



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Corporate Planning Process – Update</b>
<b>Date:</b>	5 August 2011
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive, `Ext: 6001
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Sharon McNicholl, Strategic Planning & Policy Manager, Ext: 6009

### 1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 At its meeting in June, the Committee agreed that the key issue is now for Members to set the leadership direction for Council by considering and shaping priorities to be set out in the future Corporate Plan.

The Committee also agreed that the timetable for development of the new plan should line up with the development of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the setting of the rate for 2012/13.

In the months ahead Members will receive full support to take an evidence based approach to creating a strategy that delivers the Corporate Plan and its financial commitments. The strategy will be clear, concise and easily communicated deliverable with definite roles and responsibilities so that officers can be held to account.

### 2.0 Key Issues

2.1 The development of the priorities and projects which will be the content of the new Corporate Plan has been initiated and a series of Party Group and Member briefings has been facilitated as requested during July and August.

An initial discussion with Party Group Leaders (or their nominees) took place at the end of June to begin to identify and explore potential priorities for the Council and to shape Members input.

To facilitate wider engagement, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed, at its meeting in June, that a workshop be arranged to enable all Members to set out and discuss their views on the important issues and priorities for the city and Council.

	<p><b>The workshop has been scheduled for Wednesday 17 August at 9.30am in the Group Space, Ulster Hall.</b> An invitation has been issued to all Members of Council.</p> <p>The purpose of the workshop is to allow Members to begin to discuss and give direction on the Council's purpose, objectives and priorities for the new Council term.</p>
2.2	<p>The workshop will provide a forum for Members to explore and discuss some of the key leadership challenges facing the Council including, for example defining:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. What is the Council's vision and ambition for the city?</li> <li>ii. What are the key priorities and areas for action – what results do Members wish to achieve within this Council and corporate planning term?</li> <li>iii. What can we afford to do?</li> <li>iv. How can we innovate to maximise the potential investment/funding into the city?</li> </ol> <p>This will set the context in which Members will discuss the Council's place shaping role within the city.</p>
2.3	<p>Given the challenging economic environment and Members' focus on value for money and efficiency it is important that discussions with respect to future priorities are taken forward within the context of affordability limits and maximising the effectiveness of the Council's assets. It is therefore vital that the discussion on the new corporate plan is integrated with the setting of the rate for 2012/2013 and consideration of capital programme and city investment.</p>
2.4	<p>In previous corporate planning processes it has proven extremely valuable where Members have given consideration, in advance of a workshop, to the key issues which they believe will face the city and Council over the next four years and their views on key priorities. In order to inform such considerations briefings have been offered to all political parties and Members.</p>
2.5	<p>In regards to the Members' workshop on 17 August, early feedback from some Members has suggested that consideration be given to using an external facilitator who might challenge Members on their views more robustly than Council Officers might do. The Committee is asked to consider this.</p>
2.6	<p>Regardless of how the workshop is facilitated the aim is to begin a series of real conversations as to how this organisation can best play a role both directly and indirectly in moving Belfast forward.</p>

2.7	<p>The Chief Executive will make a brief presentation to Committee at its meeting on 5 August 2011, outlining the emerging priorities in terms of what should be in the new corporate plan as a foundation for the workshop discussion.</p> <p>This will be followed by a more detailed look at the Council's Place-Shaping agenda by the Director of Property and Projects as this is a key focus for the first of a series of workshops.</p>
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<b>3.0 Resource implications</b>
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3.1	<p><b>Financial</b> None at present</p> <p><b>Assets</b> None at present</p> <p><b>Human</b> Officer time</p>
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<b>4.0 Equality considerations</b>
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4.1	The appropriate equality screening stages have been integrated into the corporate planning process.
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<b>5.0 Decisions required</b>
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5.1	<p>The Committee is asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To make initial comments on the Chief Executive's presentation of emerging priorities in advance of more detailed discussion at the Members workshop on 17 August 2011;</li> <li>ii. consider whether an external facilitator should be used for the Members workshop on 17 August 2011.</li> </ul>
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<b>6.0 Officers to contact for further information</b>
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6.1	Sharon McNicholl, Strategic Planning and Policy Manager, Chief Executive's Department, Ext: 6009.
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<b>7.0 Documents attached</b>
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7.1	None.
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<b>8.0 Abbreviations</b>
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8.1	MTFP – Medium Term Financial Plan.
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