

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 16th December, 2022

MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor McDonough-Brown (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly);
Aldermen Dorrian and Haire; and
Councillors Beattie, Bradley, Bunting, Ferguson,
Garrett, Groogan, Heading, Long, Lyons, McLaughlin,
McMullan, Murphy, Pankhurst, Spratt, Verner and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, Chief Executive;
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and
Civic Services;
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;
Ms. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and
Development;
Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 18th November were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council, at its meeting on 1st December, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Councillors Garrett, Groogan and Spratt declared an interest in respect of agenda item 2c – Update on North Foreshore, on the basis that they were on the Planning Committee and left the meeting whilst it was under consideration.

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in relation to agenda item 2d – Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund, in that she was employed by one of the Strategic Partners named in the appendix to the report and left the meeting whilst it was under consideration.

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Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following four items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the meeting during discussion of the following four items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2023/24

The Director of Finance submitted for the Committee's consideration a report providing an update on the development of the revenue estimates for 2023/24 and outlining the next steps in the rate setting process.

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. noted the update on the development of the revenue estimates and the setting of the District Rate;
- ii. agreed that further Party briefings be held to enable the issues which had been raised by Members to be addressed in greater detail;
- iii. approved the following next steps in the process:
 - a. that a special meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be convened on 13th January, to receive an update report on how an indicative rate could be achieved;
 - b. that further consideration be given to the increase in fees and charges being proposed within the report;
 - c. that a Finance Strategy be developed to ensure the affordability and financial sustainability of Council finances over the medium term;
 - d. that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 13th January, agree the cash limits for Committees and the level of the District Rate to be set for 2023/24;
 - e. that special meetings of the City Growth and Regeneration, People and Communities and Planning Committees be arranged for week commencing 16th January to approve their respective cash limits; and

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- f. that the district rate increase for 2023/24 be agreed at the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 20th January, after final consideration of the Chief Finance Officer's statements on the adequacy of the Council's reserve position and the robustness of the revenue estimates, as required by the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.
- iv. noted that the setting of the District Rate was a decision which must be made at a meeting of the Council and that, legally, this must occur by 15th February, 2023;
- v. noted that information on external consultancy costs incurred over the course of the current Council term, which had been requested at the Committee meeting on 21st October, would be circulated in advance of the Party briefings, with a more detailed report to be submitted to the monthly meeting in January;
- vi. granted approval for officers to write to Central Government Departments to call for the transfer of certain powers to the Council, to enable it to review those charges which were currently set by statute; and
- vii. noted the information which had been provided by the Chief Executive in relation to the Pay and Grading Review and:
 - a. authorised him to continue with the negotiations, on the basis of that information; and
 - b. noted that the implications of the Review would be considered as part of the revenue estimates/rate setting process, with further discussion to take place at the Party briefings and the special meeting of the Committee on 13th January.

Update on Contracts

The Committee:

- approved the public advertisement of tenders, as per Standing Order 37a, as detailed in Table 1 below;
- approved the award of Single Tender Actions, in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions, as detailed in Table 2 below; and
- approved the modification of the contracts, as per Standing Order 37a, as detailed in Table 3 below;

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Table 1: Competitive Tenders

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Estimated Total Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services
Daisy Telephone service provision, Calls / Lines / Broadband	Up to 12 months	£83,810	P. Gribben	The corporate telephony solution requires that all devices and users have ongoing service provision.
Professional contractor to engagement, management and physical delivery of the international residency project in partnership with British Council *Previously approval Aug 2022 for 18 months but now reviewed duration is 24 months	Up to 24 months	£160,000	J. Greer	The project requires a local delivery organisation to work with BCC producer to identify the 4-5 local locations, partner with local organisation in the area, and oversee and administer the 5 residencies of the artists visiting NI.
Supply, delivery and fitting of hydraulic hoses on vehicles and mobile plant	Up to 3 years	£80,000	C. Matthews	This is a specialist service which cannot be carried out in-house.
To supply Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil bulk fuel (HVO) which has up to 85/90% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions for daily fleet usage from the Duncrue Complex	Up to 4 years	£6,000,000	C. Matthews	To ensure that the Council's vehicles based at Duncrue Complex use the lowest carbon fuel available on its transition journey to achieving a zero net carbon output by 2030/2040/2050 through low carbon fuels, new technologies and new vehicles.
Supply of summer and winter bedding plants	Up to 3 years	£240,000	D. Sales	Annual floral displays across the City.
Supply and delivery of litter pickers tools for Stores	Up to 3 years	£75,000	S. Grimes	Litter pickers tools required to support in house teams/ operatives.
Regeneration Framework	Up to 2 years	£200,000	C. Reynolds	Commission of services to produce Regeneration Framework inc. housing led and place-based regeneration, funding advocacy proposition and

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				programme level business cases for the Council.
Installation of wireless digital connectivity network infrastructure in three rooms in City Hall	Up to 18 months	£175,000	J. Tully	A wireless digital connectivity network is required to support the Council's Augment the City programme and related digital projects.
Provision of Parking Enforcement for 8 Local Authorities in Northern Ireland	Up to 9 years	£13.5m (BCC spend - £2,25m over 9 years)	S. Toland	Off Street Car Parking enforcement contract and associated services for the efficient management for 8 local authorities across Northern Ireland. BCC is conducting joint procurement exercise on behalf of 8 local authorities.
Retail catering and small/medium sized event catering at Belfast Castle and Malone House	Up to 5 years	£6m (Estimated potential revenue for the Contractor)	J. Greer	To provide retail catering (i.e. café/restaurant) and small/ medium sized event catering at Belfast Castle and Malone House.

Table 2: Single Tender Actions

Title	Duration	Total Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
Retail catering and small/medium sized event catering at Belfast Castle and Malone House	Up to 1 year	£1.2m (Estimated potential revenue for the Contractor)	J. Greer	This STA will ensure that the venues are re-opened for business as soon as possible whilst an open procurement exercise is conducted.	USEL

Table 3: Modification to Contract

Title of Contract	Duration	Modification	SRO	Description	Supplier
T1980a Enterprise Pathway Programme	Up to 3 years	Additional 8 weeks	J. Greer	An extension would allow participants to get full benefit of mentoring hours	North City Business Centre

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				allocated. This would also provide additional time to complete all necessary monitoring and vouching required in good time prior to financial year end.	
ITT 34620 - MTC for repair and planned maintenance of small engineering and metalwork	Up to 3 years	Additional 3 months	S. Grimes	To allow the unit to update the tender documentation as part of a new procurement exercise. This will ensure the incumbent contractor can continue to carry out essential services until the new contract is in place.	WJM Building Services Ltd.
T1990(b) Cinematography for PEACE IV Programme Services	Up to 37 months	Additional 2 months	D. Sales	This extension will allow for all filming to be captured fully to allow the final programme clips to include footage from all aspects of the programme. The Contract was uplifted in October 2020 by £2,920 for voiceover and still images. The Contract was extended/modified to cover 1st January 2022 to 31st October 2022 and included an uplift of £5,720.00 with approval by the Committee in December 2021.	Morrow Communications
T2203 PEACE IV Youth Engagement & Civic Education Project	Up to 13 months	Additional 2 months and £16,000	D. Sales	There has been significant delay with the project progressing due to	Youth Link NI

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				recent interruptions due to staff testing positive for COVID. These additional two months would further help with project delivery and the achievement of the agreed targets.	
T1846 Collection and Treatment of Mixed Waste Materials – Timber and Hard Plastics T2006 Collection and reuse/recycling of Plasterboard T1896 Collection and Treatment of Paints and Varnishes	Up to 50 months	Additional 3 months and £125,000	C Matthews	A new tender process (T2310) which, is an amalgamation of three separate contracts listed, is currently under evaluation process. There is a delayed due to the necessary clarification of responses provided by the seven bidders, including social value responses. An extension is requested to ensure a thorough evaluation process is carried out.	T1846 MacNabb Bros and R. Heatrick Ltd T2006 MacNabb Bros T1896 Irish Waste Services

Update on North Foreshore

This minute has been restricted on the basis of Commercial Sensitivity. The restriction will be removed in due course.

Fuel Poverty Hardship Fund

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee's consideration a report providing an update on the work being undertaken around the implementation of the Fuel Poverty Hardship Scheme.

After a lengthy discussion, the Committee agreed that the restriction which had been placed on the report be removed to enable it to be included in the minute of the meeting.

Accordingly, the Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the ongoing work to implement the Fuel Hardship scheme, as discussed previously at Committee and as agreed by the Council on 1st December, 2022.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 In line with the Council decision of 1st December, the Committee is asked to:

- i.** note the proposed phased commencement of the scheme pre and post-Christmas implementation dependent upon partners’ capacity (as agreed by Full Council);
- ii.** note the proposed flexibility to support those who pay utilities via direct debit;
- iii.** note that the initial proposal to establish a Cost-of-Living Task Force has now been superseded by the decision taken by the Council on 1st December 2022, in relation to confirming eligibility criteria and design principles; and
- iv.** provide direction on the potential for the Council to support full cost recovery for strategic partners in relation to essential costs/expenses incurred in delivering the Fuel Hardship Scheme. NB. it is anticipated that, in total, this would amount to no more than £100,000 and would be awarded outside of the £1m allocated to the Fuel Hardship Fund.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 Members will recall the discussion at last month’s Committee meeting and subsequent decisions taken by the Council on 1st December, in relation to the design and delivery of the £1million Fuel Hardship Voucher Scheme. As instructed by Members, officers have continued to work up the practicalities on how the scheme would be implemented.

Key Considerations

3.2 Taking into account the decision register for the Council meeting, officers have continued to work on the design and

delivery framework for the scheme, incorporating the following planning assumptions:

- an increase in the value of the Fuel Hardship Fund to £1m;
- 100% of the £1m funding would be for the issue of one-off vouchers to eligible households;
- no allowance has been made in relation to 'full cost recovery' for delivery partners;
- strategic partners will receive 100% of their funding allocation upfront in order to get the vouchers on the ground as quickly as possible;
- the scheme would commence before Christmas where the delivery partners have capacity;
- the one-off vouchers would be for fuel (e.g. oil/gas/electricity or mixture of these); and
- there would be sufficient flexibility in the scheme to support those who pay for their utilities via direct debit.

3.3 Detailed work continues by officers and Strategic Partners to bring this scheme into effect. Based on discussions with delivery partners, a number of areas are set out below for the Committee's consideration.

- i Commencement - confirmed with strategic partners the ability to commence the scheme before Christmas where the capacity exists to do so;**
- ii Eligibility Criteria – in terms of ensuring flexibility in the scheme to support those who may pay for their utilities via direct debit, it has been confirmed that local arrangements can be put in place to enable the direct transfer of payment(s) to the recipient's direct debit utility account via BACs. Delivery partners have indicated that, whilst this is possible, it is more complex and time consuming to implement;**
- iii Implementation Costs - Members are asked to note a strong consensus across strategic partners that the £1m funding made available by the Council should be allocated in full through the voucher scheme to those households in need. However, a number of partners also highlighted that there would be additional essential expenses and costs incurred in delivering**

the scheme (e.g. printing and distribution costs, extended work patterns including evening and weekend and associated staffing, volunteering, utility and fuel/transport costs);

- iv Partners have stated that they do not wish to delay progress in getting the full £1m voucher scheme on the ground and recognised that any position taken on covering additional costs incurred will be subject to further political consideration and decision. Partners have therefore indicated that they are willing to proceed at risk, subject to Committee and Council decision on this issue. Members are therefore asked to consider whether an additional allocation of up to 10%/£100,000 could be made to support essential core costs attached to the delivery of the scheme. Partners have asked to provide officers with a figure in relation to covering the additional associated costs (on the understanding that this should be no more than 10% of their original funding allocation) and to included it in their project proposal documentation albeit with the caveat, as noted previously, that this will need member consideration and agreement; and
- v Cost-of-Living Task Group – The decision taken by the Council on 1st December 2022 in relation to confirming the eligibility criteria and design principles for the Fuel Hardship Fund supersedes the need to take forward the proposal to set up a Cost-of-Living Task Group at this stage.

4.0 Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.1 Any discussion and/or decision in principle taken by the Committee in relation to meeting the cost implications of implementing the scheme over and above the £1,000,000 would have to be added to the 2022/23 forecast deficit of £2.7m and found through further in-year savings or out of specified reserves.

5.0 Equality and Good Relations

- 5.1 Whilst the scheme will be open to all eligible households on a first come first served basis and within budget limitations, targeted information will be shared with specific Section 75 groups including Age Friendly Groups, via the Migrant Forum, Disability Action and Locality Partnerships.”

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After further discussion, the Committee adopted recommendations i., ii. and iii., as set out within the report. In terms of recommendation iv., it was agreed that the Council would support full cost recovery for strategic partners in relation to essential costs/expenses incurred in delivering the Fuel Hardship Scheme, up to a maximum of £100,000, which would be in addition to the £1m which had been allocated to the overall Fund.

The Committee noted, in response to a reference which had been made by a Member to a recent Spotlight broadcast around food bank users in Northern Ireland being targeted by paramilitary loan sharks, that the report on the use of strategic partners, which was due to be presented to the Committee early in the new year, would also include information on the oversight measures in place for the Fuel Poverty Hardship Scheme.

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

**Response to SONI Consultation
on Energising Belfast Project**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To update the Committee on SONI’s consultation on Energising Belfast Project and present an officer submission for approval.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to review the following officer submission to the SONI Energising Belfast Project, which has been forwarded to SONI on the understanding that Committee approval and Council ratification is required:

2.2 *‘Belfast City Council broadly welcomes the approach being taken by SONI within the Energising Belfast Project. The Council appreciates the efforts to minimise disruption to residents and businesses in Belfast.*

2.3 *In relation to the benefits of the project, as set out in SONI plans, these align with both the Council’s and the city ambitions to enhance resilience, to become net zero, while supporting economic development, as set out in the Belfast Agenda, the Belfast Resilience Strategy, the Belfast Net Zero Carbon Roadmap, Belfast Region City Deal and the Draft Belfast Economic Strategy.*

2.4 *The Council will develop a Belfast Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) by the end of 2023. It would welcome SONI involvement in the LAEP process and alignment between SONI plans and those of the Council and city partners. The Council would welcome regular updates and meetings with SONI in relation to*

the Energising Belfast project so that officers and Elected Members can support local engagement and enhanced communication around this initiative and others.'

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1** SONI is the electricity transmission system operator for Northern Ireland. SONI plans for the future of the electricity grid and operate it. This includes interconnecting to neighbouring grids and running the wholesale electricity market. The grid brings power from generators and sends it to NIE Networks. NIE then supplies electricity to every home, farm, community and business in Northern Ireland via its distribution network.
- 3.2** The Energising Belfast Project documentation describes the ambition to ensure that Belfast City Centre, its people and its businesses have the clean energy needed to grow. SONI states that 'a thriving City centre is vital to the prosperity of the entire city and region and this project will deliver a grid ready to power the clean energy transition. This scheme will support the aspirations of the Council's 'Belfast Agenda' to increase the employment and residential population in the city.'
- 3.3** The project aims to future proof the transmission system in Belfast to ensure businesses have capacity and the power they need to expand in the near-term and into the future, supporting the economic and societal vision of the Belfast Region City Deal and all partner councils in the Greater Belfast area. SONI is responsible for the design and securing planning consent and NIE Networks will lead on the construction phase of the project.
- 3.4** The project will deliver a new high-capacity underground cable in Belfast City Centre, as well as a new transformer at Castlereagh Main substation. SONI is also assessing the potential to build new substations at or next to existing sites in the city, or at new sites close by. This would mean that SONI can remove older overhead lines in the future and prepare the transmission system in the Greater Belfast area for future population and economic growth, as well as the electrification of heating and transport.
- 3.5** SONI has recently held consultation sessions in Belfast, more information on which can be found by clicking [here](#). This included a meeting on 14th September with the Council's Party Leaders to update them on the project. Feedback from that session has informed the Council's response.

Financial and Resource Implications

3.6 None

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Implications**

3.7 None.”

The Committee approved the response to SONI’s consultation on Energising Belfast Project, as set out within the report.

Complex Lives - Creation of Reserve

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an outline in relation to funding received in-year across partners to support the scaling up of the Complex Lives (CL) approach, to highlight the limited timeframe in relation to being able to fully allocate/spend and, therefore, to seek Committee approval to create a reserve to assist with the recruitment and retention of required posts and maximise spend in-year and on in 2023/24 whilst partners are confirming budgets for next year.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- i. approve the creation of a dedicated Complex Lives reserve, to be held and administered within City and Neighbourhood Services Department; and
- ii. note that work is ongoing with statutory and community and voluntary partners via the relevant structures (i.e. Strategic Leadership Group – meets quarterly, and the CL Steering Group – meets monthly) to identify and agree in-year spend priorities, progress with recruitment in-year, and to seek budget allocation for 2023/24.

3.0 Main Report

Background

3.1 The Committee will be aware that the Council is leading, alongside a range of partners, in developing the Complex Lives whole system approach to better support individuals impacted

by chronic homelessness in the City. The design of the model has been informed by proven approaches developed in Doncaster and aims to help a core group of vulnerable people who are locked in a cycle of rough sleeping with repeated accommodation breakdowns, who have poor physical and mental health, drug misuse issues, offending behaviour, often impacted by past and ongoing trauma.

- 3.2 The Belfast Complex Lives model commenced its prototyping phase in October 2021, following a period of collective agreement and joint development work. The agreed timeline was for the prototyping to run for six months, to the end of March 2022, and then to roll out/mainstream the model from April 2022 onwards, making any necessary tweaks or adaptations based on learning from the trial and test period.
- 3.3 Whilst much has been achieved in relation to improved relationships and processes across partners and in relation to outcomes for individuals, the ability to scale up the model from early 2022 as planned has been impacted upon the ability of partners to leverage in additional funding.
- 3.4 Negotiations and follow up across partners took place between April and September, 2022 to secure the £350k annual budget required to scale up the approach (this includes recruitment of up to 6 Intensive Support Workers, a Coordinator and a Project Support post alongside case management and outcomes monitoring systems and ongoing strategic advisory support via Marsh Public Service Solutions who were instrumental in developing the Doncaster model and who have been assisting throughout).
- 3.5 In-year funding was confirmed at the October 2022 meeting of the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG), with a total of £277k committed from a number of core/key partners including DfC PCSP, PBNI, PHA, PSNI, NIHE, PHA – as well as the Council.
- 3.6 The fact that funding awards were confirmed so late in the financial year presents challenges in being able to ensure full in-year allocation and spend – particularly given that a substantial amount of this funding was to recruit posts (as noted in paragraph 3.4). Therefore, a key ask at the SLG meeting was for partner organisations to be as flexible as possible in terms of taking forward in-year actions/priorities and to request if there would be any ability to carry over committed funding into next year as a specified reserve (with all necessary caveats built in) to enable the appointment of key support posts on a 1-year basis rather than on a 3-4 month

basis, as the latter would obviously impact on the attractiveness and likelihood of filling these core posts.

- 3.7 Partners with a responsibility for commissioning, are now currently engaging internally to check whether their in-year funding allocations could be utilised in this manner, and in the interim, it was agreed that officers would seek permission to create a dedicated reserve to facilitate this – hence the report to this Committee. Delivery organisations are progressing with recruitment on a temporary basis with a possibility of extension – and commission organisations, including BCC, are also working through internal budgeting processes for 2023/24 – it is therefore hoped that having a reserve will enable us to continue to fund posts and actions into early 2023/24 ensuring continuity and that momentum is maintained. The SLG is due to meet again on 17th January, 2023 and will review the current and future financial position, and the Complex Lives Steering Group continues to meet monthly to progress and review actions.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.8 All funding – BCC (58k) and Partners (218k) has been confirmed for 2022/23. Each organisation is progressing with recruitment and other related actions. The proposal is that any remaining funding, where partners attain necessary approvals, be held in a dedicated reserve for Complex Lives.

Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.9 There is set criteria for being nominated for consideration for support via the Complex Lives model and agreed processes for case management and provision of wraparound support. Many of the individuals who benefit are from S75 groups, and as part of the process, are directly involved in making decisions about their care and support needs.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Asset Management

Kent Street Car Park

The Committee approved the renewal of a three-year licence agreement with the Department for Communities for the Council operated off-street car park at Kent Street, until 30th June, 2025. The Council would continue to retain all revenue generated from the

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operation of the car park and would, in line with a Land and Property Services valuation, pay the Department a fee of £23,474 for the initial year. The fee for the subsequent two years would be agreed on an annual basis.

Areema Play Park

The Committee approved the transfer of 370m² of land from Apex Housing Association to the Council, to facilitate the extension of Areema Play Park, and of 13.5m² of land from the Council to Apex Housing Association, to form part of a new public path and road network. The transaction would, subject to the relevant approvals, incur no disposal costs by either party for the land transactions.

The Committee granted also retrospective approval to put a 6-metre-wide wayleave in place between the Council and Apex Housing Association to regularise a storm drain serving Areeva Grove, the Association's new housing development.

Update on Area Working Groups

West Belfast Area Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the West Belfast Area Working Group of 24th November, including the recommendations:

- i. to move the Greater Shankill Community Council project (BIF29) to Stage 3 – Committed;
- ii. to allocate £507k and £80k from the Social Outcomes Fund to the Greater Shankill Community Council and the Woodvale Park project respectively; and
- iii. to note that the final locations for the next phase of the Belfast Bike scheme had been deferred for further consideration and consultation.

South Belfast Area Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the South Belfast Area Working Group of 28th November, including the recommendations:

- i. to move the Coffee Culture (BIF46) and Arts and Digital Hub (BIF48) projects to Stage 2- Uncommitted; and
- ii. that Drumglass Park and the Elms Village be selected for the next phase of the Belfast Bikes Scheme in South Belfast.

North Belfast Area Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the North Belfast Area Working Group of 29th November, including the recommendations:

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- i. to move the Midland Boxing Club project (BIF45) to Stage 3 – Committed; and
- ii. that the following locations be selected for the next phase of the Belfast Bikes scheme in North Belfast:
 - the Grove Wellbeing Centre; and
 - a permanent station, close to the new station entrance, to be initially located at the Council car park adjacent to Yorkgate Station, with the final location to be confirmed by Translink, following the refurbishment of the station.

**Update on Physical Programme - Forth Meadow
Community Greenway Public Art Sculpture Plaque**

The Director of Physical Programmes submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 The Council's Physical Programme currently includes 170 capital projects with investment of £150m+ via a range of internal and external funding streams, together with projects which the Council delivers on behalf of external agencies. The Council's Capital Programme forms part of the Physical Programme and is a rolling programme of investment which either improves existing Council facilities or provides new facilities. One of the projects currently underway is Forth Meadow Community Greenway, a Peace IV funded project. In addition to the 12km of greenway, there are a number of pieces of public art, one main art piece and five smaller floor art pieces. The Committee is asked to give consideration to the installation of a plaque to accompany the main art piece 'Carry Each Other' which will be located at the roundabout at the entrance to the Innovation Factory.**

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- **Installation of Plaque 'Carry Each Other' Sculpture – note the update on the wording for the plaque to accompany the 'Carry Each Other' sculpture, as part of the Forth Meadow Community Greenway and note that the proposal is for the wording on the plaque to be in both English and Irish.**

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 The Committee will be aware that Forth Meadow Community Greenway is an ambitious and transformational Peace IV funded scheme. It will see the development of a new 12km urban greenway in West Belfast with work underway.**

Section 1 – Glencairn, works complete with the exception of the signage package

Section 2 – Springvale Park works underway due for completion May 2023

Section 3 – Falls Parks, works complete with the exception of the signage package

Section 4 – Bog Meadows, works complete with the exception of the signage package

Section 5 – Westlink to Transport Hub, planning application submitted for the erection of signage and directional markers along the route.

- 3.2 In addition to the greenway, the scheme also includes a number of pieces of public art. These include five pieces of floor art, located in each section of the greenway. The Chair of the Shared City Partnership and some local school children recently unveiled the floor art piece in Glencairn Park. The main art piece entitled ‘Carry Each Other’ will be located to the left of the roundabout at the entrance to the Innovation Factory. The artist Sara Cunningham-Bell’s piece is a 7-metre-high figure carrying a child. As part of the commission, there were numerous public engagement events which included draw, walk, share sessions with local Councillors, the volunteer walking and cycling groups involved in the greenway and many local schools. The drawings prepared by these groups have been incorporated into the floor art pieces and to the child’s jacket. The main sculpture will be installed early 2023, therefore, the plaque must be designed, ordered, manufactured and installed to accompany the piece and give some context to the piece.**

- 3.3 The Committee is asked to note that a request has been received from Conradh na Gaelige for full provision of bilingual signage, including direction signage, health and safety signage, panels and information boards, and all other markers, signs along the route of the greenway. Officers are currently reviewing this request in line with conditions contained within the Letter of Offer and the brand identity guidelines – Forth Meadow Community Greenway – on common ground. An**

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update on this will be brought to a future meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. In the interim and to ensure that the sculpture can be installed early in 2023, the Committee is asked to note that the wording on the plaque to accompany the sculpture is proposed to be in English and Irish.

Financial and Resources Implications

- 3.4 *Financial* – Funding has been received from SEUPB Peace IV Programme for construction of Forth Meadow Community Greenway and the associated art pieces.

Resources – Officer time to deliver as required.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications/
Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.5 All capital projects are screened as part of the stage approval process.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Equality and Good Relations

Minutes of the Meeting of the Shared City Partnership

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership of 5th December, including the recommendations:

PEACE IV

Secretariat

- to note the update on the Secretariat activity associated with the implementation of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.

CYP3: On the Right Track

- to note that this contract remained at risk and that all measures were being pursued to address the under-delivery and current status of project.

CYP5 NIHE

- to note the revised budgets indicating delivery to February, 2023 and to extend the Finance Officer and Programme Manager roles and the salary increase to March, 2023.

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BPR THEME

- to note the update on the Building Positive Relations theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan and agree:

BPR 1 – NIHE

- in principle, to extend the Finance Officer and Programme Manager roles to early March 2023 to ensure that all documentation could be submitted and verified to allow achievement of a successful closure process within the timeframe of the Council's Letter of Offer; and
- to note the decision of the delivery partner not to continue with the East Belfast Network for the reasons set out in the report.

BPR 3 - Local Action Plan Projects

- to note that all projects had been completed in November; and
- to note the two remaining study visits which the Council was tasked to deliver would not be achieved.

BPR 5 - LINCS

- to note that this project would complete at the end of November, with a small, localised event planned to capture completion of the leadership programme and overall completion of the project.

BPR 5 - Traveller

- to note that the final event had been cancelled due to low commitment to attend and that the collective exhibition artworks would be showcased in the new year at a central location.

BPR 6 St. Comgall's

- to agree that the extension approved in November to 31st January 2023, to allow for changes to materials to be implemented, be instead processed through to 28th February 2023 for prudence (this was within the original contract terms (a contract renewal));

BPR Cinematography Project

- to approve an extension to 28th February to allow all filming to be captured for projects which had been extended (SSS, NIHE projects).

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- to note that the Peace IV Programme Officer would liaise with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in respect of a specific Building Positive Relations programme date.

SSS THEME

- to note the update on the Shared Spaces and Services theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan, including:

Narratives/Interpretative Panel – Mediation NI

- to note that the contact hours achievement level was to be discussed and agreed with the Special EU Programmes Body;

Youth Civic Education – Youth Link NI

- to note an extension of the Youth Civic Education project to 28th February 2023;
- to note the additional/alternative activity for schools (Crumlin Road Gaol) and day trips;
- to agree a possible contract uplift of no more than 10% (£16,000) subject to the submission of a budget breakdown and availability of support within the SSS programme budget; and
- to note that delegated authority had been given to the CYP Chair and the BPR Chair to agree the finalised contract uplift, subject to the above confirmation.

GOOD RELATIONS

Good Relations Audit

- to note that any comments on the draft Good Relations Audit were to be submitted to Mr. Peter Osborne by 14th December, 2022; and
- to note that a finalised Audit and draft 2023/24 Good Relations Action Plan would be submitted to the Partnership meeting in January, prior to submission to The Executive Office.

BCC 7 Interfaces Programme

- to award funding under the BCC7 Interfaces Programme within the Council's Good Relations Action Plan, as follows:
 - Lower Oldpark Community Association - £4,927 towards its NOW (Neighbours Over the Wall) programme; and

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- Limestone United Football Club - £1,000 towards a youth engagement programme.

PEACEPLUS

- to note the update on recent activity around the development of the PEACE PLUS 1.1. Co-designed Local Community Peace Action Plan for Belfast
- to agreed that Stage 1 facilitated engagement process be closed, as outlined in the report;
- to note the feedback on the process for finalising the Stage 1 report; and
- to approve the general process for commencing Stage 2 for developing the local action plan.

Operational Issues

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Party
Group Leaders' Consultative Forum**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum of 8th December.

**Minutes of the Meeting of
the Audit and Risk Panel**

The Committee noted the key issues which had been discussed at the meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel on 6th December and approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting, including the updated Raising Concerns Policy [here](#)

**Requests for Use of the City Hall
and the Provision of Hospitality**

The Committee adopted the recommendations in respect of those applications received up to 2nd December, as set out below:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2023 EVENTS						
European Youth Parliament	21 February 2023	NI Regional Session of Youth Parliament - teams of secondary students debate and	B & D	No (Charity)	No (they provide their own lunches for attendees)	Approve No charge No hospitality

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		present their ideas and solutions on current topics. Numbers attending – 100				
Donegal Pass Community Forum	2 March 2023	Launch of 'Language Matters' Research – project linked to language provision delivered by community groups. Numbers attending – 60	D	No charge as community group	Yes, tea and coffee reception as community group	Approve No Charge Tea and Coffee Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for tea and coffee</i>
John Hewitt Society	2 March 2023	40th Anniversary Celebration of John Hewitt Freedom of City of Belfast - reception and celebration evening. Numbers attending – 60 – 100 tbc	C	No charge as not for profit group	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>
Belfast Knights	3 March 2023	Belfast Knights 30th Anniversary Celebration - Drinks Reception, Awards, Dinner and entertainment. Numbers attending – 250 - 300	C & D	No Charge as voluntary group	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>
Irish FA Foundation/ GAA and Ulster Rugby	21 March 2023	Sports Inspire Awards Gala Dinner to celebrate and reward volunteers in the Inspire Programme	C and D	No charge as charity	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

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		run by Irish FA, Ulster GAA and Ulster Rugby. Numbers attending – 200				
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	16 May 2023	Involvement Recognition event to acknowledge how service users and advisers have helped develop Trust Services. Numbers attending – 80	C	Charge £115	No hospitality	Approve Charge £115 No hospitality
Public Health Agency	17 May 2023	Cross-Border Healthcare Intervention Trials In Ireland Network (CHITIN) Closure Event – celebrating a cross-border partnership between the Public Health Agency (PHA) and the Health Research Board (HRB) in the Republic of Ireland, delivering 11 Healthcare Intervention Trials. PHA is community partner of Belfast Agenda. Numbers attending – 250	A & C	Charge £300	No Hospitality	Approve Charge £300 No hospitality
Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry	23 June 2023	Annual President’s Lunch – annual lunch	B	Charge £300	No Hospitality	Approve Charge £300 No hospitality

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		for the NI Chamber of Commerce and Industry to mark economic benefits to the City. Numbers attending – 400				
Irish Football Association Foundation	2 November 2023	IFA McDonalds Community Football Awards – Celebrating the volunteers who help deliver their programs – reception, dinner, entertainment and awards. Numbers attending - 190	C & D	No (Charity)	No Hospitality	Approve No Charge No Hospitality
EAPRIL (European Association for Practitioner Research on Improving Learning)	23 November 2023	APRIL Conference 2023 Dinner for guests attending their 3-day conference taking place in QUB. Numbers attending – 150 – 250	A & B	No (Waived as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
St Brigid's GAC	25 November 2023	St Brigid's GAC 25th Anniversary Celebration - Drinks Reception, Awards, Dinner and entertainment.	C & D	No Charge as voluntary group	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>

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		Numbers attending - 350 – 400				
2026 EVENTS						
NAHT – National Association of Head Teachers	2 May 2026	NAHT Conference 2026 Gala Dinner for guests attending their 2-day conference taking place in ICC Belfast. Numbers attending – 320	A &B	No (Waivered as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

Minutes of the Meeting of the Disability Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Disability Working Group of 22nd November.

Minutes of the Meeting of the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group of 14th December.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Social Policy Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Social Policy Working Group of 13th December.

Minutes of the Meeting of the All-Party Working Group on the City Centre

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the All-Party Working Group on the City Centre of 2nd December.

Recruitment of the Post of Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services

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The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 23rd September, it had approved a revised structure and implementation plan for the Corporate Management Tier and had noted that it would receive further reports for agreement at key stages in the process.

Accordingly, the Committee:

- i. approved the recruitment of a post of Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Services on a permanent basis; and
- ii. agreed that the shortlisting and selection panel comprise the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Committee (or their nominees), an Elected Member from the Sinn Féin Party, the Chief Executive (or his nominee) and a Director.

**Northern Ireland Local Government Association
Local Government Conference**

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy informed the Committee that the Northern Ireland Local Government Association would, on 23rd February, be holding its Local Government Conference in Omagh. The theme for the event would be “Responding to Future Challenges”, with a focus on how local government should innovate and collaborate across all sectors to achieve its ambitions.

He pointed out that it was normal practice for the Committee to grant authority for any of the ten Members appointed by the Council to the Northern Ireland Local Government Association to attend the conference. The fee per delegate would be £99, which would be met from existing budgets.

The Committee granted approval for any of the ten Members appointed by the Council to the Northern Ireland Local Government Association and one officer to attend the conference.

Additional Item

Update on Legal Proceedings

The Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services reminded the Committee that the Council had been one of three parties which had, earlier in the year, taken legal action against Mr. Edwin Poots MLA, in respect of his decision, as Minister for the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, to instruct his officials to halt checks on goods entering Northern Ireland from Great Britain. The Council had issued proceedings separately from the other two parties, as that had been considered to be more appropriate.

She reported that the Judgement had been issued the previous day and that the Court found that the then Minister had acted unlawfully in ordering the removal of the

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checks. She added that the draft Judgement would, upon being received by the Council, be presented to the Committee for consideration.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Chairperson