



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Belfast City Centre Regeneration Task Force</b>
<b>Date:</b>	7th November, 2018
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Alistair Reid, Strategic Director Place and Economy, ext. 2233
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Cathy Reynolds, City Regeneration and Development Lead Officer

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Some time in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	To advise Members on proposals for a City Centre Regeneration Task Force to provide high level public sector commitment to the regeneration of the city centre, in light of the impact of the recent Bank Buildings Primark fire.

2.0	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the proposal to establish a City Centre Regeneration Task Force aimed at ensuring a collaborative public sector response to drive and resource the city centre recovery efforts in response to the Bank Buildings fire and provide a high level forum for the consideration of cross cutting issues and proposals for collaborative working and co-investment in the city centre. The proposed Task Force is to be jointly chaired by BCC’s Chief Executive and the Head of the Civil Service and with membership made up of the Permanent Secretaries.</li> <li>• that future reports will be submitted to the Committee in relation to the work of the Task Force, in the context of both a shorter and longer term action plan and with a focus on those parts of the city most impacted by the fire.</li> </ul>
3.0	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><b><u>Key Issues</u></b></p> <p>Members are aware of the significant effort currently in place to respond to and manage the impact of the Bank Buildings Primark fire, which has resulted in significant officer time and Council financial resources being directed towards city recovery. This has included a focus on the future redevelopment of the building, economic and business recovery in the area as well as wider city connection and infrastructure issues.</p>
3.2	<p>Clearly, this recovery work has required ongoing engagement with businesses and their representative bodies and this will continue. To date the Council has taken the lead role in recovery plans from a public sector perspective, although this has involved ongoing liaison with a number of central government departments and public sector bodies including DfI, Translink, DfC, Visit Belfast etc. The recovery plans have significant financial and staff resource implications for the Council and whilst it is recognised that this level of effort and commitment is likely to continue in the coming months, and with continued liaison with other public bodies, it is essential that the public sector also takes a strategic view on how to maximise current efforts to revitalise the city centre in the longer term.</p>

3.3	<p>It is critical, therefore, that both the immediate and longer term recovery priorities for the city centre are considered in a strategic and collaborative manner in order to maximise our efforts to ensure that the city centre is successfully revitalised.</p>
3.4	<p>At a recent meeting between senior Council Officers and the Head of the Civil Service and Permanent Secretaries to discuss the need for a collaborative approach to city recovery there was agreement to establish a City Centre Regeneration Task Force, jointly chaired by BCC's Chief Executive and the Head of the Civil Service.</p>
3.5	<p>The aim of the Task Force is to ensure a collaborative public sector response to drive and resource the city centre recovery efforts in response to the Bank Buildings fire and provide a high level forum for the consideration of cross cutting issues and proposals for collaborative working and co-investment in the city centre. It is intended that the Task Force will provide the strategic oversight and direction to drive and facilitate the delivery of the ongoing city centre recovery and revitalisation plans both in the short and longer terms.</p> <p>It is proposed that there will be an immediate focus on a recovery plan to address the issues of the Bank Buildings fire but with a longer term action plan and a focus on those parts of the city most impacted by the fire.</p>
3.6	<p>Terms of Reference for the Task Force are to be agreed by the parties and it is intended to have the first meeting of the Task Force within the next month.</p>
3.7	<p>Given that the impacts of the fire have long-term consequences for businesses in the city centre as well as the future role and success of the city centre, it may also be timely to consider the prioritisation of key elements within the Belfast City Centre and Investment Strategy that will help realise the Belfast Agenda ambitions and take account of other strategic moves by the public sector in the city centre. This will also need to take cognisance of existing and proposed developments and reflect the changing economic, social and physical environment in the city centre. It will need to consider housing, transport and tourism aspects. Critically, it will need to take account of the impacts of the recent Bank Buildings fire and the need to prioritise regeneration efforts in this part of the city. Further reports on this will however be brought back to Committee.</p>

3.8	<p>Alongside the proposed Task Force there will continue to be ongoing liaison with businesses, their representative bodies and other stakeholders in order to ensure that there is a joined up and strategic approach to city recovery both in the short and longer term.</p> <p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p>
3.9	<p>It is intended that the Task Force will provide a collaborative public sector approach in terms of how we collectively maximise our investment and efforts to revitalise the city centre. Staff time will be required to support the Task Force, as well as the current Joint BCC/DfC Regeneration Working Group.</p> <p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p>
3.10	<p>None associated with this report. The Council's Equality and Diversity Officers will be consulted on any future changes to strategies or plans that are currently in place.</p>
4.0	<p><b>Documents attached</b></p>
	<p>None</p>