

Minutes of Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum

Thursday 5 December 2024

Attendance

Members:

Councillor Michael Long
Councillor Séamas de Faoite
Councillor Ciaran Beattie
Councillor Sarah Bunting
Councillor Aine Groogan
Alderman Sonia Copeland

Apologies: Councillor Ryan Murphy

Officers:

John Walsh, Chief Executive
Sharon McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Strategic Director of Corporate Services
Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Trevor Wallace, Director of Finance
Christine Sheridan, Director of HR
David Sales, Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services
Jim Girvan, Neighbourhood Services Manager (for Item 3)
Pol Hamilton, Lead Officer, Community Provision (for Item 3)
John Tully, Director of City & Organisational Strategy (Item 4)
Damien Martin, Strategic Director of Place & Economy
Sinead Grimes, Director of Property & Projects
Lynsey Cameron, Executive Manager (Acting) (secretariat)

1. Finance Update

The Director of Finance provided an update on the setting of the district rate for 2025/26. Party Leaders were reminded of the impact of uncontrollable costs such as the rise in National Insurance Contributions and any other pending announcements. Various scenarios on the impact on the rate were highlighted to Party Leaders. Party Leaders were also reminded of the growth proposals which had been outlined at the recent Party Briefings.

2. Planning Update

The City Solicitor updated the Forum on the live planning applications and provided an update on the applications to be considered at the December Planning Committee.

3. Summer Community Diversionary Festival Fund

Party Leaders were reminded that at November's SP&R Committee, members agreed to defer consideration of the 3 options for the future delivery of the SCDFP to allow for further discussion on the issues which had been raised by Party Group Leaders. The Director of

Neighbourhood Services outlined to Party Leaders the 3 proposed future delivery options and in line with the options suggested members may also wish to consider a revised Fund name. Discussion followed. Party Leaders asked that the timeframe of the Fund process be adjusted to allow for an earlier application launch date and as such it was agreed a paper would be brought to December SP&R committee seeking approval on the future delivery model.

4. Area Based Community Plans

The Director of City & Organisational Strategy outlined early thinking on the approach to place based community planning, to affect real change and impact at community level. Party Leaders welcomed this update and noted that a report will be brought to Committee followed by Party Briefings to further inform the development of this piece of work.

5. Illuminate Request

The City Solicitor outlined a request received from the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU) to illuminate City Hall in green on 13 February 2025 to mark its 150th anniversary. Party Leaders were content this request was approved under the City Solicitor's delegated authority.

6. AOB

Portrait of former Lord Mayor

The City Solicitor advised that the portrait of a former Lord Mayor has been repaired and is now back in situ in City Hall. Associated costs were noted. Party Leaders also noted that there is still an ongoing investigation by the PSNI into the damage caused to the portrait.

Contract Management Update

The Deputy Chief Executive advised that she will be undertaking a review of processes around contract management. A paper on this will be brought to Party Leaders in due course.

Corporate Plan

Party Leaders noted a first draft of the plan will be brought to December SP&R Committee.

Anaerobic Digestion Plant at the North Foreshore

The Director of Property & Projects advised Party Leaders that the terms around this development have been finalised and will be brought to December SP&R Committee this month. Its complementarity to potential neighbouring developments was noted.