

Minutes of Budget and Transformation Panel Meeting 8 March 2012

1. Attendance

Members:

Cllr Tim Attwood
Alderman David Browne
Cllr Deirdre Hargey (Chair)
Cllr Maire Hendron
Cllr Jim McVeigh
Alderman Hugh Smith
Alderman Christopher Stalford

Officers:

Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources
Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects
Mark McBride, Head of Finance and Performance

2. RPA

The Chief Executive advised that the Environment Minister had recently written to councils requesting that they restore necessary implementation structures to support the operational delivery of the local government reform at a local level. He reminded Members that initial discussions on local government reform had taken place at the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 2 March 2012. At this meeting the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the issue until its next meeting on the 23 March 2012 to enable members and Political Parties to give further consideration in advance of taking decisions.

Members agreed that a paper should be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 23 March 2012 which would seek the views of Members on the options for the composition of the Belfast voluntary Transition Committee as well as Belfast proposals for progressing the following aspects of the local government reform:

- Transfer of Functions
- Engagement with Lisburn and Castlereagh
- Governance Proposals and Decision Making Process
- Development of Project plan

In response to questions, the Chief Executive confirmed that the voluntary Transition Committee would have no statutory powers and that the makeup of the voluntary Transition Committee was a matter which could be agreed by the Members, however the makeup of the Statutory Transition Committee would however be defined by statute.

3. Data Protection

The Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Resources provided an overview of the actions taken by officers following the release of the personal data, including the communication with and advice provided to Members. The Chief Executive advised that as soon as the breach had become apparent, the communication with Members by telephone

had commenced, however it was clear that more resources should have been applied to this task to ensure that all members were advised as soon as possible and he apologised for the delay in ensuring that all members were made aware of the situation.

The Director of Finance and Resources agreed to provide briefings for Members on an individual or group basis and that these would be co-ordinated through the Party group Leader.

The Chief executive also confirmed that an update on the incident and the management investigation would be provided to Members at the SP&R meeting on the 23 March 2012.

4. Investment Programme

The chief Executive presented a summary of the key milestones for the Investment Programme for the period March – June 2012. These included:-

Political Agreement on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy Frameworks (Capital Programme, CIF and LIF) • Prioritisation Framework • Political Governance Framework 	By 2 April 2012
Design of Political Governance framework	By end of April 2012
Operation of Framework	By end of May 2012
First Prioritisation of Projects	By end of June 2012
Production of Final Investment Programme document	By end of June 2012

While Members agreed that the Local Investment Fund should encourage project proposers to obtain matched funding for their projects, it was recognised that this could prohibit valuable projects being progressed where proposers did not have the capacity to seek out and attract partners or where partner funding streams were difficult to obtain. It was therefore suggested that the scoring criteria for the prioritisation of projects should reflect the sustainability benefits of partnership funding, but that matched funding should not be a mandatory criteria for the Local investment Fund.

It was noted that options for the split of the Local Investment Fund on an area basis would be considered at the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 23 March 2012.

5. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Budget and transformation Panel would be on Thursday 5 April 2012 at a time to be confirmed.