



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	The live streaming and archiving of Council proceedings on the internet
Date:	Friday, 21 October, 2011
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext. 6314)
Contact Officer:	Gareth Quinn, Senior Democratic Services Officer (ext. 6316)

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members will recall that the Committee, at its meeting on 22 October, 2010, agreed to the invitation of tenders for a system which would facilitate the live streaming and archiving of Council meetings on the internet. Furthermore, the matter was discussed briefly at the Committee's most recent meeting on 7 October.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The tender process is now complete and, as agreed by the Committee, the Assistant Chief Executive/Town Solicitor has exercised his delegated authority to approve the successful tender. This will result in the installation and operation of a webstreaming solution which will live stream and archive Council meetings.
2.2	The system will be installed in the Council Chamber over the coming weeks and will be fully tested at the Council meeting on 1st November. This meeting will not be shown live on the internet and the footage will only be used to help with the operation of the equipment, the training of staff and to feedback to the political parties.
2.3	It is important that all Members not only have an understanding of how the system will operate but that they are also both confident and comfortable with any implications that the system may have on the conduct of meetings. In order to ensure that this is the case, the footage recorded on 1st November will be used as a tool to assist with the briefing of Members during November. A further report will be presented to the Committee on 18th November setting out a more detailed protocol. It is intended that the Council meeting on 1st December will be the first meeting to be both broadcast live and archived.

2.4	During the last meeting of the Committee, a number of Members indicated that thought should be given as to how the conduct of the Council meetings might be impacted upon when the live broadcasts commence. In particular, Members were concerned to ensure that the reputation of the Council would not be adversely affected. It is intended that these matters will be discussed with the Parties during the briefings in November and any issues arising will be dealt with in the report to Committee on 18th November. The maintenance of order and the impact that the increased usage of social media during meetings might have will also be discussed with the parties during the briefings in November.
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3	Resource Implications
3.1	The Council has agreed to the implementation of the system at a cost of £60,000 over three years.
3.2	Provision has been made within the draft 2011/2012 revenue estimates for the costs which would be incurred with the purchase of such a system.

4	Equality Implications
4.1	N/A

5	Recommendations
5.1	The Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report and that briefings will take place during November.

6	Decision Tracking
Officers responsible: Gareth Quinn, Senior Democratic Services Officer November 2011	