

# **Minutes of Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum**

## **14 November 2019**

### **Attendance**

#### Members:

Alderman Brian Kingston (Chair)  
Councillor Ciaran Beattie  
Councillor George Dorrian  
Councillor Billy Hutchinson  
Councillor Donal Lyons  
Councillor Nuala McAllister (for Cllr Long)  
Councillor Mal O'Hara  
Alderman Jim Rodgers (for Alderman 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  
Sean Dolan, Acting Director City Regeneration and Development  
Emer Husbands, Strategic Performance Manager (secretariat)

### **1. City Centre Connectivity Study**

The Acting Director of City Regeneration and Development updated the forum on the ongoing work to develop a City Centre Connectivity Study which had been presented to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. This included the proposed process and engagement to develop the city centre future vision and the emerging work programme with DfC in relation to civic spaces. Members discussed the need to ensure any study on the city centre takes account of the impact on surrounding communities and asked that further engagement is carried out with these communities. The forum also referred to the need to get clarity from DfI on a transport plan for the city and agreed to invite them to a future meeting of the PGLCF in the new year.

### **2. Strategic Site Assessments**

The forum were provided with an overview on the ongoing work on the Strategic Site Assessment piece which was being undertaken. The Chief Executive outlined a number of decisions that the SP&R Committee would be asked to take at their November meeting in order to progress this work. This includes further areas of work required to deliver a

comprehensive programme of mixed used regeneration, both residential and commercial, around the city centre. It was noted that Party Group Briefings have also been held to discuss the proposals in more detail.

### **3. Finance**

#### **Quarter 2 Update**

The Director of Finance and Resources presented the 2019/20 quarter 2 financial position for the council and the forecast for the year end outturn. The recommendation to the November SP&R Committee will be that no reallocations or cash flow payments are considered until the quarter 3 position is presented to members in February 2020.

#### **Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2020/21**

The Director of Finance and Resources outlined the ongoing process to develop the revenue estimates and set the district rate for 2020/21. He provided an update on the efficiency savings that had been identified as part of the process, the business as usual cost pressures and the priority growth proposals. Following November SP&R the Director will be attending Party Group Briefings to discuss the proposed budgets in detail with members, and further reports will be brought back to the forum and SP&R in December 2019.

### **4. Statement of Progress – Belfast Agenda**

The Director of Organisational Strategy circulated a summary statement of progress document on the Belfast Agenda, which highlighted key actions and achievements over the past two years. The full document on progress will be presented to the November SP&R Committee.

### **5. Waste Collection (Siobhan Toland and John McConnell attended for this item)**

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services provided a short presentation on the Waste Collection Service including an update on issues regarding missed bins as well as areas that are being targeted for improvement. The members commended the City Services Manager on his team's response to queries and requests. It was agreed that more focussed discussions on specific issues should be held with the area working groups at their meetings early in the New Year

### **6. Notices of Motion**

The City Solicitor circulated an updated proposal on a process for dealing with Notices of Motion and invited feedback or suggestions from members on the report.

## **7. 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. It was agreed that officers from the Planning Service should attend a future meeting of the forum to provide an update on their Improvement Plan.

## **8. AOB**

### **December Strategic Policy and Resources Committee**

The forum requested that given the date of the General Election that the December SP&R meeting is rescheduled and should take place week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019. It was agreed that a report recommending a new date that week would be brought to the November meeting for consideration.