



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Notice of Motion re: Northern Ireland Hospice
Date:	19 April 2013
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources
Contact Officer:	Mark McBride, Head of Finance and Performance

1.0	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<p>The Committee will recall that the Council, at its meeting on 3rd April considered the undernoted Notice of Motion which had been proposed by Councillor Convery and Seconded by Alderman Humphrey:</p> <p><u>Northern Ireland Hospice</u></p> <p>“This Council recognises the significance of the work of the Northern Ireland Hospice and its contribution to healthcare in our City and beyond.</p> <p>The Northern Ireland Hospice has contributed significantly to the welfare of the seriously ill by providing palliative care within the Hospice and by providing a service in the community throughout Northern Ireland. It also helps and assist families who at these times are under extreme emotional pressure.</p> <p>Accordingly, the Council agrees to allocate payments of £250,000 in each of the next two financial years to the Northern Ireland Hospice Redevelopment Fund using its special expenditure powers under Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.”</p>
1.2	<p>In accordance with Standing Order 11(e), the Motion stood referred to the Committee.</p>

2.0	Key Issues
2.1	Members will recall that the Committee on 22nd February considered a report regarding a request for funding from the Northern Ireland Hospice (copy attached).
2.2	The Committee agreed to contribute, from the under spend for 2012/13 in accordance with Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, £200,000 towards the redevelopment of the Northern Ireland Hospice. The expenditure was financed from the in year under spend as the Council does not have a separate budget for Section 37 expenditure.
2.3	<p>In considering the Notice of Motion Members must consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question 1: Does the payment fall within the agreed criteria approved by the Council? • Question 2: If the payment was made, would the Council's total payments be within the limit allowable for the Council under Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act 2011? • Question 3: Is there available finance within the Council's budgets to cover the expenditure?
2.4	Question 1: The Legal Services Section has confirmed that the payment to the NI Hospice for the purposes of the redevelopment of the Hospice would meet the criteria agreed by the Council.
2.5	Question 2: The total payments that can be made under Section 37 in 2013/14 and 2014/15 are approximately £305,000 each year. The only other Section 37 payments currently committed for 2013/14 and 2014/15 are £7,600 per annum for the Oil Stamps Scheme. This means that should it be agreed to make the £250,000 payments to the NI Hospice in the next two years the Council would still be within the allowable limit.
2.6	Members should note, however, that the maximum value of additional requests that could be considered in 2013/14 and 2014/15 within the Finance Act limit would be £47,400. Based on previous years, this amount would be adequate to meet expected demand.
2.7	Question 3: Before a payment can be made to the NI Hospice, Members must be satisfied that sufficient resources are available to finance the payments. In-year re-allocations (the method used to finance this type of payment) are considered by the Committee in November each year as part of the half year finance review. It is therefore recommended that if the Committee is minded to approve the payments to the Hospice consideration is given to the affordability as part of the half year finance report in November 2013.
2.8	In summary, the Notice of Motion meets the legal requirements and the payments would be within the financial limits set out in the Local Government Finance Act 2011.

3.0	Equality Implications
3.1	There are no equality implications arising from this report.

4.0	Recommendations
4.1	<p>Should Members wish to commit to payments of £250,000 for the next two financial years, to the NI Hospice then the following recommendation should be approved:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That Committee approve in principle a payment of £250,000 in 2013/14 and 2014/15, subject to the Director of Finance and Resources confirming that there are resources available to meet these payments within each of the financial years. • The financing of the £250,000 payment is considered as part of the half year finance report which will be brought to the Committee in November 2013.

6.0	Decision Tracking
<p>The Director of Finance and Resources will report the forecast financial position to Committee in November 2013 at which time a final decision regarding the payment for 2013/14 can be considered by Committee</p>	

	Key to Abbreviations

	Documents Attached
Appendix 1: SP&R Report 22 February 2013	