

Minutes of Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum

17 October 2019

Attendance

Members:

Alderman Brian Kingston (Chair)
Councillor Ciaran Beattie
Councillor George Dorrian
Councillor Fiona Ferguson
Councillor Billy Hutchinson
Councillor Brian Heading (for Councillor Donal Lyons)
Councillor Michael Long
Councillor Mal O'Hara
Alderman Sonia Copeland

Officers:

Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources
John Walsh, City Solicitor
Nigel Grimshaw, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services
John Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy
Joanne Delaney, Policy & Performance Analyst (secretariat)

1. Corporate Plan 2019-23

A draft Corporate Plan and associated Delivery Plan will be presented to SP&R in October for approval to commence public consultation. Following the public consultation the final Corporate Plan will be brought back to SP&R in February 2020.

2. Finance

Medium Term Financial Plan/Efficiencies

The Director of Finance and Resources outlined the priorities and work in progress to establish the efficiency agenda and associated targets for 2020/21 – 2022/23. Work is continuing on the non domestic revaluation which will form the basis for the 2020/21 EPP. An update report on the impact for the Council will be presented to November SP&R committee. Party Group Briefings will then be held in November/December as part of the rate setting timetable.

3. Notices of Motion

The City Solicitor sought the views of the Forum on a proposed process for managing notices of motion. The Forum agreed that this issue needs further consideration and that a report will be brought back in November outlining proposals. This report will also include options on reporting mechanisms to monitor and track notices of motions for members.

4. Freedom of the City

The City Solicitor outlined current requests for Freedom of the City. The Forum discussed the process for considering Freedom of the City requests and proposals for alternative options on how citizens could be recognised by the council. A report will be brought back to a future meeting of the Forum outlining proposed alternatives for recognition, this report to also include the current process for considering requests for Freedom of the City. Current requests will be considered in the context of the process once revised.

5. Call In – Economic Future Planning

The City Solicitor provided a summary of counsel advice on call in relating to the Motion - Economic Future Planning. This response will be considered at the next council meeting.

6. Planning Update

The Chief Executive updated the Forum on the live planning applications and informed the Forum of the applications that were being presented to the Planning Committee this month. Councillor Hutchinson raised an issue in relation to a planning application and indicated he would refer the matter to the City Solicitor.

7. AOB

(i) Anti-Social behaviour in the Holylands Area

The Chief Executive informed the Forum that she would be attending an Inter Agency meeting along with the Director of City & Neighbourhood Services in relation to issues raised about anti-social behaviour in the Holylands and the surrounding area. The Chief Executive will shortly be convening a further meeting

which would be open to all concerned stakeholders to attend to look at progress on current action plan and what further can be done.

(ii) George Telford Memorial LOL 1118 Centenary Celebration Dinner

The City Solicitor tabled a written apology made by the officers and members of George Telford Memorial LOL 1118. The Chief Executive advised that the investigation into events on the evening were ongoing and a report on the investigation will be brought back to the Forum once completed.

(iii) Requests for Use of City Hall Grounds

Councillor Ferguson requested information be brought to a future meeting on the process for requesting use of City Hall grounds and the timeframes involved. She further raised an issue regarding protests/demonstrations at the front of the City Hall.

(iv) Waste Collection

Councillor Long requested a report on managing waste collections is brought to a future meeting.

(v) Consultation Process Report on Council decisions to erect bilingual / multilingual external naming and internal directional signage in city-wide leisure centres

Further to the Special meeting of Council on Friday 11th October, the City Solicitor informed members that he would circulate a draft framework to Party Group Leaders prior to a report going to October SP&R.

(vi) Inclusive Growth Strategy - Consultation Launch

The forum were reminded that a photo call has been arranged for Party Group Leaders (or nominee) on Monday 4th November at 5.40pm. A reminder email will be circulated.

8. Presentation Good Relations Audit – Peter Osborne (*Margaret Higgins, Good Relations Unit also attended for this item*)

Peter Osborne, provided an update on the background to the Good Relations Audit which will be used to inform the forthcoming Good Relations Action Plan which is part of the implementation of the Good Relations Strategy. He discussed the ongoing consultation he was carrying out in relation to the Audit. A draft report of the audit will be completed by end of October 2019 and will be brought to the Party Leaders Forum and then to a future Strategic Policy & Resources Committee via the Shared City Partnership.