



Subject:	Planning Committee Continuing Development Programme 2017-2018
Date:	14 March 2017
Reporting Officer:	Phil Williams, Director of Planning and Place John Walsh, City Solicitor
Contact Officer:	Ed Baker, Development Engagement Manager Lisa Rogan, Principal HR OD Advisor

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To set out a draft proposed continuing development programme, to be delivered from April 2017 to March 2018, with the aim of further supporting members in their Planning Committee role.
2.0	Recommendations
	Members are asked to:
2.1	Agree the draft proposed continuing development programme (for the period April 2017 to March 2018) and suggest any additional topics or activities that would be of benefit in further supporting members.
2.2	Note that to facilitate members' attendance the sessions will be held bi-monthly. These will be delivered as part of the scheduled second monthly Planning Committee meeting. However, if there is no business to be rolled over from the first monthly meeting, the capacity building session will be the main agenda item for the second meeting. It is proposed that the initial session is delivered at the start of the scheduled 13 April 2017 Planning Committee meeting.
2.3	Note the potential for some sessions to be offered to other elected members dependent on the relevance of the subject area.
2.4	Agree to undertaking a best practice study visit to Cardiff City Council and agree proposed member participation.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Key issues</u>
	Capacity Building Programmes
3.1	Members will be aware that during the Shadow Council period a robust capacity building programme was put in place for the Shadow Planning Committee. The aim of this was to ensure that members were equipped to undertake the planning function once transferred.

	<p>The capacity building programme covered a range of themes and was delivered using internal and, where appropriate, external expertise. A range of formats were used including presentations, practical sessions and workshops. The programme also included two best practice visits to Bristol and Cardiff Councils, the purpose of which was to provide members with an opportunity to learn and gain experience from other Local Authority peer members involved in the planning decision-making process and to see Planning Committees at work.</p>
3.2	<p>Regional training provision</p> <p>The internal capacity building programme was supplemented by a regional programme organised by the Department of Environment. Members of the Shadow Planning Committee were encouraged to attend these sessions as well as other relevant conferences and seminars held by external organisations across Northern Ireland.</p>
3.3	<p>Continuing Development Programme</p> <p>Following the transfer of planning in April 2015 it was recognised that there was a need to provide further training, particularly for new members of the Planning Committee. In August, 2015 the Planning Committee approved a continuing development programme to support and assist members in dealing with the more strategic elements of planning to draft the Local Development Plan and deliver the spatial aspects of the Belfast Agenda. More recently the programme included a series of Local Development Plan workshops dealing with specific topics designed to inform the Preferred Options Paper.</p>
3.4	<p>Proposed Continuing Development Programme</p> <p>The Planning Committee has been operational for almost two years and has had experience of making complex planning decisions which will help shape the city in the future. Recently members of the committee, and senior officers, have suggested it would be useful for the continuing development programme to be updated and refreshed. The updated programme will include sessions which will focus and support members in addressing the key planning issues affecting the city while at the same time being cognisant of the synergies with the aims of Belfast Agenda, the Council's corporate priorities and other key strategies including, the Belfast Regeneration and Investment Strategy.</p>
3.5	<p>To address the issues raised by members a draft continuing development programme, detailing the proposed sessions and the indicative content, is set out at Appendix One.</p> <p>It is proposed the programme will include sessions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport and roads; • Principles of decision-making; • Developer contributions; • Heritage issues and urban design; • Local Development Plan (in addition to a wider programme of LDP sessions); and • Planning Enforcement
3.6	<p>As the programme progresses Members will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the sessions which they have attended and identify other topics or key issues they may wish to have included.</p> <p>Best Practice Study Visit</p> <p>It is recognised there has been several changes to the membership of the committee since it was first established. The draft programme therefore also includes a proposed best practice study visit. Given Cardiff City Council previously hosted an extremely worthwhile visit for our members and officers in 2015 it is proposed a further visit is undertaken to Cardiff in September 2017. Its comparative size and role; its position as the region's major city, and its community planning approach, lends itself to be of significant relevance to the Belfast</p>

	<p>context. The visit will allow members and officers to keep abreast of developments in planning in Cardiff; visit major signature projects which are contributing to city growth and regeneration and see another established Planning Committee at work.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Chair, Deputy Chair, or their nominees, and one member of the committee from each of the other party groups, not represented by the Chair and Deputy Chair, undertakes the best practice visit. It is also recommended that key officers accompany members on the visit to further develop their knowledge and skills.</p>
3.7	<p>Induction of new committee members</p> <p>In order to have a more structured approach to induction for new Planning Committee members it is proposed that an induction pack is developed and issued to new committee members when they are first nominated. A process will also be put in place to ensure new members of the committee receive briefings from relevant key senior officers to help support and guide them through the planning committee decision-making process, before they attend their first Planning Committee meeting.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The programme sessions will be delivered in the main by senior officers with input from key speakers, where appropriate. The costs of any externally facilitated activities and costs associated with undertaking a best practice visit will be met from the corporate organisational development budget.</p> <p>Corporate Human Resources will work with key senior officers to co-ordinate the delivery of the Planning Committee continuing development programme.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no equality or good relations implications</p>
4.0	Appendices
	Appendix One: Draft Proposed Planning Committee Continuing Development Programme 2017-2018.

Appendix One: Planning Committee – Proposed Continuing Development Programme (April 2017-March 2018)

Session title	Session aims	Indicative content	Attendees	Date and time	Facilitator
1. Transport and roads	To provide members with an overview of the key transportation issues relevant to planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key issues for the City • Interaction with the Local Development Plan • Transport Plan for Belfast City Council • Development management • Public transport, rapid transport and encouraging sustainable transport • Green Travel Plans • Car parking strategy for Belfast City 	Planning Committee members	Thursday 13 April 2017 5.00pm to 6.30pm	Planning and Place, and Transport NI
2. Principles of decision-making	<p>To provide members with an objective understanding and appreciation of their individual and collective council responsibilities in making good decisions.</p> <p>To provide members with an understanding of action- legal, policy and accountability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the reformed planning regime • Policy as the basis for decision-making • Members' role - accountability and decision-making • Legal principles for decision-makers • Legal challenges to decisions • Scrutiny and challenge- Judicial Reviews • Plan led system • Material considerations • Role of planning policy and human rights 	<p>Planning Committee Members</p> <p>Licensing Committee members</p>	Thursday 22 June 2017 5.00pm to 6.30pm	Legal Services
3. Developer contributions	To provide members with an understanding of how Developer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are Developer contributions? • Introducing the Developer 	Planning Committee members	17 August 2017 5.00pm to 6.30pm	Planning and Place

Session title	Session aims	Indicative content	Attendees	Date and time	Facilitator
	<p>contributions work and when they can be required</p> <p>To link this training to the Council's proposed Developer Contributions Framework, which provides local guidance to the development community on developer contributions</p>	<p>Contributions Framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning policy context • When can Developer contributions be used? • What level of contribution does the Council seek? • What are contributions spend on? • How the Council deals with viability issues • Planning agreements • Monitoring of contributions 			
4. Local Development Plan	<p>To provide members with an introduction to the preliminary Draft Plan Strategy</p> <p>To furnish members with details relating to the various Local Development Plan Working Groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of responses to the Preferred Options Paper consultation • Findings of evidence based assessments developed in support of the Local Development Plan • Emerging recommendations from LDP Working Groups <p>Timeframes and milestones for publication of the Draft Plan Strategy</p>	Planning Committee Members	21 September 2017 5.00pm to 6.30pm	Planning and Place
5. Heritage issues and urban design	To provide members with an overview of Conservation and Urban Design issues and how these apply to the planning and decision making process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies and designations applicable to both Heritage and Urban Design • Overarching principles and how they can contribute to good placemaking • The impact of new development, demolition and extensions and how 	Planning Committee Members	Thursday 19 October 2017 5.00pm to 6.30pm	Planning and Place

Session title	Session aims	Indicative content	Attendees	Date and time	Facilitator
		<p>they affect our built environment</p> <p>Use of case studies to demonstrate good practice</p>			
6. Planning enforcement	To provide members with an overview of the Council's planning enforcement function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is planning enforcement? • The enforcement process • Enforcement powers available to the Council • Introducing the Council's Planning Enforcement Charter 	Planning Committee Members	<p>Thursday 15 February 2018</p> <p>5.00pm to 6.30pm</p>	Planning and Place/Legal Services
7. Best Practice Study Visit to Cardiff City Council	<p>To provide members with an opportunity to keep abreast of developments in planning in Cardiff;</p> <p>Visit major signature projects which are contributing to city growth and regeneration and</p> <p>To observe another established Planning Committee at work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community planning • Local Development Plan • Planning Committee at work • Cardiff City Centre regeneration • Planning tour of Cardiff inner and outer areas 	Planning Committee nominees	September 2017	Hosted by Cardiff City Council