



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Presentation – Royal Maternity Hospital Liaison Group</b>
<b>Date:</b>	22nd August, 2008
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Mr. L. Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Mr. L. Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)

### **Relevant Background Information**

Members will recall that the Council, at its meeting on 1st July, passed unanimously the following Notice of Motion:

#### **New Regional Hospital for Children and Women**

“Belfast City Council calls on the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Northern Ireland Executive to make the completion of the new regional hospital for children and women, on the site of the Royal Group of Hospitals, a matter of top priority in the next comprehensive spending review.

The Council calls on the Minister of Health and the Executive to secure the resources now for clearing the site, which is an essential first step in progressing the new hospital for children and women.

The Council agrees to work in partnership with the Royal Maternity Hospital Liaison Group to lobby the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly to secure the capital funds necessary to build the new regional hospital for children and women.”

Copies of the Motion were forwarded to both the Assembly and the Minister for Health. A response has been received from the Minister for Health, a copy of which is attached at appendix 1, in which he indicates that his Department did not receive adequate funding in the current budget allocation for the new regional hospital. However, he has commissioned a review of Capital Priorities over the next 10 years. A revised business case for the new hospital is being developed by the Belfast Trust and in the context of the Review will include phased options for the proposed development, including the possibility of advance site clearance and enabling works. Only when the business case has been submitted and scrutinised can a decision on the funding and timing of the project be taken.

**Relevant Background Information (continued)**

In addition, a response has been received from the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (appendix 2) in which he states that it would be inappropriate to engage the Executive in a matter on which the responsible Minister himself has yet to determine the way forward and may himself wish to bring to the attention of the Executive in due course.

**Key Issues**

Prior to the meeting of the Council, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 20th June, agreed to hold an informal meeting or briefing session to enable the Royal Maternity Hospital Liaison Group to brief the Members on the situation with regard to the new regional hospital.

The final part of the Motion commits the Council to work in partnership with the group but, rather than hold a special meeting, the Chairman of the Committee felt that it would be more appropriate for the group to make a short presentation to the Committee at its meeting on 22nd August.

**Resource Implications**

There are no financial or Human Resources implications associated with this report.

**Recommendations**

To receive a short presentation from representatives of the Royal Maternity Hospital Liaison Group and afterwards to take such action thereon as may be determined.

**Documents Attached**

Appendix 1 – Copy of Response from the Minister for Health, Social Service and Public Safety.

Appendix 2 – Copy of Response from the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service.