

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 21st April, 2023

MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Heading (Deputy Chairperson in the Chair);
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly);
Aldermen Dorrian and Haire; and
Councillors Beattie, Bradley, Bunting, Garrett, Groogan,
Long, Lyons, McLaughlin, McMullan, Murphy, Spratt,
Thompson, 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. Matthews, Director of Resources and Fleet;
Mr. D. Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Ms. C. Sheridan, Director of Human Resources;
Ms. S. Toland, Director of City 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

Apologies were reported on behalf of the Chairperson (Councillor McDonough-Brown) and Councillor Ferguson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 24th March were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council, at its meeting on 3rd April, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

Alderman Haire declared an interest in relation to agenda item 2i – Request for the use of Barnett Demesne and the Cenotaph, on the basis that he was a Trustee of the County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast and left the meeting whilst it was under consideration.

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Councillor Beattie declared an interest in relation to agenda item 2g - Community Support Programme, in that the organisation for which he worked was a recipient and left the meeting whilst it was being discussed.

Councillor Bunting declared an interest in relation to agenda item 2e – Summer Community Diversionary Festivals Programme, on the basis that she acted as the secretary to the Belvoir Area Residents' Group, which had applied for funding through one of the applicants and left the meeting whilst it was being considered.

Councillor Groogan declared an interest in relation to agenda item 2g – Community Support Programme and item 2h – Micro and Medium Grants, in that the organisation for which she worked was a potential beneficiary and left the meeting whilst they were being discussed.

Councillor Thompson declared an interest in relation to agenda item 2h – Micro and Medium Grants 2023/24, on the basis that she was on the Board of the Shankill Women's Centre and left the meeting for the duration of that item.

Restricted Items

The information contained in the reports associated with the following eleven 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 eleven 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.

**Appointment of Deputy Chief Executive/
Strategic Director of Corporate Services**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 16th December, it had approved the recruitment of the post of Deputy Chief Executive/Strategic Director of Corporate Services on a permanent basis.

The Chief Executive provided details of the recruitment and selection process and confirmed that Mrs. Sharon McNicholl had been appointed to the post.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

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**Update on Organisational Reviews
and Change Programme**

The Committee noted the contents of a report providing a quarterly update on the progress of the Organisational Reviews and Change Portfolio and indicative timescales.

**Update on Employees on Temporary
Contracts and Agency Workers**

The Director of Human Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration a report providing an update on the number of employees on temporary contracts and agency assignees engaged by the Council and outlining the steps being taken to reduce the Council's reliance on these two categories.

She reported that, at 31st March, 215 staff had been filling posts on a temporary basis, 138 of whom had substantive Council posts to return to when no longer required. The other 77 were Fixed Term Contract employees who did not have a substantive post to return to. 279 agency assignees had been engaged by the Council on that date, with the increase of four on the previous quarter being attributed to the need for additional seasonal cover at Belfast Zoo over the Easter period. She then provided details on the projected cost of using agency assignees for the period from January to March, 2023 and pointed out this did not represent an additional financial burden on the Council, as it was met through vacant posts and underspends.

She reported further that a Corporate Contract Manager, who been appointed to manage, challenge and control agency usage across all Departments, had been in post since 6th February and was now establishing regular compliance and challenge meetings. In addition, data on agency usage was being assessed, with a view to examining the potential for creating a pool of permanent peripatetic posts to provide greater flexibility in terms of covering, for example, career breaks, long-term sickness, maternity leave and seasonal fluctuations.

The Director went on to remind the Committee that it had, at its meeting on 21st October, granted approval to engage an external consultant to undertake a feasibility study on the potential for establishing an in-house agency. A procurement exercise was now underway, the outcome of which would be reported to the Committee in due course.

After discussion, during which the Director of Human Resources undertook to circulate to Members a breakdown of the costs associated with using agency assignees, the Committee noted the contents of the report.

**Update on City Centre Public
Realm Catalyst Projects**

(Mr. S. Dolan, Senior Development Manager, City Regeneration and Development Unit, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered a report providing an update on the status of the secured financial developer contributions aligned to public realm and pedestrian crossings and adopted the recommendations to:

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- i. commit secured developer contributions totalling £1,298,000 to progress the Little Patrick Street and Little York Street Public Realm Improvement Works and the upgrade of the Lancaster Street Entrance Gateway;
- ii. commit secured developer contributions totalling £615,375 to progress the Blackstaff Square Area Public Realm Improvement Works, in conjunction with the Department for the Communities; and
- iii. noted that a report on a review of the Developer Contribution Framework would be submitted to a future meeting.

Summer Community Diversionary Festivals Programme

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee's consideration a report providing details of the initial assessment of applications which had been received under the Summer Community Diversionary Festivals Programme for 2023 and seeking approval to award funding. The report provided details also of the eligibility criteria, the two-stage eligibility assessment process and the overall process.

July Programme

For the July programme, for which £250,000 was available, eight applications had been received, with a total funding request of £409,521, which was an oversubscription of £159,521.

He provided a brief summary of the projects and officer scores for Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the assessment process and pointed out that, after allocations had been made to those organisations which had passed both stages, £47,745 remained within the budget for the Committee's consideration.

August Programme

Three applications had been received for the August programme, for which £250,000 was available. He provided details of the projects and officer scores for Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the assessment process and confirmed that the total amount being requested was £256,935, which was an oversubscription of £6,935. To address this, it was proposed that the organisations would be allocated the same amount as in 2022, totalling £250,000.

Accordingly, the Committee:

- i. agreed to award funding for the 2023 Summer Community Diversionary Festivals Programme as set out below, with any funding awarded being subject to further engagement with groups and an analysis of projects and associated budgets, in line with the Council's due diligence procedures, including any outstanding financial and monitoring returns in respect of other Council funding and funding not to be awarded until approved contracts are issued and signed;

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July Programme

Group	Overview of Project	Award 2023
Twaddell and Woodvale Residents' Association	Events in Woodvale park and other local venues from June and July. These will include a community cultural activity programme, diversionary youth work and three large scale musical events	100,000
Charter NI	Youth work, community, cultural, creative art and sporting events 4th – 12th July promoting heritage, educating on broader cultural contexts, and showcasing local artists	41,170
EastSide Partnership (Eastival)	Programme of music and community events 7th – 9th July. Including large scale community event CS Lewis and Ballymacarrett walkway This project will work with youth practitioners to identify relevant young people.	61,085
Total		202,255

August Programme

Group	Overview of Project	Award 2023
Feile (Feile August Diversionary Dance Night)	Delivery of a free Dance music event as part of Feile on 8th August and ongoing targeted outreach work in partnership with local community groups across Belfast. A community event will also take place in Distillery Street	100,000
Feile (South and East Summer Diversionary Intervention Programme)	Delivery of outreach and diversionary work during the summer, in the lead up to 8th August. Headline two-day community festival on the Lagan walkway and river 6th – 7th August and music event St. George's Market.	75,000
Ashton Community Trust	Delivery of a number of diversionary outreach activities and community and sporting events (including boxing event) in the lead up to 8th August	75,000
Total		250,000

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- ii. agreed, given the timescale for events, that officers engage with groups in advance of decisions on allocations and budgets being ratified by the Council on 2nd May;
- iii. agreed that groups in receipt of funding be also asked to work with an appointed external consultant with event management expertise to ensure that they had the necessary procedures in place to run events, in line with Health and Safety and legal requirements;
- iv. granted approval for those organisations being funded to use the Council's Parks for their event or activity and delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to negotiate satisfactory terms and conditions of use, via an appropriate legal agreement prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' and take down' periods and booking amendments, subject to:
 - the completion of an appropriate management plan; and
 - the promoter resolving any operational issues to the satisfaction of the Council and meeting all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service, including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence; and
- v. agreed, in terms of allocating the underspend of £47,745 in the July Programme, that Council officers would, in the first instance, meet with the five unsuccessful groups to discuss their requirements in terms of capacity building, with the outcome to be presented to a special meeting of the Committee;
- vi. agreed that a review be undertaken of the Summer Community Diversionary Festivals Programme moving forward; and
- vii. noted that the Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services would provide a Member with clarification directly on an issue which he had raised around the equality screening process referred to within the report.

Update on the Beacon Programme

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee's consideration a report providing an update on the provision of beacons for 2023, as an alternative to traditional bonfires over the 12th of July period.

He explained that the programme, which was open only to constituted community/voluntary groups, had been in existence for over fifteen years and that it had,

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in 2019, been extended to provide sixteen groups with a beacon. However, in 2022, due to ongoing issues associated with the pandemic, only eight had been allocated.

He went on to recommend to the Committee that officers contact those eight groups to determine if they wished to avail of a beacon in 2023, as well as four others which had expressed an interest. That would bring to twelve the number of beacons to be allocated, should all groups accept and conditions be met. He recommended also that, should any of those groups decide not to avail of a beacon, it be allocated on a first come first served basis where Members or constituted groups had expressed an interest.

The Director then provided details of the cost of storage, assessment, repair and fill of beacons for 2022/23. He pointed out that the current budget allocation for the Beacon Programme was £72,000, which included a contribution of £15,000 from the Executive Office, through its District Council Good Relations Programme. However, as no Executive budget was in place in 2023/24 for that Programme, its contribution could not be guaranteed at this stage. He explained that, in a scenario in which twelve beacons were required and the Executive Office's contribution was not forthcoming, the Council would be required to provide additional funding of between £20k and £25k through the alignment of existing budgets.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and adopted the recommendations in terms of prospective participants in this year's programme.

Community Support Programme

The Director of Neighbourhood Services informed the Members that the People and Communities Committee, at its meeting on 4th April, had agreed to refer to this Committee for consideration a report on the Community Support Programme.

He reminded them that the Department for Communities provided an annual grant to the Council to help deliver the Council's Community Support Programme. On 27th March, the Council had received correspondence from the Permanent Secretary of that Department advising of the potential for reductions in his final 2023/24 budget allocation due to the pressures being faced at a Northern Ireland Block Grant level. The Permanent Secretary had, in response to concerns raised by the sector and to alleviate some of the pressures being faced by organisations, taken a decision to provide a level of support to sustain services and posts. That support would cover the three-month period up to 30th June, 2023, with the allocations being based on the 2022/23 budget settlement.

The Director went on to outline the impact which the aforementioned decision would have upon the various grants which were funded through the Community Support Programme and recommended that the Committee:

- i. approve the offer of an initial contract of six months and 50% payment to those organisations funded via the Revenue for Community Buildings, Capacity Building and Advice Grants, as set out within the report;

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- ii. approve the full allocation of the planned identified budget towards Summer Scheme Grants, at risk, and Micro/Medium Grants, as set out within the report;
- iii. approve the offer of a three-month contract to the five organisations which the Department for Communities directly funded via the Welfare Reform Mitigation Face to Face funds, as set out within the report; and
- iv. note that a further report would be submitted to its meeting in August detailing the proposed arrangements for second payments, pending formal notification/confirmation of the remaining Community Support Programme allocation for 2023/24.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations, with the exception of the approval of Micro/Medium Grants funding, which it was agreed would be considered in the context of the report on the yearly underspend to be submitted to its meeting in June.

Micro and Medium Grants 2023/24

The Committee noted that it had, as part of the previous agenda item, agreed to defer consideration of the allocation of micro and medium grants funding to enable it to be considered in the context of the report on the yearly underspend to be submitted to its meeting in June.

Request for the use of Barnett Demesne and the Cenotaph

The Director of Neighbourhood Services reported that the Council had received from the County Grand Orange Lodge of Belfast a request for the use of the Cenotaph in the grounds of the City Hall on the morning of 12th July for a Service of Remembrance and of Barnett Demesne later that day for its annual Belfast demonstration.

The Committee acceded to the request and delegated authority to the relevant Directors to negotiate satisfactory terms and conditions of use, via an appropriate legal agreement prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' and take down' periods and booking amendments, subject to the promoter:

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- resolving any operational issues to the satisfaction of the Council and meeting all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service, including the terms and conditions of Barnett Park's Entertainment Licence.

Asset Management

Unit 3, St. George's Market

The Committee approved the surrender of a lease for Unit 3, St George's Market and agreed that a portion of the rental arrears accrued, equating to £13,450, be written off, in accordance with Section K12 of the Council's Financial Regulations.

North Foreshore

The Committee approved the granting of a licence to John Graham Construction Limited for land at the North Foreshore to be used as a contractor compound for the storage of materials, with the Council to receive £1,000 + VAT per month for the duration of the agreement.

8 - 9 Donegall Square North

The Committee agreed to extend the current Management Agreement with Visit Belfast for premises leased by the Council at 8 - 9 Donegall Square North for a period of one year from 16th July, 2023 and on a year-to-year basis thereafter, until a date no later than 15th July, 2028, in line with the expiry of the lease.

IFA-DCMS Funding Applications

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted for the Committee's consideration a report providing information on an opportunity which had been presented by the opening of the Irish Football Association/Department for Culture, Media and Sport's 2023 – 25 Grassroots Facilities Investment Fund and seeking approval in relation to two applications.

He pointed out that the Fund, which would target large capital projects and have a pitch proposal at its core, was open to councils, football clubs, association football-focused sports community organisations, association football-focused charitable organisations and schools/ colleges/ universities. The Fund had opened on 6th April, with £2 million being made available for 2023/24 and £3.59 million in 2024/25. However, there had been only one call for applications, which meant that the imminent deadline of 4th May applied regardless of the year in which the funding was intended for use.

He then provided details of the main objectives and key criteria governing the Investment Fund and on the two proposed projects.

After discussion, during which a Member highlighted the urgent need to address gaps in pitch provision across the City, the Committee:

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- i. granted approval for the Council to submit an application to the Grassroots Facilities Investment Fund for an upgrade of the current polymeric MUGA at Woodvale Park to a 3G surface, along with an upgrade of the existing floodlighting;
- ii. noted the proposal which had been received from Crusaders Football Club for a project on the former shale pitch at Loughside Playing Fields which it wished to submit to the Grassroots Facilities Investment Fund under the funding stream and agreed, given the timeframe for the application process, that the club proceed with a submission in which it would act as the applicant and that the Council enter into a lease agreement with the Club, subject to funding approval and full due diligence, which officers would commence immediately; and
- iii. agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting providing information on those football clubs which had submitted expressions of interest for funding for projects on Council assets but had not been recommended for submission on the basis that they would not meet the eligibility criteria.

Governance

**Governance Arrangements for
the New Council 2023-27**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To consider the governance arrangements to apply for the new Council term commencing in 2023.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to consider the issues set out in the report and agree the governance arrangements for the new Council term.

In particular, Members are asked to agree to continuing with the following arrangements:

- i. to operate with a traditional Committee structure;
- ii. to allocate positions of responsibility using the D’hondt method;

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- iii. to allocate Committee places using the quota greatest remainder method;
- iv. the current standing Committees to remain the same, save for reviewing the membership numbers of Planning and BUWHL Shareholder Committees;
- v. 9 political appointments to be made to the PCSP and DPCSPs using D'hondt method from the bottom up;
- vi. to agree the arrangements for Working Groups as set out in the report; and
- vii. appointment to Outside Bodies using the Sainte Lague method.

Main Report

Background

At the meeting of the new Council following the Local Government Elections in May, it will be necessary to agree the new Council's governance arrangements for the period 2023-27.

In order for the proper arrangements to be made, including meetings with the Nominating Officers of the Parties returned after the elections, in advance of the Annual Meeting of the new Council on 5th June, it is now necessary for decisions to be made.

Key Issues

1. Council Governance Arrangements

The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 provides for a number of types of governance arrangements, namely:

- Traditional committee arrangements (default position)
- Executive model

In 2014 and 2019, the Council adopted a Constitution which, amongst other things, agreed the default governance arrangements prescribed in the 2014 Act namely:

- Traditional Committee system
- Positions of responsibility selected using the D'hondt model

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- Committee places allocated using the quota greatest remainder model

Adoption of an alternative arrangement requires a qualified majority vote (80%).

Looking forward to the new Council term, should the Council agree to continue with the existing arrangements as set out in the Council Constitution, then the decision-making process requires a simple majority vote to do so.

Decision Required:

- Do members wish to continue with existing governance arrangements that is, a traditional committee system?

Please note that a mini governance review is underway in relation to the remit of Committees, Standing Orders etc. and a report is likely to be presented to the new Council in September.

2. Standing Committees

The Council currently has established seven Standing Committees which promote cross-departmental and thematic working across the organisation supporting the delivery of the Belfast Agenda and the developing process of Outcomes Based Accountability:

Committee	Number of Members	Responsibility
Strategic Policy and Resources	20	Responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Council through the development of its corporate plan and other key corporate and cross cutting strategies and policies and for setting the budget overseeing the appropriate use of Council finances.
City Growth and Regeneration	20	Responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects directed to the regeneration and inclusive growth of the city.
People and Communities	20	Responsible for the development and implementation of strategies,

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		policies, programmes, services and projects aimed at improving life at a local level.
Licensing	20	Delegated responsibility for the consideration of all matters pertaining to policy and legislation in relation to licensing issues save for those matters reserved to full Council.
Planning	14	Delegated responsibility for all the Council's planning functions, save for those matters reserved to full Council.
Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders'	14	Responsible for making the decisions required by the Shareholders' Agreement and ensure that the Company complies with the contract for the operation of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Halls.
Climate and City Resilience	20	Responsible for the political oversight of the resilience strategy for Belfast, Brexit and establishing links and collaborating with relevant authorities and organisations on a North/South and East/West basis and connections with Europe.
Standards and Business	20	Responsible for the promotion of standards and conduct of councillors and the improvement of processes in relation to the bringing of business before the Council.

Decisions Required:

- Do we wish to continue with these Committees?
- Do we wish to maintain the current remit of each Committee?
- Do we wish to continue with these Committees with the same numbers of Members?

It should be noted that, during the current Council term, Members have suggested that the number of Members on each

of the Committees should be equal, with all Committees having 20 Members.

3. Annual Review of Committee Membership

In the current Council term, members were appointed to the Committees for one-year terms and reappointed at each Annual Meeting. This allows for any changes in political affiliation which can occur during a council term to be accounted for. The City Solicitor believes this to be in keeping both the spirit and intent of the 2014 Act.

Decision Required:

- Would Members be supportive of retaining a one-year committee membership term?

4. Method of Appointing Positions of Responsibility, including PCSP and DPCSPs

The positions of responsibility include the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor, Committee Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons, some prescribed outside bodies and the Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) and the four District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (DPCSPs). In dealing with the appointments of members to the PCSP and DPCSPs, the Council needs to ensure that the appointments are made in accordance with not only the LGA 2014 but also the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and are considered as part of the allocation of positions of responsibility.

The solution, which was agreed by all parties in 2015 - 2019, was that the appointments to the PCSP and DPCSPs were made by allocating those parties' D'hondt choices from the bottom up. Therefore, the parties' earlier choices for positions of responsibility were not adversely affected by the requirements of the Justice Act as to how the appointments to the PCSP and DPCSPs had to be made.

A separate decision is also required in relation to the size of the main Policing and Community Safety Partnership. The Justice Act provides that the Council may appoint 8, 9 or 10 Political Members to the PCSP. The number of Independent Members is then set at one less than the number of Political Members. The Justice Act also provides that each DPCSP must have 6 Political and 5 Independent Members so no decision is required with regard to the DPCSP size. In 2015-2019, the Council agreed to appoint 9 Political Members to the PCSP, resulting in a membership of 17 in total (9 political and 8 independent members).

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Decisions Required:

- Are we content to again employ the solution with regard to the Positions of Responsibility in 2023?
- Are we happy to again appoint 9 Political Members to the PCSP?

5. Appointment of Working Groups

The Council decided to appoint a number of Working Groups in 2019, with a number of additional groups established throughout the Council term. These Working Groups are not specified in the 2014 Act and the Council is free to establish as many as it so wishes and use whatever mechanism it sees fit to appoint members to them.

The following is a list of the 16 Working Groups which the Council has currently:

Current Working Group	Main Role(s)
All Party Working Group on the city Centre	Acts as a reference panel for the wider development and regeneration of city centre
Audit and Risk Panel	It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.
Castle, Cavehill, Zoo and North Foreshore Steering Group	The remit of this Group is to oversee the management of the North Foreshore, especially in regard to policy, resource allocation and financial risk of future development at the site.
Community Planning Working Group	Provides recommendations on the strategic direction and political input to the community planning process within Belfast
Disability Working Group	To discuss the progress and implementation of the Belfast City Council Disability Action Plan 2022-2025 and ensure alignment with the Council's Disability Strategy

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<p>East Area Working Group North Area Working Group South Area Working Group West Area Working Group</p>	<p>To enable and ensure that the socio-economic conditions and needs of local people, areas and communities are given due consideration with respect to the delivery of our plans, services and projects.</p>
<p>Installations – City Hall/City Hall Grounds Working Group</p>	<p>Consider and provide recommendations relating to City Hall and its grounds ensuring these are reflective of the principles set out in the EQIA whilst ensuring compliance with City Hall’s status as a Grade 1 Listed Building.</p>
<p>Language Strategy Working Group</p>	<p>To provide elected members with a forum to discuss the impact of the languages in the Strategy across the above areas of work.</p>
<p>Party Leaders’ Consultative Forum</p>	<p>To receive briefings and updates on the Council’s programmes of work relating to the Belfast Agenda priorities. Council’s Corporate Plan and associated programmes of work.</p> <p>To introduce complex or sensitive reports/issues or proposed reports prior to committee or to discuss issues arising from committees/Council</p> <p>To receive information on oversight of the Council’s finances and discuss future rates setting.</p> <p>To receive and consider complex or sensitive information prior to decision making through committee and Council.</p> <p>To raise sensitive resource (particularly human resource) issues</p>

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	To receive and discuss proposals relating to governance arrangements.
Reference Group on Older People	To provide political direction and input to the development of the city planning process for improving the health, wellbeing and independence of older people within Belfast
Shared City Partnership	To assist the elected political leadership of the Council, staff, diverse civil society interests and partnering agencies to engage pro-actively on all Good Relations issues on behalf of citizens and be a collective voice, promoting a common vision for Good Relations in the City.
Social Policy Working Group	Oversee the creation of a robust and ambitious approach for the integration of social value through the Councils procurement processes, with consideration given to financial affordability, legal implications and the maximisation of impact.
Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group	To support cemetery and crematorium development and improvement of bereavement services for Belfast.

It is proposed that the decision to re-establish the working groups as outlined above is taken during the new Council term, except for the following, which approval is sought from the Committee to appoint from the beginning of the new Council term:

- **Audit and Risk Panel** - the panel is well established working group and, during June, before the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee considers quite a number of reports, including the Council's Statement of Accounts and it would be beneficial to the decision-making process to have this in place.

- **Shared City Partnership – Again another established group which includes representation from many outside organisations. The Partnership deals with many funding issues, including PEACE IV. The Group last met on 27th March and be preferable to agree to its establishment from the start of the new Council term.**

Decision required:

- **Would Members be supportive of the proposals as outlined above?**
- **In line with previous Council policy, to appoint 1 Member from each of the Parties on the Council, with a Party being defined as having 2 or more Members.**

6. Process for Nomination for High Sheriff

The current Council agreed to use a separate D’hondt process to decide which Parties would be entitled to nominate a person for consideration for appointment as High Sheriff for each year of the Council term. This process sits outside the positions of responsibility process as the appointment is made by the Secretary of State.

Decision Required:

- **Do we wish to use this process again from 2023?**

7. Appointment to Outside Bodies

There are a number of appointments to Outside Bodies. In 2019, the Council decided to use the Sainte Lague method to make these appointments. A report on the appointments to be made would be presented to the first meeting of the new SP and R Committee in June.

Decision required:

- **Do we wish to use this method again or the more common D’hondt method?**

Financial and Resource Implications

None at this stage

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

None at this stage.”

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After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations, with the number of Members on the Planning Committee and the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee to be increased from fourteen to twenty.

Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues

(Mrs. D. Colville, City Innovation Manager, attended in connection with the following two items.)

Update on Belfast Smart District Programme

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To provide the Committee with an update on the development of the Belfast Smart District programme, including the commencement of a first phase to leverage and maximise innovation opportunities for the city, communities and businesses building on the new Weavers Cross regeneration.

1.2 The report seeks the Committee's approval for a number of the programme's first initiatives.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- i note the rationale for an urban innovation accelerator at Weavers Cross, the four proposed objectives and the near term opportunities;**
- ii approve a letter of support for the £10m Belfast bid to the UKRI Net Zero Mobility Hub for a Resilient Future;**
- iii approve development work with Ulster University and others on a health innovation hub proposal at Weavers Cross;**
- iv note the development of CODI and plans to develop a funding bid that may include Smart Dublin as a partner;**
- v note the work on a potential £10 million bid to DSIT's Open Network Ecosystem competition. Members are asked to approve in advance Council's role in any bid, with details to be shared and approved at June Committee; and**

vi approve the proposed governance and resourcing arrangements for the Urban Innovation Accelerator.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 The Smart Belfast urban innovation framework (2022 to 2026) was approved by Committee in November 2022. The aim of the framework is to foster greater collaborative innovation between government (both local and regional), industry, SMEs, academia, and our communities. Smart Belfast is about encouraging these partners to work together to harness the power of digital technologies to develop policy solutions to urban challenges.

3.2 The agreed framework places great emphasis on the importance of ‘place’ for urban innovation and the role of the Belfast Smart District (an area that is geographically coterminous with the city centre). The Smart District is about grounding urban innovation initiatives in ‘real-world’ opportunities in which they can be developed, tested, and scaled.

3.3 A compelling opportunity that falls within the Smart District is the Weavers Cross regeneration. Cities across the world have used similar large-scale transport regeneration schemes as a catalyst for a wider urban innovation and economic growth (eg, London’s Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, King’s Cross, and Dublin’s Smart Docklands). A multi-partner innovation urban accelerator at Weavers Cross has the potential to radically accelerate Belfast’s Smart District ambitions. Such an urban innovation accelerator will leverage the planned investments by Translink and its partners to generate significant additionality for the wider city, communities, SMEs and both local universities.

3.4 Staff from the Council’s City Innovation Office have been developing a joint proposition with Translink, industry partners and our universities to map out what such an accelerator would look like; the immediate opportunities that it can bring to Belfast; and the steps required to deliver it. It is proposed that the Urban Accelerator would have four main objectives:

- i** Supporting urban place-making in our city centre;
- ii** Fostering inclusive innovation for communities;
- iii** Supporting economic growth through innovation; and
- iv** Encouraging next generation digital Infrastructure.

3.5 The proposition has proven immediately attractive to partners, funders, industry and researchers. There are already a number of immediate opportunities that have the potential of bringing substantial funding directly to the City:

(a) Net Zero Mobility Hub for a Resilient Future

3.6 Queen's University is working with city partners including the Council on a £10 million bid to URKI to establish a national Net Zero Mobility Hub at Weavers Cross. This would establish a UK research hub in our city centre to support collaborative innovation between the universities, industry and government. Members are asked to agree to our continuing involvement and to providing an letter of support for the bid from the Council.

(b) Health Innovation Health Hub

3.7 The City Innovation Office and Weavers Cross partners are working with Ulster University to develop a proposal that aims to accelerate innovation for the city's high growth medtech companies. The Weavers Cross location is an idea location, both in terms of easy access to travellers passing through the new station, and also its close links to inner city communities (Markets, Donegall Pass, Sandy Row, and Lower Falls). There is an opportunity to avail of a 'meanwhile use' location for healthcare professionals, SMEs and university researchers to trial innovative health care technologies with local communities and travellers. Ulster University are exploring funding opportunities and there is the potential to grow this to a multi-city, cross border proposition. Members are asked to approve work with Ulster on the development of this proposal.

(c) Citizens Opportunities for Digital Innovation (CODI)

3.8 CODI is a key strand of work in the new Smart Belfast framework. Successful urban collaborative innovation requires the direct involvement of 'end users' (ie, the individuals and communities that live and work in the city) in the development of new public services and programmes. CODI recognises that there are a core set of capabilities and resources that communities must have to order to collaborate meaningfully on such end-user co-design. The ambition is to work with our academic partners and others to create a shared resource that would be available to any city partner working with communities on innovation projects.

3.9 Weavers Cross presents an opportunity to develop CODI with local communities focused on local challenges particularly in relation to neighbourhood health and urban mobility.

- 3.10 Members are asked to note the City Innovation Office is currently developing a funding proposal to support this community programme and has been engaging extensively with partners including the potential of building shared resources with Smart Dublin which is developing a similar approach to working with communities in inner city Dublin.

(d) SME Mobility Innovation Zone

- 3.11 This zone would be a managed environment that allows SMEs to develop and trial innovative solutions with an initial focus on mobility and on health. Connected Places Catapult have developed a similar approach with Network Rail and University of Bristol at Bristol Temple Meads and there is strong evidence that it could be successfully replicated here in Belfast for our companies. The City Innovation Office is exploring opportunities to leverage Belfast Region City Deal funding to support SME involvement in such a zone.

(e) Open Network Ecosystem (ONE) Competition

- 3.12 On 27th March, DSIT opened a £80 million competition to deploy and trial Open RAN technologies in urban environments. The aim of the competition is to help diversify the UK's mobile equipment supplier base by inviting new vendors to run their technologies in the real world. This is an opportunity for Belfast to demonstrate that it is an ideal location for digital innovation, while at the same time deploying some of the most advanced wireless technologies in the world.
- 3.13 DSIT has indicated that they will make up to £10 million available per location and are particularly interested in demonstrators at high demand locations such as transport hubs. (Weavers Cross will deal with over 20 million passengers each year.)
- 3.14 The City Innovation Office has convened discussions with BT, Translink, Queen's University, and Digital Catapult UK. There is broad agreed that most of the elements for a strong Northern Ireland bid are present; however, any bid will be complex and the timeline for submission (24 May) is a challenging one. Members are asked to note that exploratory work will continue on this bid. Given that there is no SPR committee in May, Members are asked to approve in advance Council's role in any bid, with details to be shared and approved at the Committee meeting in June.

- 3.15 The City Innovation Office is exploring collaboration with industry and university partners on an 'urban data and AI lab' that would bring the latest in AI and data analytics to our city that would be accessible to SMEs, researchers, and public bodies. This would seek to manage and explore large quantities of urban data to support better decision-making and development of new innovative products and services for transport, climate programmes, etc. A proposal will be presented to the Committee meeting in June.

Making It Work

- 3.16 Members should note that if the projects described above were to proceed, the Weavers Cross urban innovation accelerator would attract over £25 million of urban innovation funding to the city. The approach will continue be driven by third-party funding opportunities and in-kind contributions with the expectation that there will be limited resources elsewhere. The Council's City Innovation Office will support the development and delivery of the Programme and draw upon the Smart District budget allocated previously agreed by Committee.
- 3.17 A group, jointly chaired by officers from the City Innovation Office, Belfast City Council and Translink and including a range of city partners, will act as a formal Urban Innovation Accelerator board to drive this work. The board would seek approval from each of its respective partner organisations on any new proposals and opportunities. Members are asked to approve the involvement of Belfast City Council officers on this board and note the role of the City Innovation Office in supporting its work.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.18 As noted in the body of the report individual initiatives will proceed based on a mix of funding and co-investment from partners.
- 3.19 Resourcing costs for programme development and delivery have been identified in the existing City Innovation team budget.
- 3.20 Resources for activities associated with the Belfast Region City Deal will be subject to business case development through the city deal process.

Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.21 A public consultation and Equality Screening was previously carried out as part of the full consultation process on the Smart Belfast Urban Innovation Framework.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

UK - Republic of Korea Innovation Twins Programme and Council of Global City Chief Innovation Officers Visit to Belfast

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

UK-Republic of Korea Innovation Twins Programme

- 1.1 To update the Committee on the UK and Republic of Korea Innovation Twins programme and plans for the next phase of the programme which includes:

- developing and implementing a roadmap to support collaboration on smart city initiatives, economic development and bi-lateral trade between Belfast and the city of Sejong;
- signing an MOU/friendly, cooperative agreement to support opportunities for city-to-city collaboration;
- an invitation to the City Innovation team to lead an Innovation Twinning Programme development visit to Sejong with costs covered by BEIS/Connected Places Catapult (CPC); and
- an invitation to host the Mayor, Choi Min-ho and a delegation from Sejong during their visit to Belfast in August 2023.

Council of Global City CIOs

- 1.2 To update Members on the Council of Global City Chief Innovation Officers visit to Belfast on 23rd May 2023.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:

UK-Republic of Korea Innovation Twins Programme

- (i) note the invitation for the City Innovation Office to lead on a visit to Sejong and support the further development of a roadmap to develop collaborative, co-investment opportunities;
- (ii) approve the request for a letter of invitation to the Mayor of Sejong to visit Belfast in August 2023; and
- (iii) approve the request for Lord Mayor to meet and host a reception for the Mayor of Sejong and the signing of an MOU in August 2023

Council of Global City CIOs

- (iv) note the CCGC event taking place on 23 May 2023;
- (v) note the attendance of the Lord Mayor at the event; and
- (vi) approve the Council's membership of the CGCC.

3.0 Main Report

UK-Republic of Korea Innovation Twins Programme

- 3.1 Members will be aware from previous update reports of the Council's participation in the '*UK-Republic of Korea Innovation Twins*' programme¹ which was set up by the Connected Places Catapult and funded by BEIS and UKRI.
- 3.2 The programme aims to build relationships between smart cities with high potential for accelerating long term R and I collaborations and generating opportunities for trade and FDI. Following Committee approval for participation in the programme in 2021, a Statement of Intent was agreed to promote collaboration on the first of the programme up to the end of March 2023.
- 3.3 While not legally binding, the Statement sets out areas of shared interest based on discussion with a range of city partners, to form the basis for cooperation between Sejong and Belfast. These include smart cities, medtech, cyber security, fintech, academic, educational and cultural cooperation,

¹ <https://cp.catapult.org.uk/project/uk-republic-of-korea-innovation-twins-programme>

economic development and opportunities for bilateral trade and investment.

- 3.4 During the initial phase of the programme, we received £100,000 funding which enabled eight local companies to avail of training and support to develop a range of products in areas such as virtual tourism, community rewards programmes, last mile delivery, safer cycling, recycling behaviour, fitness hubs and personal safety. They profiled their work during a virtual international showcase event and one company was successful in being selected for a follow up trade mission to South Korea.
- 3.5 Council staff also had opportunities to work with innovative companies to develop digital solutions and also benefitted from a bespoke innovative procurement training programme delivered via the Captapult.
- 3.6 In the next phase of the Innovation Twins programme, Connected Places Catapult (CPC), with funding from BEIS, will facilitate further engagement with key city partners on the development and implementation of a roadmap to consolidate areas of focus for both cities. The roadmap will set out key missions and priority areas for city to city civic, academic and business collaboration over the next two to three years. It will also detail governance structures and resources required. It is anticipated the roadmap will also help to unlock future funding opportunities from UK Government and attract South Korean investment.
- 3.7 Roadmap development will include the identification of one or more collaborative projects and will include outward visits to Sejong for Belfast companies as well as agreeing to host delegations here in Belfast. As part of this next phase the City Innovation team have been invited by Connected Places Catapult to lead a programme of meetings in Sejong to build on our innovation twinning relationship and agree a focus for collaborative innovation projects. CPC will provide funding of £32,500 to cover associated costs for the outward visit and resulting roadmap development. This will be made available following Committee approval for the signing of a grant agreement.
- 3.8 Invest NI has been a key partner in developing the relationship with Sejong and worked closely with us on shaping the Statement of Intent. They have now established an office in South Korea having extended their work into Sejong through the Innovation Twins programme. Their work programme for 2023 includes a Smart Cities cluster mission which is planned

to coincide with the Smart Cities Expo in Korea in September this year.

- 3.9 The Mayor of Sejong would like to visit Belfast and wishes to sign an MOU to replace the current Statement of Intent which ended on 31st March 2023. The Mayor of Sejong's office has requested a letter of invitation to bring a delegation of 10 people to include the Ambassador of International Relations (two team members), the Director of External Relations, a representative from the Culture and the Economy Department, and two people from Executive Secretary office. The visit will potentially take place 7 and 8 August 2023 and will provide an opportunity to promote collaboration on a range of areas such as Smart Cities, Digital Twins and cyber security among others, that will be confirmed during the roadmap development phase.
- 3.10 During the visit, we would like to host a meeting/reception with the Lord Mayor to facilitate the signing of the MOU, provide a lunch/dinner with key city stakeholders to promote areas of collaboration agreed in the roadmap and offer a tour of the city.
- 3.11 Invest NI are liaising with the Northern Ireland Office separately in relation to the programme for the Mayor's visit and will provide support for the visit.
- 3.12 Members should note that, in parallel, Invest NI hosted Steve Baker NI Minister of State, during a visit to South Korea. The Minister who was made aware of our programme, had the opportunity to meet with the Mayor of Sejong and invited him to come to Northern Ireland for further discussion on opportunities for bi-lateral trade and collaboration.

Council of Global City Chief Innovation Officers (CGCC)

- 3.13 The Council of Global City Chief Information Officers was set up in 2016 and brings together the leaders and commissioners for innovation and digital technologies from European cities. The aim of the Council, which is supported by Bloomberg Associates, is for cities to share best practice, practice and strategic advice on smart cities, digital technologies and urban innovation
- 3.14 CGCC originated in the US in 2016 and was led by chief technology officials in San Francisco and Washington DC with a focus on developing a model for smart cities; digital connectivity; and open source and code-sharing.

- 3.15 CGCC has been invited to Ireland on 22nd and 23rd May by the CEO of Dublin City Council for its bi-annual meeting. Invites have been issued to the CIOs of Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona, Bratislava, Dublin, Helsinki, Karlsruhe, Kyiv, London, Milan, New York, Tallinn, The Hague and Zurich. The group have expressed an interest in visiting Belfast to find out about our urban innovation ambition.
- 3.16 A visit by these CIOs would allow us to showcase Belfast's digital innovation ambition to influential European partners and to explore collaborative economic and innovation opportunities. (Note: the City Innovation Manager has been invited by Bloomberg to become a member of the group to represent the Smart Belfast Innovation ambition.)
- 3.17 The CGCC will hear about the Smart Belfast programme, the Belfast Smart District and City Deal investments. There will be a focus on smart tourism and the local creative industries sector, highlighting our Augment the City initiative and Belfast Stories development, with a visit to Ulster University's Virtual Production Studio. Ormeau Baths will also present on its role in supporting Belfast's innovation ecosystem and highlight some of the SMEs located at its coworking space.
- 3.18 The Lord Mayor has been invited to attend the event and welcome the CGCC members to Belfast.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.19 **UK-Republic of Korea Innovation Twins Programme**
1. Overall Belfast visit programme schedule will be led and funded by Invest NI;
 2. Staff from the City Innovation Office will work with the Enterprise and Business Growth Unit to plan the hosting of the dinner for the Mayor of Sejong and his team - estimated at under £3,000;

The cost for hosting the dinner will come from existing Smart Cities Budget;
 3. Costs associated with roadmap development will be funded through BEIS/Connected Places Catapult
 4. Costs for the Sejong visit to develop the programme and area/s of interest will be met by BEIS/Connected Places Catapult

In TOTAL £32,500 funding from BEIS/CPC being received.

Council of Global City CIOs

3.20 £800 for catering for approx. 30 global leaders, including tea and coffee on arrival, and lunch. Final costs subject to confirmation of final attendee numbers.

- This will come from existing Smart Cities budget. NOTE: Ormeau Baths has agreed to provide its event space at no cost.

Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment

3.21 None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

The Planting of Several Trees to Celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To consider a request received from the UK’s Trees for Cities organisation, inviting the Council to take part in the planting of several young trees to mark the forthcoming Coronation of King Charles III, as part of a UK capital cities initiative.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the request from the Trees for Cities organisation to plant several young trees to mark the Coronation of King Charles III in May 2023, as part of a UK national capital city initiative.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

3.1 On 11th April 2023, the Council received a request from Trees for Cities inviting it to take part in the planting of several young trees to mark the forthcoming Coronation of King Charles III.

3.2 Trees for Cities is the only UK charity working at a national and international scale to improve lives by planting trees in cities. With over 25 years of experience in urban tree planting, Trees

for Cities has been constantly working to highlight the multiple benefits of urban trees to improve people's lives in towns and cities. They specifically work with local communities and local authorities to cultivate lasting change within their neighbourhoods.

- 3.3 Trees for Cities is currently in talks with the Duchy of Cornwall who is supportive of the project to see trees planted in each of the four UK national capitals to mark King Charles III coronation.
- 3.4 Trees for Cities has secured agreement to plant trees in Cardiff, Edinburgh and London and their hope is that Belfast, as the capital city of Northern Ireland would also agree to take part.
- 3.5 The Trees for Cities charity recognise that its request does require a quick turnaround in terms of a decision, organising a suitable planting location and sourcing trees in such short notice.
- 3.6 It would be our recommendation to plant three 'heavy standard' ornamental, containerised trees which would be at a height of approximately 10' to 12' and an ideal location for the tree planting, would be within the grounds of Barnett Demesne.
- 3.7 This small-scale tree planting proposal would still add a small contribution towards the Council's ongoing 'One Million Tree' planting initiative.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.8 Funding for the tree supply/planting will be included within the current CNS tree planting budget and would cost in the region of £1,245.00 in total, as these will be larger trees and it will be necessary to purchase 'containerised' trees – these are trees which have been grown in a large pot and will have an adequate root system to establish quickly. It may also be possible to secure some external funding for this and officers will engage in this regard.

Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessments

- 3.9 None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

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Physical Programme and Asset Management

Update on Area Working Groups

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the East Belfast Area Working Group of 30th March and the North Belfast Area Working Group of 5th April, including the recommendations of the former to:

- i. reallocate an additional £215,000 to Bloomfield Community Association (BIF13); and
- ii. reallocate an additional £35,000 to provide additional storage facilities for sports clubs (Bredagh GAC, Cregagh Wanderers, Nettlefield Multi-Sports and Tullycarnet) (ELIF031).

Update on Physical Programme

The Committee noted the contents of a report providing an update on the Capital Programme and confirming that the following Capital letters of offer and amended letters of offer had been received for a number of projects where the Council was acting as the delivery agent:

Capital Letters of Offer 16th – 31st March, 2023

Project	Funder	Amount
<i>Marrowbone Sacred Heart (Amendment)</i>	DfC	£40,000
<i>BCC Public Realms Work Heritage Centre Roddy McCorley (Amendment)</i>	DfC	£250,000
Urban Villages Sandy Row Arts and Digital Hub	TEO	£706,856
Green & Blue Infrastructure Fund - Grey to Green – Blue / Green Projects	DfI	£400,000
Green & Blue Infrastructure Fund - Active Travel Enablers – Active Travel Project	DfI	£402,500
<i>SIF - Walkway Community Centre (Amendment)</i>	TEO	£1,695,229
<i>Covid-19 Letter of Variance No. 8 (Amendment)</i>	DfC	£4,039,000
<i>Black Mountain Shared Space – Phase 2 Finlay's Site (Amendment)</i>	IFI	£500,000
Lagan Gateway Greenway (Phase 2)	DfI	£714,326

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Update on Contracts

The Committee:

- approved the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a, as detailed in Table 1 below;

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- approved the award of Single Tender Actions, in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions, as detailed in Table 2 below; and
- noted the award of retrospective Single Tender Actions, in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions, as detailed in Table 3 below.

Table 1: Competitive Tenders

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Estimated Total Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services
Replacement media relations software	Up to 4 years	Up to £38,400	P. Gribben	Current contract is ending and needs to be renewed
Appoint an appropriately experienced contractor to develop and deliver Belfast PCSP's Young People Cyber Safety Project 2023 – 2026 (Fully Funded)	Up to 3 years and 4 months	Up to £85,000	D. Sales	PCSP funding is made available on an annual basis and the tender will be awarded with annual renewal, subject to adequate performance, PCSP approval and funding availability.
Appoint an appropriately experienced contractor to develop and deliver Belfast PCSP's Older Adults Cyber Safety Project 2023 – 2026 (Fully Funded)	Up to 3 years and 4 months	Up to £105,000	D Sales	PCSP funding is made available annually and the tender will be awarded with annual renewal, subject to adequate performance, PCSP approval and funding availability

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Asylum immigration advice project (Fully Funded)	Up to 9 months	Up to £72,000	D Sales	Council has received funding from the Executive Office to support asylum seeking communities. This proposal has been based on need identified through the Migrant Forum and Refugee and Asylum Forum
QRadar SIEM provision	Up to 3 years	Up to £106,573.98	T Wallace	A critical IT security device that can accept logs from many devices and alert/defend against Cyber Attack and Malware events in real time
Electrical vehicle fitted with power washer (Fully Funded)	One off Purchase	Up to £50,000	D Sales	DfC has provided £50k of funding to assist with the Cleansing Fleet Enhancement Project
Complex Lives Project Support (Partly funded)	Up	Up to £200,000	J Tully and D Sales	The provision of strategic advice, development and independent support to support

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				senior managers and staff with progressing this project.
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Table 2: Single Tender Actions

Title	Duration	Total Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
Requirement for Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) and Technical Support Officers (TSOs) are required for 24hr shift rota cover for essential service delivery within the Port Health service (Fully funded)	Up to 6 months	Up to £100,000	S Toland	The existing contracted provider for T1792 Provision of Temporary Agency Resources: Matrix SCM have confirmed it is unable to fulfil the required roles of Environmental Health Officer (Port Health) and Technical Support Officers within the contractually agreed time period.	MCS Group
Provision of kerbside collections and treatment services for recyclable materials	Up to 12 months	Up to £2.3m	C Matthews	Requirement for the current contract to be extended for up to 12 months to enable the findings of a feasibility study and Members' feedback to be considered in the subsequent procurement exercise. There is no service provider currently in the local market with the capacity or capability to tender for the	Bryson Recycling

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				<p>service on a short-term contract basis. This was confirmed recently (Oct/Nov 22) when Bryson was the only supplier to express an interest as part of a pre-market engagement exercise.</p>	
Catering service in Malone House	Up to 10 months	<p>£453,000 estimated annual revenue for service provider.</p> <p>5%/ £22k per annum estimated income for council</p>	J Greer	<p>Due to previous contractors withdrawing services and an increasing demand from residents and Members to open this facility there is an urgent need to appoint a provider as soon as possible. Undertaking a publicly advertised tender process would delay appointment of a catering provider resulting in reputational damage for the council and the loss of further business. The Council has struggled to secure and keep a catering service provider at this venue for a number of years despite several attempts via open tender competition.</p>	TBC at later date. Dept in negotiations with a number of suppliers to secure service provision asap.

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Table 3: Retrospective Single Tender Actions

Title of Contract	Duration	Total Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
Delivery of a feasibility study within the UKRI Pioneer Places funded Net Zero Belfast initiative (Fully funded)	Up to 3 months	Up to £59,915	J Tully	The funding award is to Belfast City Council so this will require a contract for the use of Energy Systems Catapult and allocation of external funding for that purpose	Energy Systems Catapult
Printer copy charges	Up to 1 year	Up to £100,000	P Gribben	Payment of copy charges for existing multi-function printers. The supplier has exclusive rights to these printers and the STA is required in the interim pending a full refresh of our printer estate	SCC
Complex Lives Project Support	8 months	£45,000	J Tully	The provision of strategic advice, development and independent support to support senior managers and staff with progressing this project (August 22 to March 23 spend)	Marsh Public Service Solutions

The Committee agreed to defer a request for the award of the Single Tender Action, in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions, as detailed below, to enable further information to be circulated to Members in advance of the Council meeting on 2nd May:

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Single Tender Action

Title	Duration	Total Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
The acquisition of a unique Giant Bubble Art Installation by Atelier Sisu	2 days	Up to £70,000	J Greer	The Festival Board decided that the unique design was best fitting to enhance the festival on an international setting with lots of social network opportunities to showcase Belfast's most iconic landmarks and enhance the ambience and curiosity around Belfast's Maritime Event offering	Atelier Sisu

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 27th March, including the recommendations:

PEACEPLUS

- to note the high-level feedback on the Peace Plus Programme, including an update on the Thematic Group Meeting 1 – 22nd March – St. Comgall's and further update on Stage 2 development of the Local Action Plan, including forthcoming Thematic Working Group meetings;

PEACE IV

Secretariat

- to note the contents of the report and delegate authority to the PEACE IV Programme Board to consider and agree the closure position of projects, with final agreement by the Director of Neighbourhood Services, until the reconvening of the Shared City Partnership following the Local Government Elections.

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CYP Theme

- to note the contents of the report and:
 - **CYP 1 – TECH CONNECTS, Belfast Metropolitan College (Digital Insights Programme)** – approve, in principle, the completion of the project at the level outlined and progress discussions with the Special European Union Programmes Body on any implications; and
 - **CYP5 NIHE** – note that the written return from the Special European Union Programmes Body had indicated that any additional request for mitigations to be applied to target hours had been declined.

SSS Theme

- to approve the revised narratives for the information panels in Sections 2 and 5, subject to a plain English review and creative input ,as detailed in appendix II of the minutes; and
- to note the suggested locations for panels and directional signage in Section 2 (Springvale) and Springfield Dam/Park, as detailed in appendix III of the minutes.

BPR Theme

- **BPR 1 – NIHE - Cross Community Area Networks** – to note that the Special European Union Programmes Body had responded in writing to a request for application of additional mitigations, stating that no further mitigations were permitted;
- **BPR2 – Creative Communities Project** – to agree, in principle, the level of achievement as 55% of participant targets; and
- **BPR6 St. Comgall's** – to note that the project is moving into the closure phase, with further evidence being submitted on completion of contact hours for six final adult participants, and delegate authority to the Thematic Chairs of the Programme Board to approve the final completer numbers for closure of the project.

GOOD RELATIONS

- to note the Quarter 4 report on the delivery of the Council's Good Relations Action Plan.

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Operational Issues

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

The Committee adopted the recommendations in respect of those applications received up to 3rd April, as set out below:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
2023 EVENTS						
EMBRACE	19th October 2023	<p>20th Anniversary Celebration of Embrace - a group of Christians working together to promote response to people seeking asylum, refugees and migrant workers.</p> <p>Numbers attending 50</p>	C	No charge as charity	Yes, Drinks reception as anniversary	<p>Approve No Charge Drinks Reception</p> <p><i>£500 given to their chosen caterer.</i></p>

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2025 EVENTS						
Belfast Philharmonic Society	21st June 2025	Belfast Philharmonic Society 150th Anniversary Dinner - Drinks Reception, Awards, Dinner and entertainment. Numbers attending – 200	C	No Charge as charity	Yes, Wine Reception as significant anniversary	Approve No Charge Wine Reception <i>£500 given to their chosen caterer for wine on arrival</i>
C S Lewis Foundation	24th July 2025	Opening Reception for C S Lewis Summer Institute for guests attending their 7-day conference taking place in QUB. Numbers attending - 300	A & B	No (Waiver as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality

**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 17th April.

Chairperson