

Minutes of Budget and Transformation Panel Meeting 11 May 2017

Attendance

Members:

Councillor Hussey (Chair),
Councillor Tim Attwood
Councillor Billy Hutchinson
Councillor Michael Long
Councillor Deirdre Hargey (For Cllr Jim McVeigh)
Councillor Lee Reynolds

Apologies: Alderman Browne, Cllr McVeigh

Officers:

Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources
John Walsh, City Solicitor
Emer Husbands, Strategic Performance Manager (secretariat)

1. City Centre Investment Fund

The Chief Executive updated the panel on the recommendation from the City Growth and Regeneration Committee on the allocation of part of the City Centre Investment Fund (CCIF) which would be presented to May SP&R Committee. She highlighted the importance of the timing of the decision given the market conditions and also outlined possible ways of using parts of the CCIF to help lever additional funds and maximise investment.

2. Regional Rate

The Deputy Chief Executive circulated a report providing the updated position on the regional rate which has now been set at an increase of 1.61%. This means that the overall rate increase for Belfast residents will be 1.73% and rates bills could now be issued.

3. Smart City Framework

The Deputy Chief Executive provided an update on a proposed 'Smart Belfast' framework which aims to support and develop the talent of the digital SME sector and our universities, to deliver solutions to help overcome public policy challenges in line with the Belfast Agenda. The full proposal would be presented to SP&R in May and he highlighted that it build on a number of success already achieved through the initial stages of the programme.

4. Growth Deal

The Chief Executive provided the Budget Panel with a summary update on proposals for the next stages in the strategy to secure a growth deal for the Belfast city region. The members agreed the need to secure the support of the private sector and also the importance that the benefits of any such deal were in the wider context of the region.

5. Consultation Response on Sunday Trading Hours

A report outlining the findings of the recent consultation on Sunday trading was circulated and the City Solicitor took the members through the key points. The panel were reminded that the report would be presented to SP&R and they had already agreed a number of delegations could attend the committee to provide their responses at the meeting. The members discussed the report and asked if there could be a further breakdown of some of the results included in the final report.

6. Planning Updates

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

7. AOB

Leisure Update

The Chief Executive reminded the members that the Trade Unions would be attending SP&R in May in relation to Andersonstown Leisure Centre. A mobilisation workshop had been held with the West Area Working group and the report from this would also be presented to Committee.

Fleet Review

This report had been deferred at April Committee pending further information and the Chief Executive said that a more detailed report would be brought back in June.

Lord Mayors Car

The members agreed that the Lord Mayor would now be picked up from City Hall in the mornings for attendance at any events. This arrangement would be adopted as the norm with a degree of flexibility built in to take account of the Lord Mayors diary commitments.

Freedom of the City

The Chief Executive asked if parties could respond to the Lord Mayor's current proposal in relation to Freedom of the City. She also agreed to take a report to a future meeting on options on how citizens could be recognised by the council going forward.

8. Organisational Development – *All Officers except CX left the meeting*

The Chief Executive discussed with members options for future organisational structures.