civic dignitary to participate.
 - There are a number of relatives of the aircrew who have indicated their intention to travel to Belfast to participate in any commemoration.
 - There will be a US Consular presence on the day.

- They have spoken informally with a colleague at the MOD Press Office at Thiepval who has indicated that there would be an interest in attending, possibly a representative(s) of the RAF. (The MOD have indicated that commemorations for D-Day on 6th June will take place in Normandy and there are no plans for any other events).
 - There will be a number of representatives from other local RBL branches and from RBL NIDC.
 - Given where the memorial is situated, they would also need assistance with logistics to ensure all guests could be transported to and from the memorial.
- 3.9 Furthermore, Council has been advised that Alfie Montgomery is currently in the final stages of completing a book which relates to his childhood experiences up to and beyond the finding of the ring. He is hoping to launch at Belfast Castle in the lead up to the commemorations. Members are asked to note that he has provided a permanent display of artefacts and background information about the tragedy at Belfast Castle.
- 3.10 The RBL has also highlighted that the Lisnabreeny Memorial Garden (the site of the original USA cemetery, where the aircrew were buried prior to final repatriation to the US in the late 1940s is now in the ownership of BCC and there is certainly an opportunity to highlight this unique event for the City.
- 3.11 Officers have been advised that the number of people attending is anticipated to be around 50.
- 3.12 Request for Support from Council
- Access to and from the grounds of the zoo;
 - Transport to and from the memorial;
 - Erection of a 'temporary' flagstaff to facilitate the flying of a US Flag at the memorial;
 - Possible reception either at the zoo or at Belfast Castle for guests;
 - Provision of US military vehicle from WW2 era;
 - Provision of personnel in period uniform;
 - Provision of bugler;
 - Provision of flypast by 'Sally B';;
 - Provision of appropriate security arrangements and discussions with appropriate agencies.

- 3.13 The group are requesting that the event be coordinated by Council with Officer support required to deliver the event and providing liaison among the different parties involved. A resource/s would need to be identified for this.
- 3.14 In relation to the flypast, costs have been estimated at £15,000. Officers have been advised that there is a small window of opportunity for this as the aircraft will be required for other D Day events and flight plans need to be submitted as soon as possible.
- 3.15 Members may wish to note that the group could potentially be signposted to the NI War Memorial Museum who may be able to assist in accessing the US Military vehicle or personnel in period uniform. However, the feasibility of placing vehicles at the site would have to be explored with the Zoo.
- 3.16 Financial & Resource Implications

The group is requesting that this be a Council led event with Officer support required to deliver the event and providing liaison among the different parties involved which would require significant input and is not within current workplans.

There is no budget set aside for this event in current Council budgets and the SP&R Committee has previously agreed not to consider requests for ad hoc funding until the end of June 2019.

In relation to financial costs, the flypast would be in the region of £15,000 and a tea/coffee and scone reception at Belfast Castle could be in the region of £360 based on 50 people attending. It is difficult to put a cost on transport at this stage, as previously organisers have used their own cars to access the memorial but increased numbers could present an issue for parking, health and safety etc.

However, should the event affect public access to the Zoo, this could have a financial impact on the service and would require timely communication.

- 3.17 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

The commemoration event led by Oldpark/Cavehill RBL has been taking place since 2006 and there have been no good relations or equality implications identified with the customary event.”

The Committee agreed to the request in the following context:

1. The event on 1st June 2019 at the USAF memorial commemorating the 75th anniversary of the air crash on Cavehill should be coordinated by the Council; and
2. Noted that the flypast had been withdrawn from the programme and agreed to the level of support of up to £1500.

Active Belfast Ltd. Board

The Committee noted the minutes of the meeting of the Active Belfast Limited Board of 8th April.

ABF The Soldiers' Charity D-Day Commemoration Concert

The Committee was advised that a letter had been received asking the Council to nominate Members to attend the D-Day Commemoration Concert being held in the Waterfront Hall on 8th June, 2019. The Committee was reminded that it had previously approved the attendance of the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson plus one Member from the six main parties on the Council at events organised by the ABF Charity as follows:

1. The Centenary of the Battle of the Somme Event on 7th May, 2016;
2. The Ulster at War Concert on 24th March, 2018; and
3. The Ladies' Lunch Event on 11th September, 2018.

It was pointed out that the event would take place on 8th June, which was after the local elections on 2nd May. It would not therefore be possible to nominate Members to attend until after the elections. However, if the Committee was minded it could reserve places for the incoming Chairperson and the incoming Deputy Chairperson of the Committee who would be appointed at the Annual Council Meeting on 21st May and for a representative of each of the main Parties on the Council. The names of the nominees could then be given after the elections.

The Committee agreed to this course of action.

Honorary Council in Belfast for Iceland

The Committee approved the acceptance of an invitation by the Chief Executive to become the Honorary Council in Belfast for Iceland.

Chairperson