

Minutes of Budget and Transformation Panel Meeting 12 September 2012

1. Attendance

Members:

Cllr Tim Attwood
Alderman David Browne
Cllr Deirdre Hargey (Chair)
Cllr Jim McVeigh
Cllr Lee Reynolds

Officers:

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

External:

Brian Ambrose, Belfast City Airport (For item 2 only)
Katie Best, Belfast City Airport For item 2 only)

2. George Best Belfast City Airport

Mr Brian Ambrose and Mrs Katie Best, George Best Belfast City Airport attended the meeting for this item and presented a summary of the current business activity at the airport and the airport's role in contributing to the local economy through tourism and business development and in particular the airports aim of attracting new European business routes to Belfast.

Mr Ambrose also outlined the airports community outreach projects including work with charities, schools and providing apprenticeship opportunities for 16-24 year olds. He also highlighted the action being undertaken to expand these initiatives across the Belfast area.

3. Feasibility Fund – Governance Arrangements

The Director of Finance and Resources presented a report on the proposed governance arrangements for the Feasibility Fund which had been established by SP&R with a budget of £500k for 2012/13.

It was noted that in future years the fund would mainly be used to support feasibility work on proposals for major scheme proposals under the City Investment Fund (CIF), this would enable work to be taken to a stage where members could make a decision regarding future capital expenditure on proposed CIF projects.

As the major focus of Members and Area Working Groups in 2012/13 had been on establishing the Local Investment Fund (LIF), there was the opportunity to use the 2012/13 feasibility budget to progress work on a number of LIF proposals, until such times as the CIF policy and emerging CIF projects are established.

Given that the 2012/13 feasibility budget was limited to £500k, it was agreed that SP&R should ask Area Working Groups (AWG) to consider recommending up to 5 projects per area for feasibility work. This work will be supported by the feasibility fund and when completed will enable the working groups consider the proposals further.

4. Local Investment Fund – Governance Arrangements

The Director of Property and Projects provided an overview of the delivery options for LIF projects and the key factors which would be considered in deciding on the delivery action and the supporting governance arrangements which would be put in place to ensure value for money and stewardship of public funds in the funding of projects.

It was agreed that the flowcharts describing the delivery options and the governance arrangements should be presented to SP&R for approval at the meeting on the 21 September 2012.

5. Urban Broadband

The Director of Finance and Resources distributed a Executive Summary of the Council's Super-connected Cities programme application for the Urban Broadband Fund. He advised that the planned announcement on successful applications which was due on Friday the 14 September had been delayed due to the cabinet reshuffle. He confirmed that the communications plan was in place and would be implemented should the application be successful. A further update would be provided to SP&R on the 21 September.

6. Freedom of the City

The Chief Executive referred to his correspondence to Councillor McCarthy regarding the Council's policy on awarding the Freedom of the City and the response from other Party Groups. It was noted that a further report to Committee would be made shortly.

7. Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed