Belfast Agenda
Governance Model

Governance Model Composition

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Belfast City Council

1. Introduction

Good governance is about doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

The Council has designed governance arrangements for the Belfast Agenda. These are set out in this document. The governance arrangements are integral to the successful delivery of the Agenda and, related to this, for the Council itself to secure continuous improvement. The purpose of these governance arrangements is to ensure that there is effective direction, decision making and oversight of the ongoing development and delivery of the Belfast Agenda. The governance arrangements will also serve to ensure there is clear understanding of processes and accountability for the delivery of outcomes.

These governance arrangements will be essential to those chairing and attending relevant governance forums (Council management, Members and Community Planning partners) as a basis for understanding their role, authority and accountability and determining and directing their activities. They will also serve as a reference point for other interested parties not directly involved in the specific governance forums, but who have an interest in the delivery of the Agenda and associated programme of work.

This document sets out the key principles of the governance model, a pictorial summary (schematic) and provides details on the key constitutional elements of the model. It is also sets out the arrangements for ongoing review of the governance model and anticipated further developments in the future.
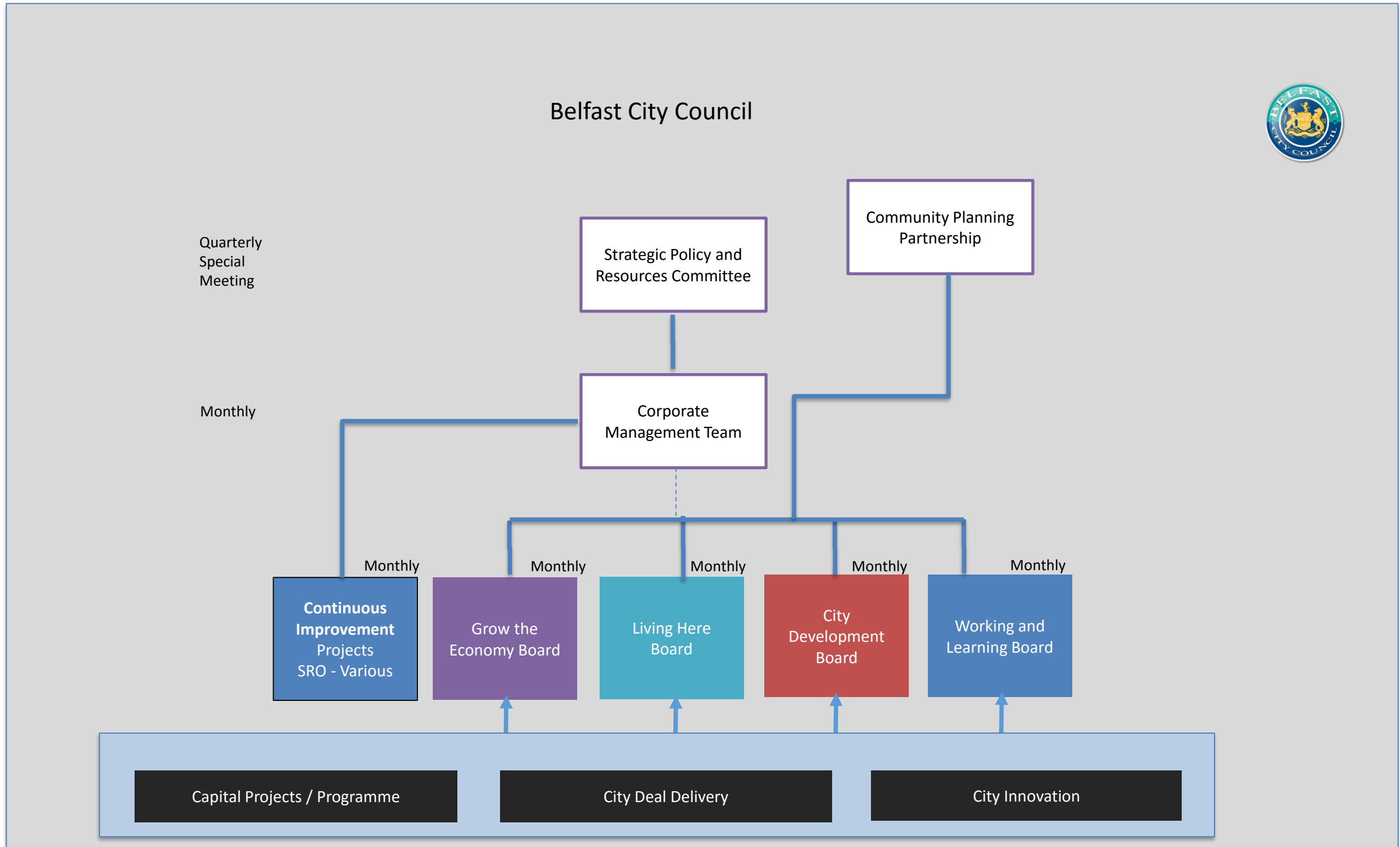
2. Key Principles

1. This proposed governance model is initially focused on how we support the delivery of the Belfast Agenda and Continuous Improvement plan for the Council.

2. Formal Council governance will be via SP&R[1], CMT and four underpinning boards (linked to Agenda themes) that will be chaired by a nominated SRO (Note: these boards will provide a specific focus on the strands of the Belfast Agenda where gaps / opportunities exist rather than be unduly onerous or all encompassing).

3. Each SRO will have a Portfolio Management support from the Strategic Hub, which will manage the overall delivery of outcomes and inclusive growth for their 2017-2021 Priorities. Board membership will be flexible; the SRO will be guided by the need for delivery of outcomes against priorities rather than rigid structures.

4. Formal partnership governance of the Belfast Agenda will be via the Belfast Community Planning Partnership. The SROs will be accountable to the Community Planning Partnership.

5. Where possible, partnership delivery will be achieved through existing organisations and/or existing partnerships towards the achievement of Belfast Agenda outcomes. It may also be necessary to establish new partnerships, such as time-bond task and finish groups.

6. No initial changes to the Council's financial decision making arrangements, with an Investment Support mechanism to be developed at a later stage.

[1] Whilst the Corporate Plan indicates that there will be Lead Committees for the delivery of specific Commitments 2017-21, it is proposed that SP&R is also named as a Lead Committee for each commitment to ensure this oversight is possible.

3. Governance Model – Belfast Agenda
Summary Schematic

Belfast City Council

Quarterly
Special
Meeting

Strategic Policy and
Resources Committee

Community Planning
Partnership

Monthly

Corporate
Management Team

Monthly | Monthly | Monthly | Monthly | Monthly

Continuous Improvement Projects SRO - Various

Grow the Economy Board

Living Here Board

City Development Board

Working and Learning Board

Capital Projects / Programme

City Deal Delivery

City Innovation

4a. SP&R Committee (quarterly meeting)

Purpose

- A special SP&R Committee convened each quarter to focus on the committee's existing responsibilities as follows:
  - Setting the strategic direction of the Council through the development of its corporate plan and other key corporate and cross cutting strategies and policy;
  - Working with partners to lead the development of the community plan;
  - Managing and monitoring performance against the achievement of the council objectives [agreed in the Corporate Plan] and those agreed in the community plan; and
  - Developing the council's organisational development strategy and all matters relating to its implementation including: governance and organisational structures, organisational improvement initiatives, member and officer capacity building and monitoring of organisational performance.

Frequency

- Quarterly (First Friday of the month)
- (where possible this SP&R Committee will be preceded by a Community Planning Partnership meeting).

4b. Standing Committees

- No changes to the structure or terms of reference of the Council's standing committees are proposed
- Standing Committees will be furnished with reports on the progress of relevant Belfast Agenda related activity, issues and outcomes
- Standing Committees will continue to receive financial reports in relation to rate setting, spend against budget reports in relation to their areas of responsibility
- It will be the responsibility of the relevant Strategic Director to ensure that the Committees are furnished with the relevant reports

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4c. Belfast Agenda Boards x 4

Purpose

- To manage the delivery of the programme outcomes and projects that fall under the relevant programme, and to report on outcomes related issues and the capacity of Council, Community Planning Partners and Support Partners to deliver agreed community outcomes.

Frequency

- Monthly

Composition

- Chair: Programme SRO

Members

- Portfolio Manager
- Community Planning Partners*
- Support Partners *
- Media and Communications
- Others as determined by the Chair*

Secretariat

- Portfolio Management when established

Quorum

- 2 members, to include the Chair.

* Membership will be flexible and will be determined by the SRO and will be portfolio focused

Within the scope of the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) mandate, the functions of the Programme Board are:

- To hold the Council, Community Planning Partners and Support Partners to account for the delivery of the outcomes, benefits and projects within the programme;
- To be accountable (through the SRO) to the Community Planning Partnership Board
- To assure the overall health of the delivery activity of the programme;
- To recognise the risks and issues affecting the delivery, including monitoring current and forecast use of funding and resources against agreed budgets, and ensure appropriate mitigations are in place;
- To escalate issues that cannot be managed within this Programme Board with recommended action to the Council's CMT or the Community Planning Partnership;
- To raise issues with recommended action to the Council's CMT or the Community Planning Partnership where delivery activity has, or is predicted to, go outside of approved tolerances;
- To align the communication of the programme plan and delivery success with the wider Belfast Agenda portfolio;
- To receive, consider and assess the impact of new change requirements from the Belfast Agenda portfolio or from within the programme;
- To specify requirements for resources and programmatic support from the portfolio or Community Planning Partnership; and
- To support CMT by identifying potential funding and resource requirements, and assessing the relative priorities for committed and potential change activities.

4d. Belfast Community Planning Partnership

Purpose

- Provide overarching oversight, guidance and strategic direction for the Community Planning process in Belfast to ensure that objectives of the Belfast Agenda are achieved and compliance with statutory obligations for community planning

Frequency

- At least 2x per year.

Composition

- Chair: Chief Executive BCC

Members

- Community Planning partners (inc BCC)
- SROs

Attendees

- Support partners (Business, education, community and voluntary sector representatives

Secretariat

- Strategic Hub

Quorum

- 25% of eligible members

The functions of the Belfast Community Planning Partnership are:

- Development of community plan
- Delivery of assigned tasks and workstreams in the community plan
- Monitoring and review of the community plan
- Seeking community participation in the community planning process, including production and review of the community plan
- Integrating community plan objectives and priorities within (planning partner) corporate and business planning regimes.

5. Review and Further Development

- Governance Model
  - Given arrangements are new / evolving, to be reviewed on a quarterly basis by Director of City & Organisational Strategy, in consultation with partners, committees and officers.

- Further Development Phases
  - Establish Area Working links
  - Establish wider links (e.g. Planning)
  - Alignment with Belfast Region City Deal delivery governance
  - Consideration of the alignment / relationship with the Council's rate setting and financial decision / investment mechanisms
  - Consideration of the alignment / relationship with the Council's corporate planning, performance management and risk management processes
  - Development of information / reporting arrangements for measuring current position against Belfast Agenda priorities, monitoring progress in relation to agreed outcomes and related programmes / projects.

(related programme of work to be developed)

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