



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Area Working Update
Date:	24 th January 2014
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects, Ext: 6217
Contact Officers:	Sinead Grimes, Programme Manager, Ext: 6203

1.0	Relevant Background Information															
	Role of the Area Working Groups															
1.1	Members are aware that the Area Working Groups (AWGs) were established last year as a means of connecting Members to local areas in preparation for their role in community planning under the Reform of Local Government. In governance terms, the AWGs were established to have an advisory role, informing the implementation of the Investment Programme. It was agreed that the AWGs would have no delegated authority and no budget.															
1.2	Since this time, the AWGs have played an integral role in recommending investment decisions for their areas in terms of the Local Investment Fund, the Feasibility Fund and Local Interventions Funds to the SP&R Committee. It was also previously agreed at SP&R in November 2012 that the AWGs would play a central part in the decisions related to the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF) given their knowledge of local areas and projects.															
2.0	Key issues															
	Area Working Group Updates - East AWG - Local Intervention															
2.1	Members will recall that in August 2012, it had agreed to support area interventions to address particular problems or take advantage of opportunities which had been identified by the AWGs. A fund of £100,000 per AWG, with a pro rata amount for the Greater Shankill, was established for taking these forward. A series of interventions have already been agreed for -															
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	An update on the Local Interventions will be brought to a future Committee.															
2.2	The East AWG has made the following recommendation for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their Local Intervention Fund money :															
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		Fund to support the Diamond project in East Belfast under two parts – Part 1 £30,000 support to Charter NI, Part 2: £30,000 to develop a local action plan, on condition that discussions take place with CharterNI to ensure that all necessary issues can be put in place, including the appropriateness of the split as suggested. <i>Members are asked to note that subsequent discussions have taken place with CharterNI in relation to this split and this has been agreed with them. It is recommended that this is taken forward by the Director of HE&S</i>
	Willowfield Parish Community Association	That £7,500 be allocated from the East’s AWG’s Local Intervention Fund to support the development of business plan – this is being matched funded by DSD/BRO. <i>It is recommended that this is taken forward by the Director of Property & Projects.</i>
	Members are asked to note that an update on LIF, including the latest projects, which have completed due-diligence and/or have now received funding agreements is attached at Appendix A and an update on BIF is attached at Appendix B.	
	Social Investment Fund (SIF) – Update	
2.9	Members are aware the OFMdFM established an £80m Social Investment Fund (split between capital and revenue) aimed at <i>‘reducing poverty, unemployment and physical deterioration through strategic areas based interventions of significant scale’</i> . SIF is being delivered in partnership with communities across 9 investment zones with 4 zones in the Greater Belfast area – North, South, East and West and each zone was required to put together an area plan with 10 identified priority projects – these included clusters of capital projects.	
2.10	Members will be aware that there have been delays in the SIF process due to issues with the economic appraisal process and also that the Fund itself was massively oversubscribed. Council officers met with OFMDFM officials last week for an update on the current status of SIF. Decisions on the allocations of monies per zone have now been taken at Ministerial level and details of the projects which will receive funding are now becoming clear. Members will be aware that when the draft area plans were submitted each zones was asked to rank their ten projects in terms of priority. This has now been used as the basis for which projects will receive funding. A number of zones in Belfast have looked at reprioritising their projects on this basis now that allocations are clear.	
2.11	Members were previously updated in March 2012 that the Council was named as the potential delivery agent for a series of capital projects across the four Belfast zones. Committee at this stage gave an ‘in-principle’ agreement for this on the basis that further detail was brought back when this was available. Members are asked to note that following the discussion with OFMDFM last week it is still envisaged that the Council will be the main delivery agent for the majority of capital projects across the 4 Belfast zones. This includes a number of cluster projects and at this stage it is likely that the Council may be the delivery agent for over 30 projects.	
2.12	There will be associated resource implications and resources costs in delivering projects and the impact of delivering these also needs to be taken in the context of the Council’s other project delivery commitments under the Capital Programme, LIF and projects which may emerge through BIF. However at this stage it is not possible to quantify the exact resource implications and Council officers are working with OFMDFM officials to quantify the exact scope and scale of emerging projects. Members are asked to note that a management fee has been build into each project and Council officers are also progressing discussions about how this is best allocated.	
2.13	In the interim, so that projects are ready to be progressed, Members are asked to authorise the Director of Property & Projects, in conjunction with Legal Services, to progress the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with officials from OFMDFM in relation to the delivery of SIF projects within the four Belfast zones. This will be considered in the context of the ongoing	

	resource implications and further detail on both the projects and the management fee associated with these being provided. Further detail on this will be brought back to Committee next month.
2.14	A number of SIF projects could provide substantial matched funding for potential BIF projects (see appendix B). Likewise there are also some potential BIF projects that had been dependent upon SIF funding which is not now forthcoming.
2.15	In these circumstances officers will bring a full report on the current status of BIF projects particularly in regard to matched funding to the February Committee. Members will be asked to consider BIF projects for economic appraisal in the light of matched funding possibilities, feasibility and in accordance with Investment Programme principles such as balanced investment.
2.16	SIF and BIF are only two possibilities open to Members in terms of obtaining resources that might be used to make a real difference to the lives of constituents across the City, there are now further emerging possibilities outlined below.
3.0	Area Planning - Emerging Opportunities
3.1	<p>Committee is asked to note however that the current changes now facing the local government sector provide a great opportunity for Members in terms of making a real difference in Belfast, in particular in terms of physical investment decisions.</p> <p><u>Planning Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's approach to community planning is now beginning to crystallise which will provide a citywide framework and context for taking decisions – the STC agreed on 10th January that a community planning workshop, to which all Members would be invited, would be held. This workshop has now been provisionally agreed for the start of March • there are increasing opportunities to work in partnership with government departments including DRD/DCAL and opportunities for enhanced relationships with the other anchor agencies such as INI/BHC/SIB/UU/QUB/NITB etc. which in turn will assist in attracting private sector investment • Committee has agreed that a major piece of work in terms of regeneration focusing on the city centre, which will link to the ongoing work in relation to community planning, is progressed • there are a number of significant strategic projects (both planned and underway) across the city which provide a timely opportunity for Members to consider the development of comprehensive strategic regeneration plans around these (e.g. Girdwood/North Gateway, Casement Andersonstown LC, Windsor/Olympia, CCG/Avoniel LC). These types of plans would help pick up additional issues and programmes around existing projects <p><u>Resource Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • detail is now forthcoming on what projects will be funded across the city under SIF – these includes a range of capital projects as well as revenue programming projects. There is nearly £40m being invested in the city under this funding stream and this could allow Members the opportunity to cluster investment decisions which will have a greater strategic impact • detailed information is being provided by DSD in terms of the assets, liabilities, contracts, masterplans and resources which will transfer under LGR and the outcome of this should be factored into decisions on project investment. The DSD transfer issue also involves the new boundary areas and a number of interfaces with other government departments • no money has yet been committed under BIF • money may be decommitted from projects under LIF where projects are unable to complete the DD process and/or where there are other reasons why projects are not advanced (match funding not secured etc.) and there is an opportunity for Members to look at the reallocation of this

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The intervention approach (as outlined in 2.1 above) has been a pilot to date with a limited budget ringfenced for these. There is learning that can be taken on board from these that will become more relevant when area planning becomes grounded within Council
3.2	As part of the community planning process endorsed by the STC in January the proposed BIF paper will provide Members with up to date information that can be fed into community and area plans to create optimum benefit, officers can also provide updated capital programme progress together with LIF schemes and emerging DSD transfers to develop an overall investment picture.
4.0	Equality Implications
As part of the Stage approval process, a screening will be carried out on each project to indicate potential equality and good relations impacts and any mitigating actions needed.	
5.0	Recommendations
Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and -	
Local Intervention Fund	
-	agree the Local Intervention recommendations as proposed by the East AWG
Social Investment Fund	
-	authorise the Director of Property & Projects, in conjunction with Legal Services, to progress the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with OFMDFM in relation to the delivery of SIF projects within the four Belfast zones. This will be considered in the context of the ongoing resource implications and further detail on both the projects and the management fee being provided.
Area planning	
-	Members are asked to note the STC decision to host a community planning workshop in March and to receive updates on BIF and other investment opportunities during February.

Appendix A - Local Investment Fund (LIF) – Update

- Over 65 projects have been approved in principle for LIF funding. 40 of these worth £2.66m have now been through the Council’s rigorous due-diligence process. Since September, Members are asked to note that an additional 15 LIF projects have completed due-diligence/have now received funding agreements including

NLIF029	Rosemont House	£46,000 towards the development of a garden
NLIF051	St Mary's Nursery School	£29,000 towards the development of a sensory garden
NLIF055	Small Steps Adult Education Group	£30,281 towards the transforming the grounds of the North Belfast Orange Memorial Hall
NLIF023	Fortwilliam & Macrory Church	£100,000 towards building refurbishments
SLIF042	Women's Aid	£40,000 towards building improvements
SLIF052	Mornington Community Association	£200,000 towards building refurbishments
ELIF016	East Belfast Partnership	£250,000 towards the CS Lewis Visitor Centre
ELIF015	Short Strand Community Centre	£94,648 towards building improvements
ELIF025	Wandsworth Community Association	£25,000 towards building renovations and refurbishments
WLIF029	An Cumann Chluain Ard	£75,000 towards building renovations
WLIF036	Padraig Sairseil CLG (Sarsfield	£80,000 towards the redevelopment of the all weather pitch to a 3G/4G pitch
WLIF020	Divis Joint Development Committee	£60,000 towards building renovations at the Frank Gillen centre
WLIF032	Greater Turf Lodge Residents' Association	£30,000 towards building refurbishments
ShLIF006	Greater Shankill Partnership	£30,000 towards building improvements
ShLIF026	Ballygomartin Presbyterian Church	£27,680 towards building refurbishments

Due-diligence work is continuing on the other projects which have been approved in principle. AWGs will continue to receive updates on the status of all LIF projects in their areas in the coming months which will help inform decisions re re-allocations of LIF monies to existing or alternative projects if required.

Appendix B - Belfast Investment Fund (BIF) – Update

BIF Objectives

BIF was established to enable the Council to take a lead role and work in partnership to deliver key investment projects across the city. Such projects were expected to:

1. Promote the image of Belfast as a place to visit
2. Enable us to promote the city as a place to do business
3. Bring financial or other economic returns to the city which help to build the city's rate base
4. Promote Belfast as a city in which its citizens have pride and belief in a brighter future
5. Enhance the city's strategic, social, cultural and environmental infrastructure
6. Provide a lasting legacy for future generations

The overall objectives of the funding itself which were agreed by Council in December 2007 and further endorsed by Council in April 2012 are to:

- Create a focal point for the council to play a leading role in the development of the city
- Create a 'can do' attitude amongst its citizens and create a sense of place and pride
- Encourage investment from and engagement of the public, private and voluntary sectors in the achievement of that aim
- To contribute to the council's priorities and vision for the city.

While the above objectives were further endorsed by the SP&R Committee in March 2012 the SP&R Committee also agreed to use the funding to support transformational/ iconic programmes or clusters of capital investment as well as single iconic projects. In November 2012 Committee agreed an approval process for BIF projects (see appendix 1) and stipulated that projects must be at least 50% match funded from other sources and with no revenue consequences for council. It was further agreed that the time horizon for BIF was to be three council terms (2007 through to 2019/20).

Current status

19 projects have been agreed by Committee to advance to stage 1 to test their feasibility. This does not constitute a final decision to invest in any project.

AWG	Recommended projects
North	Malgrove; Cancer Lifeline; St. Kevin's Hall; Grace Women's Centre; Ballysillan Masterplan and the Old Grove site
West	St. Comgall's, An Sportslann, Corpus Christi – sports pitches, St Mary's Christian Brothers – sports facilities, Conway Mill, Belfast Hills, Lionra Uladh (Radio Failte) and Suffolk community forum – integrated pre-school development at Teeling's Green
East	Strand Cinema Community Arts project
South	Lagan, Gilpins and Markets Tunnels
Shankill	St. Andrew's Church

Officers are now working closely with groups to progress these to outline case which will check the projects against the criteria and objectives of the funding alongside the feasibility, affordability, deliverability and sustainability.