

## **Minutes of Budget and Transformation Panel Meeting 8 December 2016**

### **Attendance**

#### Members:

Councillor John Hussey (Chair)  
Alderman Pat Convery  
Councillor Matt Garrett (for Cllr J. McVeigh)  
Councillor Billy Hutchinson  
Councillor Michael Long  
Councillor Lee Reynolds  
Alderman Jim Rodgers (for Alderman D Browne)

Apologies: Alderman Browne, Cllr McVeigh

#### Officers:

Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive  
Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources  
Mark McBride, Head of Finance & Performance  
Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects (for Item 2)  
Phil Williams, Director of Planning and Place (for Item 9)  
Emer Husbands, Strategic Performance Manager (secretariat)

### **1. Revenue Estimates 2017 /18**

The Director of Finance and Resources provided an updated position on the revenue estimates and rate setting process for 2017 / 18. This included a revised EPP position and additional efficiency savings. A number of additional potential areas for savings were highlighted by Councillor Reynolds and these would be discussed further at the December SP&R Committee. The Director then outlined the proposed timetable for agreeing the estimates and striking the rate which would include party group briefings and special meetings of the standing committees in January 2017.

### **2. City Centre Development**

The Director of Property and Projects outlined to members a possible city centre development opportunity and he agreed to take a report to December SP&R for a decision on the matter.

### **3. Programme for Government**

The Chief Executive updated members on the Council's draft response to the Programme for Government. The detailed response would be presented to SP&R together with an Executive Summary which would also be e-mailed to members of the panel. She highlighted to members some of the key issues in the response and in particular the council's wish to

work as a strategic partner in co-designing and delivering aspects of the programme in line with its aspirations for the city and the region.

#### **4. Belfast Agenda**

An updated copy of the Belfast Agenda together with a short summary document was circulated. The Chief Executive reminded the panel that this would go out for public consultation from 15<sup>th</sup> December. A launch for stakeholders is planned for 15<sup>th</sup> December and with a number of area events taking place during January. Dates and venues would be sent to members and discussed further at the January meeting of the panel. Members welcomed the document and highlighted the importance of getting the support of our partners to develop and deliver realistic and resourced programmes of work to ensure we achieve our outcomes.

#### **5. Westminster Update**

Following the recent meetings in Westminster and Stormont the Chief Executive re-iterated the council's city growth deal priorities of, creating a single mechanism for regeneration and place-making powers, a focus on skills and employment of citizens at a local level, infrastructure development and exploring access to alternative financing platforms. She also informed members that the City Growth Committee has agreed to commission a detailed piece of work to develop the proposal (including financial contributions and pay-back).

Following the recent event at Stormont further meetings will be set up with MPs in January and another with MLAs. A Political workshop for partner Councils is also proposed for late January/early Feb as well as formal engagement with Executive.

#### **6. Diversity Working Group**

The members agreed that the Party Group Leaders would meet to discuss the future role and remit of the Diversity Working Group. A report would then be brought to SP&R in January 2017.

#### **7. ICT for Members**

The Director of Finance and Resources outlined the proposals to ensure members IT equipment is fully compatible with Office 365. This will involve the replacement of their IT equipment in April 2017. A protocol for ICT support for members was also being drawn up and would be brought to a future meeting.

## **8. Audit and Risk Panel Update**

Alderman Rodgers, chair of the Audit and Risk Panel, provided the Members with a brief update on the recent meeting and in particular highlighted the 'clean' audit received from the NIAO. The minutes of the Audit and Risk Panel would be presented to the November SP&R Committee. He also reminded Members of the protocol for referring matters of concern around council processes to the Audit Panel in line with its terms of reference.

## **9. Planning Applications / Update**

The Chief Executive informed the panel of the applications that were being presented to the Planning Committee in October.

The Director of Planning and Place updated the Panel on the progress with establishing a Framework for securing developer contributions in particular the timeline and steps included in consulting on the framework which will include party group briefings. A report on the framework including the developer contributions to date will be presented to the December Planning Committee.

## **10. AOB**

### **(i) Robinson Centre**

The members were updated on the position in relation to the Robinson Centre.

### **(ii) Peace IV**

The Chief Executive updated the panel on the Peace IV Shared Space funding bid submitted to SEUPB and the fact that a decision was due in January 2017.

### **(iii) New Council Building**

The Chief Executive reminded the panel that staff were starting to move into the new Council building and members were welcome to have a tour anytime from next week.

### **(iv) Bin Route Optimisation**

Members highlighted that there were still problems in some areas following the changes to bin collection routes but that the management in Cleansing Services were helpful in trying to resolve any issues. The Chief Executive asked if she could be copied in on any correspondence to Cleansing Services so that she could discuss it with the Director of City

and Neighbourhood Services. She also informed the Panel that a report on Assisted Bin Lifts would be prepared.