

# Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section  
Chief Executive's Department  
Belfast City Council  
City Hall  
Belfast  
BT1 5GS**



10<sup>th</sup> February, 2012

## **MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room (Room G05), City Hall on Friday, 17th February, 2012 at 10.00 am, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

PETER McNANEY

Chief Executive

### **AGENDA:**

1. **Routine Matters**
  - (a) Apologies
  - (b) Minutes
  - (c) Declarations of Interest
  - (d) Connswater Community Greenway - Update on Contract (referred back to Committee at the Council Meeting on 1st February 2012) (Pages 1 - 6)
2. **Modernisation and Improvement**
  - (a) Programme for Government (Pages 7 - 48)

3. **Finance/Value for Money**

- (a) Quarter 3 Financial Reporting (Pages 49 - 70)
- (b) Green New Deal (Pages 71 - 72)
- (c) Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel of 9th February, 2012

4. **Democratic Services and Governance**

- (a) Requests for the Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality (Pages 73 - 80)
- (b) Request for the Use of the City Hall to Mark the Centenary of the Signing of the Ulster Covenant (Pages 81 - 86)
- (c) Request for the Use of the City Hall for an E-Counting Demonstration (Pages 87 - 88)
- (d) Date for Annual Council Meeting in June 2012 (Pages 89 - 90)
- (e) Local Authorities Members' Association Spring Seminar (Pages 91 - 92)
- (f) Northern Ireland Local Government Association Subscription (Pages 93 - 96)
- (g) Minutes of the meeting of the Governance Working Group of 30th January, 2012 (Pages 97 - 102)

5. **Human Resources**

- (a) Standing Order 55 - Employment of Relatives (Pages 103 - 104)
- (b) Procurement of Computer Based Administrative and Clerical Skills Testing Tender (Pages 105 - 106)

6. **Asset Management**

- (a) Request to lay a wreath at the Cenotaph - Irish Guards Association (Pages 107 - 110)
- (b) North Foreshore Giant's Park - Proposed licence to carry out Site Investigation Works (Pages 111 - 114)

7. **Good Relations and Equality**

- (a) Minutes of the meeting of the Good Relations Partnership of 6th February, 2012
- (b) Minutes of the meetings of the Joint Centenaries Working Group and Party Group Leaders' Forum of 27th January and 10th February, 2012 (Pages 115 - 124)

8. **Cross-Cutting Issues**

- (a) Appointment of Political Members to the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) and District PCSPs (Pages 125 - 130)
- (b) Appointment of Independent Members to the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) and District PCSPs (Pages 131 - 132)
- (c) Age Friendly Declaration and Interreg Funding

**To: The Chairman and Members of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee**

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**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee  
Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2012**

**-extract of minute-**

Connswater Community Greenway – Update on Contract

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update in relation to the contract associated with the Connswater Community Greenway and affirmed its decision to grant authority to the Director of Property and Projects, in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Town Solicitor, to pursue the most advantageous option to ensure value-for-money and expeditious completion of the project to the acquired design standards and also to follow up with the Connswater Joint Venture the issue of an independent review of cost and value.

Referred back to the Committee for further consideration by the Council at its meeting on 1 February, 2012, at the request of Alderman Stoker.

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Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	BCC Response to the draft Programme for Government, the Draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland, and the draft NI Economic Strategy
<b>Date:</b>	Friday 17 February 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kevin Heaney, Russell Connelly (ext 6202)

<b>1.0</b>	<b><u>RELEVANT BACKGROUND</u></b>
1.1	On 17 November 2011, the First Minister and deputy First Minister published the draft Programme for Government 2011-2015 and draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland. In parallel, the Department of Trade and Investment (DETI) DETI released the draft NI Economic Strategy for consultation.
1.2	<p><b>The draft Programme for Government 2011-2015 (PfG)</b> sets out the high level objectives and actions of the NI Executive over the next four years which focuses on the following key priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Growing a Sustainable Economy and Investing in the Future</li> <li>- Creating Opportunities, Tackling Disadvantage and Improving Health and Well-Being</li> <li>- Protecting Our People, the Environment and Creating Safer Communities</li> <li>- Building a Strong and Shared Community</li> <li>- Delivering High Quality and Efficient Public Services</li> </ul>
1.3	The <b>draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021 (ISNI)</b> sets out the NI Executive and central government's investment priorities over the next decade. The Investment Strategy seeks to provide a modern and efficient infrastructure which will act as a stimulus to create a growing and sustainable economy, and delivering high quality and efficient public services.
1.4	<p>The <b>draft Economic Strategy for Northern Ireland</b> seeks to improve the economic competitiveness of the economy by increasing employment and wealth opportunities for all. The draft strategy includes a framework for economic growth, built around the rebuilding and rebalancing themes. It includes a range of short, medium and long-term priorities for growth within which specific activities are identified. The rebuilding theme focuses on increasing private sector productivity while the rebuilding theme is based on creating employment in export focused sectors.</p> <p>The key priorities under the rebalancing theme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stimulating innovation and creativity</li> <li>- Improving employability and the level, relevance and use of skills</li> <li>- Competing in the global economy</li> <li>- Encouraging business growth</li> <li>- Developing economic infrastructure</li> </ul> <p>The key priorities under the rebuilding theme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving employment opportunities and employability</li> <li>- Promoting employment</li> </ul>

1.5	It is clear that the three documents are interrelated and will collectively shape the future direction of public investment within Northern Ireland. Given the clear linkages and synergies between the draft PfG and ISNI and the Council's own Investment Programme, a combined response to both documents has been prepared and is attached at <b>Appendix 1</b> for Members consideration.
1.6	The Development Committee had given detailed consideration to the draft NI Economic Strategy on 7 February and a draft Council response is attached at <b>Appendix 2</b> for Members consideration. As the Economic Strategy seeks to deliver against a number of the key priorities identified within the draft PfG and ISNI including growing a sustainable economy, supporting economic recovery and growth, and rebalancing and rebuilding the economy, the draft Council response attached at Appendix 1 incorporates the relevant points raised in the draft response to the Economic Strategic (Appendix 2)
<b><i>Draft Council response to PfG and ISNI</i></b>	
1.7	<b>The draft Council response to the PfG and ISNI set out at Appendix 1 is a companion piece to the Council's own investment programme seeks a firm commitment from the NI Executive to include the Investment Programme within the PfG and ISNI and to enable us to jointly maximise the potential opportunities for greater alignment and integration of resources/efforts to ensure key investment priorities for the city area delivered. A commitment to work in partnership and integrate resources to ensure effective delivery within Belfast is the underpinning tenet of our response.</b>
1.8	<p>The response provides an Executive Summary of the main issues raised as well as a number of specific comments linked to the priority areas identified within the draft PfG and ISNI. An overview of the key points outlined in the draft response include:</p> <p><b>General</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council commends the NI Executive on its clear commitment to continue to invest during this period of economic austerity, a commitment shared by the Council as set out within the Councils Investment Programme.</li> <li>• A request that the Belfast Investment Programme be supported by the NI Executive and specifically incorporated within the PfG and ISNI</li> <li>• The Desire of the Council to work in partnership with NI Executive to identify and develop joint delivery models and to align and integrate resources where possible to ensure delivery.</li> <li>• The PfG and ISNI need to commit resources to the identified investment projects for Belfast.</li> <li>• A proposal to establish a 'Belfast Delivery Forum' and 'Implementation Plan' which ensures that capacity exists across all agencies and resources to ensure delivery of key investment projects.</li> <li>• A request for greater focus to be given to creating a set of policy instruments to maximise the benefits of our cities in supporting the economic recovery of Northern Ireland.</li> <li>• Support a new urban development programme as part of the next wave of EU funding programmes (2014-2020)</li> </ul> <p><b>Priority 1: Growing a Sustainable Economy and Investing in the Future</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A request to work with the NI Executive and DETI to maximise the economic benefits of the potential investment in enhancing the City's broadband infrastructure as recently announced by the UK Chancellor George Osborne.</li> <li>• The need to explore alternative forms of finance for major capital schemes and a request for the Executive to put in place the necessary regulatory requirements to allow councils to explore these options.</li> <li>• The need to consider the future supply of appropriate office accommodation for large scale investments and a request to urgently review this and to consider how future supply might be incentivised in the current climate.</li> <li>• A proposal to establish a ministerial working group to look at town and city centre regeneration issues, as has happened in the Welsh Assembly and Scottish Parliament</li> </ul>

- Request that recognition is given to Belfast's role as the regional driver and that an appropriate interface is put in place across government to coordinate policy and address the challenges presented in delivering key strategic projects, particularly the relocation of the University of Ulster into Belfast City Centre.
- Identification of the opportunities presented by business tourism and the associated need for adequate investment in providing needed infrastructure e.g. integrated conference and exhibition facilities for conferences of an international scale.
- Identification of the opportunities presented by the renewables sector and the need for a targeted strategy for its future development. This might include the establishment of an Enterprise Zone for renewables in the Belfast Harbour/North Foreshore area of the city
- Request that consideration be given to allocating further investment in the provision of public transport as an overall percentage of the investment in roads infrastructure.

### **Priority 2: Creating Opportunities, Tackling Disadvantage and Improving Health and Wellbeing**

- Seek the support of the NI Executive and relevant government departments to deliver the actions emerging from the Belfast Strategic Partnership's 'Framework for Action on Life Inequalities 2011-2015'.
- Seek further discussions with NI Executive and the Department of Finance and Personnel in pursuance of integrated approaches to address poverty and social inequalities within Belfast and wider region.
- Advocate that the co-location and integration of public services should be considered as a key service delivery model of the future.
- Suggest that the new Public Health Strategy for Northern Ireland should be considered as a key building block for the draft PfG and ISNI.
- Welcome the creation of the Social Investment Fund and request that consideration be given to Belfast City Council securing representation on any governance structure put in place to over the administration of the fund.
- Request that a budget be included in the PfG and ISNI for the delivery of the Belfast rapid transit system which will play a key role in supporting local economies, linking businesses with markets and linking communities and people with potential employment opportunities.

### **Priority 3: Protecting our People, the Environment and Creating Safer Communities**

- Advocate for greater level of funding for the development of critical waste infrastructure within Northern Ireland
- Advocate that further consideration be given to the potential to create a single waste disposal authority within Northern Ireland.
- Suggest that incremental targets for both reductions in greenhouse gas omissions and air quality standards be included.
- Request that the Department of Regional Development's pilot initiative to roll-out electronic vehicle infrastructure be included in the draft PfG and ISNI.
- Request that consideration be given to the potential inclusion of a Belfast based public bike hire scheme as part of the PfG and ISNI investment priorities linked to sustainable transport.

### **Priority 4: Building a Strong and Shared Community**

- Council desire to work with the NI Executive and all relevant statutory and community stakeholders to build a strong and shared community and promote equality and good relations.
- Advocate the need for a concerted and inter-agency approach to addressing historic physical and non physical barriers within the city and their contribution to division and segregation.

### **Priority 5: Delivering High Quality and Efficient Public Services**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council welcomes and remains committed to taking forward local government reform and ensuring the effective and efficient transfer and integration of important new place-shaping functions.</li> <li>• The Council would wish to explore with NI Executive and DFP the types of financial mechanisms which could be utilised to enable local government fund specific elements of reform on an 'invest to save' basis.</li> <li>• Commend that the transfer of functions be rates neutral at point of transfer to local government.</li> <li>• The Council recognises the strategic significance of Planning in supporting economic development and regeneration activity and wish to work with NI Executive and DoE to ensure that planning can deliver against the ambitious targets set out within draft PfG and ISNI.</li> <li>• The Council would wish to explore with the NI Executive and government departments the potential for greater integration/co-design and co-location of public services at the local level.</li> <li>• Support for the commitment to explore the implementation of social clauses for government capital schemes, urging a dialogue across government to maximise the potential impact of these</li> </ul>
1.9	As recommended by Members at the recent SP&R delivery workshop on 3 February and recent discussions in regards to the development of the Council's own Investment Programme, in responding to the draft PfG, ISNI and Economic Strategy, <b>the Council will request to meet with the NI Executive, the First and Deputy First Minister and other relevant Ministers to discuss the Investment Programme and shared investment priorities for the City.</b>

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
There are no financial or human resource commitments contained within this report.	

<b>4.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
4.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) consider the contents of this report:</li> <li>ii) consider the draft Council response attached at Appendix 1 to the draft PfG and ISNI and provide any feedback which they may have;</li> <li>iii) consider the draft Council response attached at Appendix 2 to the draft Economic Strategy and provide any feedback/comments which they may have</li> <li>iv) agree that the revised Council's responses, taking account of any amendments made by Members, be submitted to OFMDFM and DETI</li> </ul>

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Appendices</b>
<b>Appendix 1:</b> Draft BCC response to draft PfG and ISNI	
<b>Appendix 2:</b> draft Council response to draft Economic Strategy	

**Belfast City Council Draft Response to  
Draft Programme for Government 2011-2015  
Draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland 2011-2021  
Outline Response – Version 1.0 30 January 2012**

## **Introduction**

The Council commends the NI Executive on its clear commitment to continue to invest during this period of economic austerity, a commitment which the Council shares as set out within the recently launched Belfast Investment Programme 2011-2015.

This Investment Programme sets out the Council's clear ambitious for the city and the collective leadership of our Elected Members in agreeing a shared vision for the Council as it moves into its new electoral term; stating the need for strong city leadership and the willingness to work in partnership to ensure continued investment in the city.

The Council recognises that creating a competitive and sustainable city requires the effective and strategic utilisation of all the city's resources and asset base. This places an even greater emphasis on the need to develop innovative and new ways in which partners can work together at a local, city and regional level to deliver and maximise the benefits of key strategic investments and the effectiveness of local delivery arrangements.

The Council therefore welcomes the opportunity to consider and input into the draft Programme for Government (PfG) 2011-2015 and the draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI) 2011–2021. It is clear that these documents are interrelated and will collectively shape the future direction of public investment within Northern Ireland. The Council believe that collectively these documents present a huge opportunity to redesign how we work, to break through silos, to integrate our collective energy and resources, and to create a new collaborative partnership between central and local government.

The Council's response is set out in two parts; the first is an Executive Summary of the main issues contained within the Belfast City Council response and the second deals with the more specific comments linked to the priorities and objectives as set out within the two documents.

**The Council wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive and government departments at every opportunity to deliver on the ambitious and challenging priorities set out within these documents and to maximise the level of investment in the economic, social and physical fabric of Belfast.**

## **Part 1: Executive Summary**

The main comments from Belfast City Council can be summarised as follows:

- The Council commends the NI Executive on its clear commitment to continue to invest during this period of economic austerity, a commitment which the Council shares.
- Given the clear synergies between the NI Executive's and Council's own investment priorities, request that the Belfast investment programme be supported by the NI Executive and specifically incorporated within the PfG and ISNI
- The Council wishes to work in partnership with NI Executive to identify and develop joint delivery models and to align and integrate resources where possible to ensure delivery.
- The PfG and ISNI need to commit resources to the identified investment projects for Belfast.

- A proposal to establish a 'Belfast Delivery Forum' and 'Implementation Plan' which ensures that capacity exists across all agencies and disciplines to ensure delivery of key investment projects.
- A request for greater focus to be given to creating a set of policy instruments to maximise the benefits of our cities in supporting the economic recovery of Northern Ireland.
- Support a new urban development programme as part of the next wave of EU funding programmes (2014-2020)

### **Priority 1: Growing a Sustainable Economy and Investing in the Future**

- A request to work with the NI Executive and DETI to maximise the economic benefits of the potential investment in enhancing the City's broadband infrastructure as recently announced by the UK Chancellor George Osborne.
- The need to explore alternative forms of finance for major capital schemes and a request for the Executive to put in place the necessary regulatory requirements to allow councils to explore these options.
- The need to consider the future supply of appropriate office accommodation for large scale investments and a request to urgently review this and to consider how future supply might be incentivised in the current climate.
- A proposal to establish a ministerial working group to look at town and city centre regeneration issues, as has happened in the Welsh Assembly and Scottish Parliament
- Request that recognition is given to Belfast's role as the regional driver and that an appropriate interface is put in place across government to coordinate policy and address the challenges presented in delivering key strategic projects, particularly the relocation of the University of Ulster into Belfast City Centre.
- Identification of the opportunities presented by business tourism and the associated need for adequate investment in providing needed infrastructure e.g. integrated conference and exhibition facilities for conferences of an international scale.
- Identification of the opportunities presented by the renewables sector and the need for a targeted strategy for its future development. This might include the establishment of an Enterprise Zone for renewables in the Belfast Harbour/North Foreshore area of the city
- Request that consideration be given to allocating further investment in the provision of public transport as an overall percentage of the investment in roads infrastructure.

### **Priority 2: Creating Opportunities, Tackling Disadvantage and Improving Health and Wellbeing**

- Seek the support of the NI Executive and relevant government departments to deliver the actions emerging from the Belfast Strategic Partnership's 'Framework for Action on Life Inequalities 2011-2015'.
- Seek further discussions with NI Executive and the Department of Finance and Personnel in pursuance of integrated approaches to address poverty and social inequalities within Belfast and the wider region.
- Advocate that the co-location and integration of public services should be considered as a key service delivery model of the future.
- Suggest that the new Public Health Strategy for Northern Ireland should be considered as a key building block for the draft PfG and ISNI.

- Welcome the creation of the Social Investment Fund and request that consideration be given to Belfast City Council securing representation on any governance structure put in place to over the administration of the fund.
- Request that a budget be included in the PfG and ISNI for the delivery of the Belfast rapid transit system which will play a key role in supporting local economies, linking businesses with markets and linking communities and people with potential employment opportunities.

### **Priority 3: Protecting our People, the Environment and Creating Safer Communities**

- Advocate for greater level of funding for the development of critical waste infrastructure within Northern Ireland
- Advocate that further consideration be given to the potential to create a single waste disposal authority within Northern Ireland.
- Suggest that incremental targets for both reductions in greenhouse gas omissions and air quality standards be included.
- Request that the Department of Regional Development's pilot initiative to roll-out electronic vehicle infrastructure be included in the draft PfG and ISNI.
- Request that consideration be given to the potential inclusion of a Belfast based public bike hire scheme as part of the PfG and ISNI investment priorities linked to sustainable transport.

### **Priority 4: Building a Strong and Shared Community**

- Council desire to work with the NI Executive and all relevant statutory and community stakeholders to build a strong and shared community and promote equality and good relations.
- Advocate the need for a concerted and inter-agency approach to addressing historic physical and non physical barriers within the city and their contribution to division and segregation.

### **Priority 5: Delivering High Quality and Efficient Public Services**

- The Council welcomes and remains committed to taking forward local government reform and ensuring the effective and efficient transfer and integration of important new place-shaping functions.
- The Council would wish to explore with NI Executive and DFP the types of financial mechanisms which could be utilised to enable local government fund specific elements of reform on an 'invest to save' basis.
- Commend that the transfer of functions be rates neutral at point of transfer to local government.
- The Council recognises the strategic significance of Planning in supporting economic development and regeneration activity and wish to work with NI Executive and DoE to ensure that planning can deliver against the ambitious targets set out within draft PfG and ISNI.
- The Council would wish to explore with the NI Executive and government departments the potential for greater integration/co-design and co-location of public services at the local level.
- Support for the commitment to explore the implementation of social clauses for government capital schemes, urging a dialogue across government to maximise the potential impact of these

## **Part 2: OVERARCHING COMMENTS**

A summary of the key overarching issues as identified by Belfast City Council is included below for reference.

- i) **Investment Priorities** - The Council welcomes the NI Executive's identified investment priorities as set out within the draft PfG, ISNI and Economic Strategy and view all three documents as an opportunity for the Council to provide high level strategic support and commitment to central government for much needed improvement in resource management within Northern Ireland.

The Council believe that the challenge of delivering on the priorities set out within the PfG and the related documents will be the responsibility of a range of stakeholders, not least the Council. A strong strategic partnership between central and local government will therefore be essential and should provide the groundwork for a balanced, two tier government approach which will be necessary to assist any economic and social recovery. The Council will work with the NI Executive and government departments to identify and develop joint delivery models and to align and integrate resources where possible.

Many of the key priorities within the three documents complement and align with the Council's own priorities for Belfast. These priorities have recently been set out in two key planning documents for the Belfast region, the "**Belfast Investment Programme 2012 – 2015**" and the "**Belfast Masterplan**". We note that a commitment is set out within the draft PfG and ISNI that the NI Executive will support the delivery of the 'One Plan' for the regeneration of the North West and would ask that a similar commitment of support is provided for these key strategic plans for Belfast.

- ii) **Belfast Investment Programme 2012-2015** - As a demonstration of our commitment to action and to investing in the city and supporting the economic recovery of Belfast, the Council has recently released for consultation its own **Investment Programme for the period 2012-2015**. This Programme has consensus from all political parties and has buy-in from a wide range of partners from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. Speaking at the recent launch of the draft Investment Programme, the First and Deputy First Ministers stated their clear support for the investment commitments of the Council including £150million in capital schemes across the city, £34million in supporting economic growth/recovery and £29million in local communities and neighbourhoods.

The Council recognises that the provision of modern infrastructure is critical to the future success of Belfast and will underpin the revitalisation of our local economy. The Council's Investment Programme sets out a package of proposed measures which seeks to help grow the local economy, support businesses, help people into employment and provide the economic infrastructure necessary for future growth. Similar objectives are also reflected in the draft PfG, ISNI and Economic Strategy.

In creating its draft Investment Programme, the Council has looked closely at the plans of other bodies including the draft PfG, ISNI and Economic Strategy, to ensure that the projects and programmes outlined align closely with the objectives of central government.

- iii) **Belfast Masterplan** - The Belfast Masterplan sets out our high level vision for the next ten years and highlights what we need to focus on in terms of city infrastructure and relationships to create a competitive, connected, inclusive Belfast. The key objectives under our Masterplan are:

- **The centre city** - A vibrant and dynamic centre city which supports regional economic growth
- **The neighbourhood city** - Neighbourhoods which provide the focus for community, social and environmental sustainability



- **The accessible and connected city-** Enhancing the accessibility and connectivity internationally, regionally and locally
- **The learning city-** Harnessing the power of cutting edge research and development and third level education
- **The eco city -** Clean technology, renewable energy and efficiency will drive growth in the economy and reduce costs for businesses and households.

iv) **Partnership** – the Council wish to work in partnership with the NI Executive and government departments at every opportunity to deliver on the challenges set out within the draft PfG, ISNI and Economic Strategy. These documents present a huge opportunity to redesign how we work, to break through silos, to integrate our collective energy and resources, and to create a new collaborative partnership between central and local government.

The Council welcomes the focus given within the draft ISNI to joining-up and co-locating services and would seek to work with the NI Executive to explore what opportunities may exist for collaborative projects within Belfast. The Council has been ahead of the game on this in many respects, in working with other agencies to develop a 'one-stop-shop' approach to service provision such as the Grove Health and Well-being Centre.

v) **Belfast Delivery Plan** – the Council would highlight the need for an effective implementation plan for Belfast which ensures that capacity exists across all agencies and disciplines to make key projects happen and to deliver on the significant investment commitments as set out within the draft PfG, ISNI and Economic Strategy. The Council would advocate for the establishment of an inter-departmental, politically led, **City Delivery Forum** (a guiding coalition) which could develop and oversee a forward work plan which prioritises and supports the delivery of key investment projects within the city. This delivery plan would seek to map out the potential investment workflows and timelines emerging from the PfG, ISNI, the Council's own Investment Programme and other key private sector investment projects, identify and secure the necessary capacity and resources required to ensure delivery.

The Council would highlight the previous success of the 'New Belfast Group' which had been established to oversee the delivery of a £300million investment programme in Belfast including the Belfast Sewers Project, the Belfast Streets Ahead initiative and the M1 Motorway and Westlink project.

vi) **Resource commitments** – The Council's own Masterplan has identified a number of priority transformational projects which will have beneficial effects at a citywide and regional level. Whilst a number of these are referred to within the draft PfG and ISNI, the Council is would be concerned that specific resources have not been assigned to them. For example:

- redevelopment of University of Ulster's York Street Campus
- introduction of Belfast Rapid Transit System
- redevelopment of Belfast City Centre North East Quarter (i.e. Royal Exchange)
- delivery of 5 major public realm schemes across Belfast
- redevelopment of Crumlin Road Gaol (*ISNI, page 34*)
- potential development of a new Integrated Transport Hub and Interchange on the existing Europa Bus Centre and Great Victoria Street railway station

The Council believe that such projects are key economic priorities for the city and would request that an action plan and specific budget line (resources) be identified within the PfG and ISNI. The Council would be keen to work with the NI Executive to explore the possible alignment/integration of resources to enable projects to happen.

- vii) **Alternative Funding Sources** – It is important to recognise the ability of local government to borrow to invest, a power which can be utilised by the Council to help deliver some of the identified investment priorities for the city. Furthermore, the Council has carried out a number of exploratory studies to identify and examine alternative financial instruments which could be utilised by the Council and/or its partners to deliver the investment priorities for the city and wider region (e.g. Tax Increment Financing, Local Asset Back Vehicles, Joint Ventures with the private sector etc). The Council would wish to work with the NI Executive, the Strategic Investment Board and other key partners to ensure that all available funding sources are utilised to maximise the level of investment into both Belfast and Northern Ireland. The Council would welcome further dialogue with Northern Ireland Executive regarding the necessary regulatory requirements to allow councils to explore these options as a way forward in the current era of funding restraint within the public sector. We would also welcome a discussion on how EU funding mechanisms such as JEREMIE and JESSICA could be levered in this context
- viii) **Future of EU Structural Funds 2014 -2020** – In a period when capital expenditure is going to be reduced it will be important to maximise potential funding from Europe. The Council is aware that the NI Executive are considering the future direction and potential delivery models for EU Structural Funds for the period 2014-2020 (which is understood to be in the region of 3.76billion Euros). Whilst the NI block allocation of this funding is still to be negotiated and agreed, the Council would strongly advocate for, and seek the support of the NI Executive, for the inclusion of a strong urban dimension to any future European funding programmes, given the clear role of cities as key regional economic drivers.
- ix) **Urban Policy** – An urban policy agenda is considered essential to enable the key urban centres to develop coherent strategies to spearhead regeneration and sustainable transport and a compelling quality of life agenda for the continued development of our towns and cities. The Council would commend that greater focus be given within the PfG, ISNI and Economic Strategy on creating a set of policy instruments to maximise the benefits of our cities in supporting the economic recovery of Northern Ireland.

## **Part 2: COMMENTS ON PRIORITY AREAS**

### **Priority 1 – Growing a Sustainable Economy and Investing in the Future**

The Council will have an important role to play in helping to develop the economic environment required to stimulate growth and investment in the city. Belfast, as the largest city in Northern Ireland, plays an important role as a key driver of regional economic growth. We are committed to working with the NI Executive and our partners in all sectors to rebuild a strong and competitive local economy which will be critical to the success of the city and wider region. The Council's own Investment Programme seeks to stimulate the local economy, create employment opportunities and provide the economic infrastructure to ensure future competitiveness.

The Council recognises that the challenges facing the Northern Ireland economy are significant. The draft PfG makes clear that the potential for recovery and growth will depend upon effective partnership working between the public and private, voluntary and community sectors. The Council is committed to working with government departments, agencies and the private sector to contribute towards the targets set out in these key regional strategies.

**The Council welcomes the NI Executive's recognition of the importance of Belfast to regional prosperity and would commend that a commitment of support for the Council's Investment Programme 2011-2015 for the city be included in the draft PfG and ISNI similar to that included for the 'One Plan' for the regeneration of Derry/Londonderry.**

#### **i) Job Creation, Employability and Skills Development**

*How can the Council help to deliver?*

The Council believe that there is need for specific, targeted interventions to ensure that people in all parts of Belfast have the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to apply for and secure jobs particularly our young people (16-24) who have been badly impacted by the economic downturn. The Council is committed to looking at how we, as a large employer in the city, can provide job opportunities and extend employment opportunities by supporting those who are unemployed or disadvantaged in the labour market to tackle the barriers to work that they face.

Over the next three years the Council will:

- Invest in the development of **bursaries** to help those aged 16-24 into further education, training and employment;
- work with local partners to deliver **targeted employability initiatives** across the city,
- work with partners on the **Belfast Social Clause Delivery Forum**, ensuring that government contracts contain appropriate social clauses to support employment and apprenticeship opportunities that can be easily managed and monitored;
- work with DEL and Belfast Metropolitan College to deliver on the targets set out in their successive employment and skills strategies and set up a city-wide Employability and Skills Steering Group to maximise the significant resources available across government and other agencies;
- provide **work placement, apprenticeship and internship** opportunities within Belfast City Council for graduates and young long-term unemployed and disabled persons; and
- deliver **employment opportunities** at no additional cost to the ratepayer.

#### **ii) Infrastructure Investment**

*How can the council help to deliver?*

Councils are ideally placed to identify and develop key sub-regional infrastructure projects. The Council will work collaboratively with the NI Executive and government departments to further develop the city's infrastructure to promote growth and inward investment. The Council's own

investment programme contains a number of investment projects which will help support key growth sectors including tourism, the creative industries, green technology and renewables. For example:

- a £20million integrated convention and exhibition centre at the Belfast Waterfront Hall;
- an £8million Green Economy Business Park at the North Foreshore;
- an £8million Innovation Centre at Springvale; and
- a £4million Digital Hub for Belfast

**Broadband infrastructure** – The Council will work with the NI Executive and DETI to maximise the economic benefits of the recent announcement made by the UK Chancellor, George Osborne, that Belfast would be one of ten cities to share £100 million investment in superfast broadband and Wi-Fi infrastructure. Becoming a ‘super-connected’ city will not only support the continued economic growth and competitiveness of Belfast and will provide a platform to encourage foreign direct investment and enhancing the city’s tourism offering.

### *Maximising the Impact of PFG and ISNI*

- **Capital Investment** - Whilst the draft PFG and ISNI identifies a number of infrastructure projects which the Council believe are key economic priorities for the city (e.g. redevelopment of Belfast City Centre North East Quarter, redevelopment of Crumlin Road Gaol, Belfast rapid Transit etc) we note with concern that specific resources have not been assigned to ensure their delivery. These include:

The Council would be keen to work with the NI Executive to explore the possible alignment/integration of resources to enable such projects to happen. The value of this approach has already been demonstrated through the success of joint projects such as Titanic Belfast, MAC and Lyric.

- **Office accommodation** – the Council believe that there is a need for a concerted approach to addressing the current lack of ‘grade A’ office space within Belfast which will be necessary to accommodate any Foreign Direct Investment in the city. There is therefore a need to identify creative solutions around office space to ensure alignment between investment agenda and provision of appropriate, available business space.
- **City Centre degeneration** – The Council would commend that a greater focus be given within the PFG and ISNI to addressing the significant degeneration experienced by of our key towns and cities as a result of the economic downturn, the rise in online retailing and out of town shopping.

The Council would highlight the stark findings of a recent Department for Business Innovation and Skills report entitled “*Understanding High Street Performance*” (Dec. 2011), which indicated that a third of high streets are “degenerating or failing” with town centre vacancy rates on the increase. Would highlight also the findings of the recently published ‘*Portas Review (Dec 2011)*’, an independent review into the future of our high streets. This report recommended the planning system should have an “explicit presumption” in favour of town centre development; a relaxation of the planning restrictions that apply to changes of buildings’ use; introduction of free controlled parking schemes to increase access to town centres and high street shopping facilities and greater use of other legislative levers such as Business Improvement Districts, rates relief to create the right conditions to support businesses. Against this backdrop, new benchmarks and expectations in terms of value, service, entertainment and experience must be put in place if town and city centres are to remain vibrant.

The Council would recommend that the NI Executive should follow the lead set by the the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly in establishing a Ministerial Working Group to

address this issue and that there should be greater collaborative working across departments and other agencies to ensure that the broad spectrum of issues are addressed in a holistic manner and that the vibrancy of town and city centres is consolidated and enhanced.

- **University of Ulster relocation** - Need to recognise the potential role of the relocation of the University of Ulster campus into Belfast City Centre as a key economic driver for the city. The location of two universities in the city centre creates direct opportunities for local businesses but, more importantly, also creates the possibility of clustering of scientific and research expertise. The Council believe that an appropriate interface needs to be put in place across government (i.e. Belfast Delivery Forum as referred to earlier) to coordinate policy and address the challenges presented in delivering key strategic projects of this nature in a timely and structured manner.

### iii) Encouraging business growth and competitiveness in key growth sectors

*How can the Council help to deliver?*

- The Council recognises the importance of securing additional foreign direct investment and export-led growth as a means of rebalancing the local economy and will continue to work with our partners in Invest NI to maximise inward investment opportunities. The Council will work also with our enterprise partners to encourage new businesses start-ups and will continue to implement a range of targeted business support programmes which seek to help businesses in Belfast enhance their own competitiveness and growth potential.
- **Tourism** - Recognising the importance of the tourism sector the Council has developed an Integrated Strategic Framework for Belfast Tourism which we will deliver over the next three years. We will ensure that all parts of the city benefit from the potential growth in tourism over the coming years. Key to this framework will be support for the marketing and visitor servicing activities of the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau, the development of Belfast's tourism product and investment in the city's culture and arts sectors.

The Council has established a Tourism Forum which brings together the sector's key stakeholders to ensure a coordinated and informed approach to the development of the sector. Although this is still in the early stages of development, it has been useful in ensuring policy and funding alignment to maximise the impact of investment and to ensure targeting of resources. The Council would encourage the relevant government departments to continue their engagement with this forum.

The recent MTV event and the upcoming Titanic celebrations as well as the City of Culture, World Police and Fire Games and Tall Ships demonstrate the importance of event tourism to economic growth in the city and wider region. The MTV event and associated Belfast Music Week generated **£22million** of spend in the local economy. With these other major events in the pipeline, it is important to develop a coordinated approach to their promotion and development, in order to maximise the return to the local economy.

The Council will work with central government to ensure the maximise the potential benefits and economic impact of the range of key events to happen across Northern Ireland over the next 2-3 years including the 'Our Time, Our Place' initiative in 2012 and other key events over the next.

*Maximising the Impact of PfG and ISNI*

- **Business tourism market** - represents a significant opportunity for growth in the coming years which needs to be stimulated through appropriate investment in necessary infrastructure. The Council believe that the current infrastructure and facilities in the city to support this market are inadequate with limited capacity to facilitate many conferences of an international scale. The Council believe that there is a clear need for integrated conference and exhibition facilities and

has submitted an application to secure potential European funding to extend the current provision at the Waterfront Hall. If this project is realised, it will be a significant contributor to the growth of this sector and will have an impact beyond its immediate location in terms of business and employment generated. The Council would wish to explore with central government and DETI the potential for part funding of such a facility which will be a significant contributor to the growth of the business tourism market within Northern Ireland.

The Council would urge the Northern Ireland Executive to ensure that this and the other major capital schemes identified in our investment programme are given urgent attention by the relevant government departments and agencies and that efforts are focused on expediting their progress through the necessary administrative and statutory approvals processes.

- **Renewable Energy Sector** – The Council considers there to be significant growth potential in this sector and feel that this requires a targeted strategy for the future development of the sector.

There is an imperative to seize the opportunities to ensure that Belfast can take a lead and establish the city and wider region as a global centre of excellence in this growing sector. We have considerable assets which provide a stable basis from which to develop the sector and would encourage the Northern Ireland Executive to explore the opportunity to create an Enterprise Zone for renewables in the Belfast Harbour/North Foreshore area of Belfast.

The Council is already exploring the potential of developing a “green business park” at the city’s former landfill site at North Foreshore and would welcome the opportunity to explore with the NI Executive and DETI any potential scope to link this into the ISNI. This will provide an opportunity for clustering of secondary and tertiary companies to service the larger businesses in the adjacent area.

- **Rail and Road Infrastructure and investment** - The budget for roads infrastructure is approximately 10 times that of public transport, (£11960m v £196m 2011-2014). The Executive and the Department for Regional Development may wish to consider if this is an appropriate balance of resources. Previous experience shows that investment in the road infrastructure brings more cars onto the road, ultimately increases carbon dioxide emissions, and does not encourage a modal shift onto public transport.

## Priority 2: Creating Opportunities, Tackling Disadvantage and Improving Health and Wellbeing

Quality of life in Belfast is vital to the well-being of citizens and attracting visitors, investors and students and is the bedrock of economic growth. Central to this is equal access to opportunities, improved health and wellbeing for people from deprived communities and a reduction in health inequalities.

### i) Reducing life inequalities and tackling disadvantage

*How can the Council help to deliver?*

**Belfast Strategic Partnership for addressing life inequalities** - The Council recognise the importance of taking inter-sectoral approach to addressing the root causes of ill-health and to reduce life inequalities within Belfast and the wider region. Working in partnership with the Public Health Agency and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT), the Council has jointly established a joint Belfast Health Development Unit for the city with co-located members of staff from each of the agencies working together on joint programmes. In pursuance of securing further alignment and integration of activities, the Belfast Strategic Partnership (BSP) for addressing life inequalities has been established with senior representation from the key statutory, voluntary and community sectors. The BSP has developed a 'Framework for Action on life inequalities (2011-2015)' which includes joint inter-agency work on mental health, alcohol and drug related health issues, life-long learning and early years. The Council would commend that this framework be taken into consideration when moving forward.

The Council recognise the need for greater alignment between regional and local interventions if real and sustainable outcomes are to be achieved and would commend that the Belfast Strategic Partnership may provide an opportunity to assist in the cascade of desired outcomes/outputs.

- **Active Belfast Partnership** – Over the next three years, Belfast City Council will invest £3.5m in delivering health and well-being programmes which seek to address health inequalities across the city. These initiatives will be delivered through the Active Belfast Partnership (including representatives from Belfast City Council, Public Health Agency, the Belfast Health Trust, DSD and Sports NI) and are likely to include:
  - better use of local parks and leisure facilities including promoting free access to leisure centres for those people in the most deprived areas;
  - the creation of more community gardens and allotments, the development of a 'Growing Your Own' food programme; and
  - the further roll-out of outdoor gyms.
- **Delivery of local community provision and support** – It is important to note that the Council already provides a number of key local level services which help to increase the sustainability and resilience of local communities e.g. skills development, anti-poverty work, advice provision, integrated health and social care provision, food safety initiatives etc.
- **Poverty and Social Inequalities Framework** - Over the next three years Belfast City Council will implement the actions within our Poverty and Social Inequalities Framework to ensure that our services are accessible, that we target our resources more effectively and that we work in partnership with other lead government departments to deliver on the ground projects that will support our citizens e.g. helping to reduce fuel poverty through our fuel stamps initiative, working with the Department of Finance and Personnel to maximise the potential uptake of rates relief support etc.

*Maximising the Impact of PfG and ISNI*

- **Co-location and integration of services** - The Council would welcome further discussions with the NI Executive and government departments to explore the potential for co-locating and integrating public services at the local level – possibly building upon the approach taken to the development of the Grove Well Being Centre in North Belfast.
- The new Public Health Strategy for Northern Ireland will provide the new framework for health priorities in Northern Ireland and therefore needs to be considered as a key building block for the draft PfG and ISNI.

## **ii) Social Investment Fund**

*How will the Council help to deliver?*

- The Council would commend OFMDFM's commitment to establishing the Social Investment Fund with its aims of increasing quality of life, reducing poverty, improving employment opportunities and addressing dereliction.
- Given the strong synergies between the objectives of the Fund and the Council's own Investment Programme, the Council would be keen to work with OFMDFM to ensure that delivery priorities are aligned and maximum benefit and impact is realised through our combined investment in the city.
- The Council would recommend that the Social Investment Fund should result in change that people can see, touch and feel at a local level rather than the establishment of structures and development of plans. There is an abundance of plans, concepts, strategies and priority lists and the focus now needs to switch to prioritisation and delivery.
- In its response to the draft Social Investment Fund proposals, the Council highlighted the need to ensure that the emerging investment plans for the 4 designated investment zones within Belfast are considered as a whole and are complementary. It will be important that the plans are both physically and thematically connected, balanced, and promote mobility within and across the city.
- As 50% of the focus of the programme is in the greater Belfast area, the Council has requested that consideration be given to Belfast City Council representation on any governance structure put in place to oversee the delivery of the Fund (e.g. proposed Ministerial Committee).

## **iii) Integrated Transport Infrastructure and improved public transport**

*Maximising the Impact of PfG and ISNI*

- **Belfast Rapid Transit** - The Council would request that a budget commitment be included in the draft PfG and ISNI to ensure the delivery of the Belfast Rapid Transit Scheme. The Council believe that this scheme provides a real opportunity to improve the public transport infrastructure across the city and will help to regenerate and open up new development opportunities along its routes. It will play a key role in supporting local economies, linking businesses with markets and linking communities and people with potential employment opportunities.

The Council would request the NI Executive to take forward the planning and design for the potential extension of the rapid transit network to ensure an equitable high quality public transport system is implemented throughout the city.



## Priority 3 – Protecting our People, the Environment and Creating Safer Communities

### i) Waste

#### *Maximising the Impact of PfG and ISNI*

- **Waste management infrastructure** – The Council would commend that the PfG and ISNI should include a firm financial commitment to support the provision of adequate waste infrastructure regional waste infrastructure which would ensure the more sustainable management of waste, particularly municipal waste. The Council notes with concern the significant reduction in the level of central funding support from £200million in the last comprehensive spending review period to around £2million in the current. This shift appears to be at odds with the significant government investment in waste infrastructure in England through the national infrastructure plan.
- **Single waste disposal authority** - The Council believes that dealing effectively with waste treatment and disposal has now become a regional infrastructure issue and would request that consideration be given to addressing this critical challenge within the draft PfG and ISNI.

The increasing complexity of waste treatment and the challenge of procuring and developing facilities of a scale that is economic and will contribute to the necessary robust regional network of waste management facilities clearly increases the value of moving towards a single waste plan and single waste disposal authority. Such an arrangement would also enable NI to cope with the inevitable continual change in environmental standards and other legal requirements governing waste management including potential significant Landfill Allowance Scheme and other European fines linked to statutory waste and recycling targets.

- **Waste targets** – the Council would suggest that in addition to the inclusion of household waste targets, the PfG and ISNI should include other important types of waste such as industrial or commercial waste, which form a large and critical proportion of Northern Ireland's waste.

Whilst recognising that the stated incremental targets set out within the PfG and ISNI for recycling of household waste is in line with the EU Waste Framework Directive, they are above the targets as set out within the current NI Waste Strategy. The Council would commend that any revised recycling targets and timescales are clearly communicated to local councils to ensure adherence.

### ii) Environmental Health

#### *Maximising the Impact of PfG and ISNI*

- The Council welcomes the renewed emphasis on community health care service provision in the draft ISNI, and would emphasise the role that councils can have, working with the healthcare sector, in developing a 'one stop shop' approach to healthcare, leisure and community service provision in a wider context. Examples such as the Grove Wellbeing Centre should not be 'one-offs', but as always these need to be properly costed, resourced in partnership and made sustainable. The Council would wish to explore with the NI Executive and government departments the potential for future collaborative, multifunctional facilities.
- **Greenhouse gas** – the PfG and ISNI should include incremental targets for greenhouse gas reductions. The Council would note the recent Committee on Climate Change Report which suggested that legislative targets could assist Northern Ireland deliver more sustainable greenhouse gas emissions. Setting emission reduction targets could be helpful to reduce emissions from agriculture, road transport, homes, public sector and power sectors, whilst driving economic efficiencies in each sector. The Council believe also that there is potential growth potential for Northern Ireland in this area by supporting the transformation to a low carbon green economy, encouraging innovation while at the assisting with job creation.

- **Air-Quality** – the PfG and ISNI should include incremental targets for achieving national and European health-based air quality standards, as set out within the Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

### iii) Sustainable Transport

#### *Maximising the Impact of PfG and ISNI*

- The Council welcome the commitment in the PfG to dedicate £500million towards the promotion of more sustainable modes of transport and would commend that further detail is included on the types of initiatives/programmes which DRD will be taking forward to promote sustainable modes of transport and attach related milestones as appropriate.
- **Electric vehicle infrastructure** – the draft PfG and ISNI should include the commitment and funding by the Department for Regional Development to pilot the roll out of electric vehicle infrastructure (i.e. ecar initiative) across Northern Ireland. The use of electric vehicles, ideally powered by electricity from renewable sources, is an excellent way to to reduce carbon emissions from transport and will contribute to the climate change, air quality and noise objectives as set out within the drat PfG and ISNI
- **Public bike hire scheme** – the Council would commend that consideration be given to the introduction of a public bike hire scheme for Belfast city centre. The Council has already undertaken a joint piece of work with DRD to consider the viability of such a scheme within Belfast subject to the necessary funding being secured. The public bike scheme has already been highly successful in other key cities such as Dublin, Paris and London and has extended cycling as an alternative sustainable means of transport.

## Priority 4 – Building a Strong and Shared Community

Belfast City Council welcomes the priority given within the draft PfG and ISNI to building a strong and shared community within Northern Ireland. The Council recognise that promoting equality and good relations is key to improving the quality of life for everyone in the city and we will ensure that fairness, equality and respect are at the heart of everything that we do – values that are central to our policy and underpin all of our activities. Despite the economic challenges currently faced by the city, the Council believe that Equality and Good Relations are central to economic regeneration, attracting talent, sustaining inward investment, generating significant tourism and tackling poverty.

### i) Good Relations

*How can the Council help to deliver?*

The Council believe that good relations and community cohesion remain vital ingredients for the city's future development. The Council has published the its second Good Relations Plan for the city in 2011 which sets out a vision for Belfast for the next 3 years as we strive to make Belfast a better place in which to live, work, socialise and do business.

Through our Good Relations Plan, the Council will facilitate a partnership approach from a number of agencies including statutory, voluntary, community and faith based groups to effect change in our city and address issues such as sectarianism and racism. There are four themes that this plan will be based on that will help us achieve this. They are:

- Securing shared city space
- Transforming contested space
- Developing shared cultural space
- Building shared organisational space

These themes reflect the current challenges that the city faces as it continues with the process of transformation and the Council would wish to work with the NI Executive to take a concerted approach to addressing this challenges.

### ii) Interfaces

*How can the Council help to deliver?*

- Belfast City Council welcomes the inclusion of a specific commitment to seek local agreement to reduce the number of 'peace walls'.
- As a result of the conflict, Belfast has over 80 peace walls or interfaces, by far the greatest number anywhere in NI. Erected originally to improve security, they remain almost 40 years later and have contributed to the perpetuation of the cycle of division and segregation. The inefficient use an duplication of services and facilities, significant urban blight and poverty are all characteristics of divided areas. Physical and psychological barriers between communities make travel around parts of the city difficult and have resulted in people avoiding certain areas perceived to be unsafe.
- The Council's recently adopted strategy and action plan on the issue of physical barriers complements the commitments now being made in the draft PfG and ISNI and we would like to work with the NI Executive to ensure that this work is developed in unison with our central government colleagues. The Council's strategy and plan will focus on those areas where communities do wish to move towards a transformation and reduction in interface barriers.
- The milestones listed for 2012 – 2013, and beyond, are in line with the goals that the Council has set itself for engagement on the issue of physical barriers. The milestones will only be met if there is cross-departmental cooperation and an inter-agency approach to develop and delivery of local action plans for individual areas.

## Priority 5 – Delivering High Quality and Efficient Public Services

The Council is working hard to strike the right balance between continuing to invest in the city to stimulate the economy and providing value for money services. We recognise that this is a challenging time for businesses and households across the city and we therefore keep our expenditure under review to minimise the burden to ratepayers. The Council will continue to deliver its efficiency programme and secure a further £4million of savings by 2014 which will be reinvested in providing important services.

### i) Local Government Reform

*How can the Council help to deliver?*

The Council welcomes the commitment set out within the draft PfG and ISNI to move forward local government reform within Northern Ireland and to establish the 11 new Councils, with enhanced powers, by 2015. The Council remains fully committed to delivering local government reform and to ensuring the effective and efficient transfer and integration of important new place-shaping functions such as planning and regeneration within the Council.

*Maximising the Impact of PfG and ISNI*

- **Resourcing reform** – whilst recognising that local government will be required to fund the large proportion of the reform programme, the Council would wish to explore with the NI Executive, Department of Finance and Personnel and Department of Environment, the types of financial mechanisms which could be brought forward to enable local government to fund specific elements on an ‘invest to save’ basis.
- Consideration should be given to the possible establishment of a ‘Challenge Fund’ administered by DOE, from which monies could be made available to councils to fund critical elements of the reform programme including necessary capacity building initiatives.
- The Council would further suggest that consideration be given to putting appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure that transferring functions are rates neutral at point of transfer to local government.

### ii) Planning

*How can the Council help to deliver?*

- The Council recognises the strategic significance of Planning in supporting economic development and regeneration activity and would wish to work with the NI Executive and DoE to bring affect to planning reform and to ensure that the planning system is fit-for-purpose and can deliver against the ambitious targets set out within the draft PfG and ISNI. The Council is already in active discussions with the Belfast Area Planning Office to explore how appropriate resources and capacity can be made available to enable critical investment projects for the city to be delivered. It would be the intention to extend such discussion to other statutory and private sector stakeholders within the context of the proposed development of a Belfast Delivery Forum.

### iii) Community planning

*How can the Council help to deliver?*

- The Council is concluding a community planning pilot, funded by the BIG Lottery Fund, which looked at the theme of health in the city – a key outcome has been a framework for tackling life inequalities developed through the Belfast Strategic Partnership. The pilot is culminating in a conference at which the Minister for the Environment will speak.

- There has been a significant amount of learning from this pilot and the Council is keen to build on the momentum that has been created and ensure sustainability for the model of community planning which is emerging. The Council believe that outworking of this pilot could inform emerging guidance from DoE on community planning and would be keen to work with officials to take this forward.
- The Council sees potential for community planning to enhance the implementation of our own investment programme which is premised upon partnership and greater alignment between other government strategies and investment priorities.
- The Council believe that the key issues going forward include the necessary commitment of government departments to participating in community planning; resources for on-going development of the process and for delivery of new models of working; alignment of plans and of planning and resource allocation cycles; and the potential for single outcome agreements.
- The effectiveness of the community planning process and the delivery of improved outcomes will be dependent upon the strength of relationships between councils, departments and other public bodies. There should be a shared commitment to align plans and resources to address identified needs. The Council would therefore recommend that any legislation brought forward by the Department introduces a statutory duty, similar to other jurisdictions, on relevant public bodies and statutory agencies to participate and contribute to the community planning process

### **iv) One public estate**

*How can the Council help to deliver?*

- Councils play a key role in addressing some of the societal issues highlighted under this priority through the development of closer integration and delivery between core council functions such as leisure and wider public health services. In recent years, the co-location of services has proved successful (e.g. the Grove Health and Well Being Centre) in delivering innovative and sustainable outcomes.

This is an area of working that the Council would like to further develop, in conjunction with other key services such as libraries and youth services. Co-location will and should be a vital aspect of government efficiency savings over the lifetime of this PfG.

- As a potential enabler for this, the Council would highlight the recent development of the 'One Public Estate' approach in Great Britain. In simple terms, the model is based on the concept of place-based asset management whereby local public service providers collaborate on developing, managing and using their land and buildings as a collective resource across an area.

It seeks to forge new collaborative partnership approach to the planning and delivery of public services with a clear and collective understanding of the needs of local communities and how users want to access public services. The approach seeks to deliver savings combined with better social, economic and regenerative outcomes. The Council would be keen to work with the NI Executive and government departments to explore the potential for greater integration of services at the local level.

### **v) Social Clauses**

*How can the Council help to deliver?*

The Council welcomes the clear commitment within the draft PfG and ISNI to explore the potential extension of the use of social clauses extend the potential use of social clauses for government capital schemes. The Council has some experience of these through the Titanic Quarter and consider that there have been many lessons learned which should be disseminated across government. Consideration needs to be given to the content of the clauses as well as their management and monitoring. This needs to be done in the context of difficult market conditions for

private sector employers and needs to include innovative approaches, for example, to help apprentices complete their apprenticeship across a number of schemes. Although the current focus is on capital schemes, we welcome proposals to extend social clauses to all government contracts. We acknowledge that consideration is currently being given by the Department for Environment (DoE) to allowing councils to take account of non-commercial clauses in awarding contracts and are open to considering how this can be done in the context of our capital programme and wider partnership projects.

The Council will continue to work with key partners on the Belfast Social Clause Delivery Forum, to take this important issue forward and ensure that all opportunities are maximised to enable young people and the long-term unemployed to access valuable employment and training opportunities at a time of particular difficulty in the training and jobs market.

DRAFT



<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Consultation response – draft Northern Ireland Executive Economic Strategy: “Priorities for sustainable growth”
<b>Date:</b>	7 February 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives, ext 3459

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	The Northern Ireland Executive’s draft economic strategy “Priorities for Sustainable Growth” was launched for consultation in November 2011. The closing date for submissions to the consultation is 22 February 2012.
1.2	The draft strategy identifies the twin goals of rebuilding and rebalancing the economy. It contains a long-term vision to 2030 to create “an economy characterised by a sustainable and growing private sector, where a greater number of firms compete in global markets and there is growing employment and prosperity.”
1.3	The draft economic strategy has been developed by a sub-committee of the Executive, chaired by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment. It is based on analysis of global best practice on issues such as stimulating innovation and R&D (research and development); investment in skills and employability, connections to the global economy, developing economic infrastructure and encouraging business growth.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	The draft strategy builds on Northern Ireland Executive’s Economic Strategy: Consultation on Priorities for Sustainable Growth and Prosperity in February 2011. This underlined the need for export-led growth as the best means of increasing employment and wealth in Northern Ireland and the improving the overall competitiveness.
2.2	The draft strategy includes a framework for economic growth, built around the rebuilding and rebalancing themes. It includes a range of short, medium and long-term priorities for growth within which specific activities are identified. The rebuilding theme focuses on increasing private sector productivity while the rebuilding theme is based on creating employment in export focused sectors.

2.3	<p>The key priorities under the rebalancing theme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stimulating innovation and creativity</li> <li>- Improving employability and the level, relevance and use of skills</li> <li>- Competing in the global economy</li> <li>- Encouraging business growth</li> <li>- Developing economic infrastructure</li> </ul>
2.4	<p>The key priorities under the rebuilding theme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving employment opportunities and employability</li> <li>- Promoting employment</li> </ul>
2.5	<p>The draft Belfast City Council response to the document is attached as Appendix 1. It includes a range of general comments on the draft strategy as well as a number of specific points around the issues of business growth; investment and infrastructure; skills development and management and governance.</p>
2.6	<p>Some of the major issues outlined in the draft response include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A broad welcome for the draft strategy and a request that the Council's investment programme is supported by the Northern Ireland Executive and specifically incorporated within the economic strategy</li> <li>- A request that recognition is given to Belfast's role as the regional driver and that an appropriate interface is put in place across government to coordinate policy and address the challenges presented in delivering key strategic projects, particularly the University of Ulster</li> <li>- A welcome for the acknowledgement that Belfast and Derry/Londonderry have a specific role to play in the economic competitiveness of the region and a proposal to support a new urban development programme as part of the next wave of EU funding programmes (2014-2020)</li> <li>- The need to consider the future supply of appropriate office accommodation for large scale investments and a request to urgently review this and to consider how future supply might be incentivised in the current climate</li> <li>- The need to explore alternative forms of finance for major capital schemes and a request for the Executive to put in place the necessary regulatory requirements to allow councils to explore these options</li> <li>- A proposal to establish a ministerial working group to look at town and city centre regeneration issues, as has happened in the Welsh Assembly and Scottish Parliament</li> <li>- Identification of the opportunities presented by the renewables sector and the need for a targeted strategy for its future development. This might include the establishment of an Enterprise Zone for renewables in the Belfast Harbour/North Foreshore area of the city</li> <li>- Support for the commitment to explore the implementation of social clauses for government capital schemes, urging a dialogue across government to agree a framework for their management and monitoring.</li> <li>- A request that the capital schemes identified in the investment programme as well as the wider programme of public and investment initiatives are given</li> </ul>



	urgent attention by the relevant government departments and agencies, and that efforts are focused on expediting their progress through the necessary administrative and statutory approvals processes.
2.7	The draft economic strategy has been issued for consultation alongside the Programme for Government (2011-2015) and the Investment Strategy (2011-2021). The closing date for responses to these documents is also 22 February. Draft Belfast City Council responses to these are to be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in February. The Programme for Government's number one priority is "growing a sustainable economy and investing in the future" while the Investment Strategy focuses on "supporting economic recovery and growth" so there is a clear alignment between all three documents.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	No specific resource implications attached to this report.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	All documents will be subject to EQIA.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	Members are asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Note the consultations on the draft Programme for Government, Investment Strategy and Economic Strategy</li> <li>- Note the attached draft response to the draft Economic Strategy and agree that it should be submitted to the Northern Ireland Executive, subject to any comments and amendments required.</li> </ul>

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	There is no decision tracking attached to this report.

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	EQIA – Equality impact assessment

<b>8</b>	<b>Documents attached</b>
	Appendix 1 - Economic strategy, draft Belfast City Council response.

## **Economic strategy – priorities for sustainable growth and prosperity – draft Belfast City Council response**

<b>Executive summary – key issues</b>	
<b>1.1</b>	Belfast City Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the draft economic strategy for Northern Ireland “Priorities for sustainable growth and prosperity”. As the region’s capital city, Belfast is the driver of the regional economy. It is home to over 200,000 jobs, provides employment for 108,000 commuters, is the major location for Foreign Direct Investment and is home to the majority of the region’s creative industries and professional and financial services. Its success is critical to the success of the wider region.
<b>1.2</b>	Belfast City Council recently launched its “Belfast Investment Programme”. This includes a capital investment of £150million for the period 2012-2015 aimed at putting in place the economic infrastructure necessary to support the Belfast economy. This will be accompanied by a range of programmes to encourage business start-up and growth within the city. It will also focus on employability and skills development.
<b>1.3</b>	The investment programme is closely aligned to the draft strategy and the Council would ask that it is supported by the Northern Ireland Executive and specifically incorporated within the economic strategy.
<b>1.4</b>	Belfast City Council recognises the ambition set out within the action plan associated with the strategy. It also recognises, however, the challenges in delivering the projects identified. We support the creation of the proposed coordination unit but would go further to suggest that the Executive should create an interdepartmental delivery group specifically for Belfast, given the importance of the delivery of projects within the city to the economic wellbeing of the wider region.
<b>1.5</b>	Belfast City Council regards the planned relocation of the University of Ulster into the city centre as being one of the biggest economic development opportunities which the city is likely to see in a generation. Whilst the university is not due to open until 2018, we believe that it is imperative that the project is reflected within the economic strategy and that a cross departmental steering group is established to drive the project and maximise the economic and regenerative potential which it presents.
<b>1.6</b>	Belfast City Council welcomes the acknowledgement that Belfast and Derry have a specific role to play in the economic competitiveness of the region. It is globally accepted that cities are the economic engines upon which regions depend. We believe that this must be recognised in the new EU funding programmes for 2014-2020 through the inclusion of a specific urban development programme.
<b>1.7</b>	The Programme for Government contains the ambition of creating 25,000 new jobs over the next four years. The ability to achieve these targets will be

	<p>dependent on attracting foreign direct investment which will require grade A accommodation with large floorplates. There is a limited supply of suitable accommodation in Belfast and this has the potential to limit Invest NI's ability to attract further investment within its targeted sectors. Belfast City Council believes that the Executive should commit to an urgent revision of future demand for grade A office accommodation and consider how future supply might be incentivised in the current climate.</p>
<b>1.8</b>	<p>We acknowledge that the tools available to support economic growth through Regional Aid are under threat at present and have responded strongly to the consultation on this to argue for the ongoing availability of this type of assistance. However, we acknowledge that it will be important to look at alternative forms of finance for major capital schemes. We have carried out some exploratory work on a range of financial instruments such as TIFs (Tax Incremental Financing schemes), LABVs (Local Asset-backed Vehicles) and joint ventures with the private sector. We would welcome further dialogue with government on these issues and consider that the Northern Ireland Executive should put in place the necessary regulatory requirements to allow councils to explore these options as a way forward in the current era of funding restraint within the public sector. We would also welcome a discussion on how EU funding mechanisms such as JEREMIE and JESSICA could be levered in this context.</p>
<b>1.9</b>	<p>The recent report by Mary Portas into the review of the high street included a number of recommendations including actions to make high streets more accessible, attractive and safe; encouraging mixed-use city centres and addressing the short-term challenge of vacancy levels faced by most cities. We consider that vibrant town and city centres are critical to achieving the objectives set out in the economic strategy and to attracting inward investment, tourism and talent to a city. We believe that the Northern Ireland Executive should follow the lead set by the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly in establishing a ministerial working group to address this issue and that there should be greater collaborative working across departments and other agencies to ensure that the broad spectrum of issues are addressed in a holistic manner and that the vibrancy of town and city centres is consolidated and enhanced.</p>
<b>1.10</b>	<p>We acknowledge and agree with the focus on a number of key sectors for the region's future economic competitiveness and support the work of MATRIX. We consider that there is significant potential within the renewables sector and feel that this requires a targeted strategy for the future development of the sector. There is an imperative to seize the opportunities to ensure that we can steal a lead and establish the city and wider region as a global centre of excellence in this growing sector. We have considerable assets which provide a stable basis from which to develop the sector and would encourage the Northern Ireland Executive to explore the opportunity to create an Enterprise Zone for renewables in the Belfast Harbour/North Foreshore area of Belfast.</p>
<b>1.11</b>	<p>We welcome the commitment to explore the implementation of social clauses for government capital schemes. We have had some experience of these through the Titanic Quarter and consider that there have been many lessons learned which should be disseminated across government. Consideration needs to be given to the content of the clauses as well as their management</p>

	<p>and monitoring. This needs to be done in the context of difficult market conditions for private sector employers and needs to include innovative approaches, for example, to help apprentices complete their apprenticeship across a number of schemes. Although the current focus is on capital schemes, we welcome proposals to extend social clauses to all government contracts. We acknowledge that consideration is currently being given by the Department for Environment (DoE) to allowing councils to take account of non-commercial clauses in awarding contracts and are open to considering how this can be done in the context of our capital programme and wider partnership projects.</p>
<b>1.12</b>	<p>The planned capital investment set out in Belfast City Council's investment programme and in the Executive's economic strategy, Programme for Government and Investment Strategy includes a number of major schemes which have the potential to stimulate economic growth in the city and wider region. We would ask that these projects are given urgent attention by the relevant government departments and agencies and that efforts are focused on expediting their progress through the necessary administrative and statutory approvals processes.</p>

<b>Specific comments</b>	
<b>Management and governance</b>	
<b>2.1</b>	We welcome the commitment to an implementation plan with regular reporting through the Executive Sub-Committee. This will support coordination across government and ensure alignment with agreed priorities. We would suggest that these updates need to happen on a regular basis, in order to allow for flexibility and to be able to respond to challenges as they emerge.
<b>2.2</b>	We support the creation of the “coordinating unit” (1.19 of strategy) and would be keen to work closely with those involved in this. We consider, in particular, that additional intelligence is required on new growth sectors and their requirements to allow us to focus our strategy and determine what work we should prioritise in order to ensure maximum economic impact.
<b>2.3</b>	However, it is important to acknowledge that there are other public, private and community organisations involved in regeneration and economic development activity and it will be essential to lever the resources presented by their investment to make the step change required.
<b>2.4</b>	Belfast City Council had embraced its leadership role in its Investment Programme for the period 2012-2015. Central to the delivery of this programme is a commitment of more than £150million towards capital projects and £50million for revenue proposals to make Belfast a better place in which to live, work and invest. This document is premised on the need for partnership in delivery and its priority schemes will help deliver on some of the priorities identified in this draft strategy.
<b>2.5</b>	In light of this and of the significance of Belfast in relation to the wider economic competitiveness of the region, we would encourage the Northern Ireland Executive to consider the potential for establishing an interdepartmental working group for Belfast. The purpose of this group would be to address cross-cutting issues impacting on key economic challenges and specific projects in the city in order to flag up potential difficulties, support holistic development and encourage greater coordination across government and its partners.
<b>2.6</b>	Our investment package recognises that there are a number of “game changer” investments in the city in the coming years, and commits to maximising the impact of these for the citizens and the wider population. One such investment is the relocation to Belfast city centre of the University of Ulster. This represents a once in a lifetime opportunity to create a new community which will support greater population density in the city; encourage greater university-business collaboration; generate new business opportunities for local companies and support additional investment in the city. However projects of this scale require significant planning to ensure that they develop in a coordinated, holistic and sustainable manner and that the economic potential of the development is maximised.
<b>2.7</b>	We would encourage the Northern Ireland Executive and its department to consider its management and governance role in such schemes in order to support their progress where feasible, while ensuring compliance with all

	<p>relevant regulatory issues. Belfast City Council is willing to work in a coordinating capacity in such projects and we have some successful examples of assuming this role. Our work on the Titanic Quarter sets in place a framework for discussion around the key challenges affecting the site and impacting on those living adjacent to the location, as well as those businesses already based there. The Memorandum of Understanding with the developer has enabled us address accessibility issues; identify and develop bespoke employability initiatives and create a comprehensive community engagement strategy. Such an approach is indicative of the multi-faceted nature of these key projects and illustrates the need for significant partnership working, in a structured manner.</p>
<b>2.8</b>	<p>The draft Programme for Government indicates a commitment to implementation of the Reform of Public Administration (RPA) in the region. Local government will need to play a key partnership role in the successful reform of public sector service delivery in Northern Ireland. This is just one of a number of vital measures which will directly involve the local government sector and will be required in order to address the challenging economic climate in Northern Ireland over the next few years. Belfast City Council is committed to collaborating with partner organisations to help maximise the economic potential of the city.</p>
<b>2.9</b>	<p>The council already has productive working relationships with all government bodies and agencies and we would advocate for ongoing liaison at a senior level in order to progress key projects and to ensure maximum return on investment.</p>
<b>2.10</b>	<p>We note the reference in the draft strategy to “related strategies” (5.14). On paper, all of these strategies appear to align. However, in practice, we consider that the reality is sometimes different. These are a number of reasons for this - different priorities; areas of focus; funding mechanisms etc. The high level targets and indicators established in this strategy should guide all other governmental initiatives and should dictate operating mechanisms and management structures, taking account of existing provision. This should lead to greater synergy, with organisations committed to the same, high-level objectives and thereby avoiding duplication and gaps in provision.</p>
<b>2.11</b>	<p>Previous governmental discussions have introduced the potential for new ways of working that may create a new dynamic between the public and private sectors. These include Business Improvement Districts, which were the subject of a Department for Social Development (DSD) consultation last year. Belfast City Council is supportive of the key principles behind the legislation, namely the need for partnership between the public and private sector; the need for BIDs to be business-led; the need for BIDs to target specific issues and to deliver specific, measurable benefits. However we accept that, in practice, significant engagement between DSD, Land and Property Services and the councils will be necessary to address the practicalities of the challenges presented and to create a workable solution for all parties.</p>
<b>2.12</b>	<p>We note the acknowledgement that Belfast and Derry have a specific role to play in the region’s future economic competitiveness and are supportive of greater collaboration between the two localities. There is an opportunity to confirm this role through the new EU funding programmes from 2015, by supporting the creation of a specific urban initiative. This would provide a framework for a coordinated programme of economic development and social cohesion support which could underpin both the rebuilding and the rebalancing priorities identified in this draft strategy.</p>



<b>Infrastructure and investment</b>	
<b>3.1</b>	We acknowledge the investment in economic infrastructure in recent years by the Northern Ireland Executive, particularly in the context of public spending constraints which are likely to be in place for the foreseeable future.
<b>3.2</b>	We would encourage the Northern Ireland Executive to maintain its commitment to key infrastructure schemes included in the draft strategy and the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland, not only for their direct impact on the economic development of the area but also on employment levels in the construction sector, which has been particularly badly affected by the downturn.
<b>3.3</b>	We welcome the acknowledgement that major urban centres provide the catalyst for growth across a regional economy (point 5.65 of the draft strategy). Research suggests that strong regional economies are predicated on an analysis of differentiation and specialisation, establishing clusters and focusing investment in agreed areas where impact can be greatest and where assets are strongest. Belfast – as the capital city – is the investment and business hub of the region and has a disproportionately large impact on economic development across Northern Ireland. Focusing investment on key assets is arguably even more important in a post-debt era where there is simply insufficient critical mass and demand to allow all areas to compete and attract the same range of economic activities.
<b>3.4</b>	Belfast plays a significant role in the Northern Ireland economy: almost 55% of those working in Belfast live outside the city boundaries; the city is home to one-third of all Northern Ireland service sector jobs, half of all the region's hi-tech manufacturing jobs, 3 in 5 computer and related service jobs and two-thirds of creative media and arts jobs; it is the transport hub for the region; a gateway for tourism and the focal point of specialist health services and unique cultural and entertainment offerings <sup>1</sup> . It is home to two universities and one Further Education College and will, by 2018, provide the location for an expanded University of Ulster campus within the city centre. This critical mass of investment and potential investment provides a solid foundation for additional focused support to underpin regional growth.
<b>3.5</b>	Recent reports from property agents indicate a potential long-term supply issue for Grade A office accommodation. This could possible impact negatively on the proposals contained within this draft strategy to increase the volume of FDI and indigenous business growth in targeted sectors across the region as a means of rebalancing the economy. We would welcome an open discussion with government on how this may be addressed.
<b>3.6</b>	The current available stock of Grade A and B office space on the market in Belfast totals 1,009,854 sq ft (Grade A -440,883 sq ft and Grade B - 568,971 sq ft) with 2million sq ft of approved schemes in the pipeline. Assuming indicative requirements of approximately 200,000 sq ft (annual take-up historically averaged approximately 300,000 sq ft), there is a current 5 year supply available, with an additional 10 year supply with planning permission. However if the stated requirements of 200,000 sq ft is for Grade A only, this

<sup>1</sup> Oxford Economics (2009), *Belfast flow of people, skills, spending and investment*



	reduces the current supply to 2 years (or 1 ½ years if the annual take-up increased to 300,000 sq ft).
<b>3.7</b>	Local agents have indicated that, following the recent lettings, supply has reduced further and there may be a shortage of Grade A space available in Belfast. The fundamental concern is the <i>type</i> of office space available and Lisney reported that much of the available office product in Belfast does not show corporate ambition for NI plc <sup>2</sup> . The availability of larger floorplates is also an issue. In Belfast, a majority of the buildings around the city centre are older Grade B and C office blocks and are unlikely to be occupied again. Clearly, the era of speculative development has long since ceased. However it is considered that the future implications of current provision levels and the condition of available buildings require an in-depth assessment of potential demand and supply for new office space in the city which will impact on all agencies seeking to promote investment in Belfast.
<b>3.8</b>	We acknowledge that the tools available to support economic growth through Regional Aid are under threat at present and have responded strongly to the consultation on this to argue for the ongoing availability of this type of assistance. However, we acknowledge that it will be important to look at alternative forms of finance for major capital schemes. We have carried out some exploratory work on a range of financial instruments such as TIFs (Tax Incremental Financing schemes), LABVs (Local Asset-backed Vehicles) and joint ventures with the private sector. We would welcome further dialogue with government on these issues and would encourage the Northern Ireland Executive to put in place the necessary regulatory requirements to allow councils to explore these options as a way forward in the current era of funding restraint within the public sector. We would also welcome a discussion on how EU funding mechanisms such as JEREMIE and JESSICA could be levered in this context.
<b>3.9</b>	We recognise the impact of recent investments in the telecommunications and broadband infrastructure in the region and note the positive message that this presents to potential investors. We are currently exploring the potential for ultra-fast broadband in the city, alongside an extensive wireless network, as a means of transforming the business environment and enhancing social cohesion and access to public information for residents. We would like to work closely with our colleagues in DETI – given their experience of the previous broadband scheme – and with the private sector contractors to leverage maximum impact from the investment and address specific challenges at the development stage of this project. An application for support to DCMS is to be presented in February 2012 and we are hopeful of drawing down a significant amount of resources to secure the implementation of this scheme.
<b>3.10</b>	We see significant potential for businesses in this initiative and are considering the opportunity for a targeted capacity building initiative to ensure that companies are aware of the opportunities presented by the investment and are supported to make changes to their operating systems to capitalise on these.
<b>3.11</b>	We welcome the commitment within the draft strategy to reform the planning system and consider that this is essential in order to bring forward potential

<sup>2</sup> Lisney Belfast (September 2011), *Office update*

	development schemes, while adhering to all relevant regulatory and legislative stipulations. We welcome the proposed partial transfer of planning powers to local government and the ongoing review of current operations. Councils are already working with the Department of Environment to ensure an efficient transition and to explore the potential for input into the delivery and decision making.
<b>3.12</b>	Whilst this change is welcomed, there are concerns regarding the capacity of the system to deliver effective decision-making in the short-term and the implications this might have for current and proposed planning applications.
<b>3.13</b>	As with other cities, we are concerned at the impact of vacancies in the city centre and in our neighbourhoods and we would welcome a dialogue with all relevant partners to identify a sustainable solution to this challenge. From a Belfast City Council perspective, this has a direct impact on our rates intake and – by default – our ability to deliver services.
<b>3.14</b>	The recent report by Mary Portas into the review of the high streets made a number of recommendations including actions to make high streets accessible, attractive and safe and introducing measures to make it easier to change the uses of key properties to introduce a more balanced high street. We concur with many of the findings and would support a more coordinated approach to city and town regeneration across government to address the issues such as those identified in the report.
<b>3.15</b>	The draft strategy suggests that DoE's new approach to urban planning will "help revitalise urban centres, making them more attractive places to live, work and invest". We have some concerns that the current approach to urban regeneration is not focused or strategic and that there is no shared vision of the role of cities and urban areas in Northern Ireland. This is reflected in the recent plans to introduce a large retail levy which will have a disproportionate impact on Belfast and which risks adding to the considerable blight in the city centre.
<b>3.16</b>	We welcome the commitment to exploring more renewable energy sources, with gas, coal and oil accounting for 90% of power generation and spiralling costs having significant implications for all local residents and businesses. We are currently using methane gas generated from our former landfill site at North Foreshore to export electricity to the local grid for distribution. This is producing around 35000 megawatts per year at present. We are also exploring the potential for an anaerobic digestion point at this site which, if it progresses, will also allow renewable energy to be exported to the grid.

<b>Key economic sectors</b>	
<b>4.1</b>	<p>We support the analysis of the MATRIX panels regarding the key sectors that demonstrate the greatest potential for growth, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telecommunications and IT</li> <li>• Life and health sciences</li> <li>• Agrifood</li> <li>• Advance materials</li> <li>• Advanced engineering.</li> </ul>
<b>4.2</b>	<p>We note that MATRIX is currently conducting further analysis into the market opportunities presented by the sustainable energy sector and the green economy. We concur with the consideration that this is one sector in which we could potentially have significant competitive advantage and consider that Belfast has a key role to play in the future development of this sector. We suggest that it should be given greater focus within this strategy.</p>
<b>4.3</b>	<p>We note that the research for this strategy points out that “small economies focus on innovation policy in sectors where they have competitive advantage or historical strengths”. We consider that the fledgling renewables sector in the city represents a combination of the two. It utilises the natural resources of the harbour and the available surrounding land; is driven by the technologies and expertise developed in the city’s traditional manufacturing base and is supported by the significant research expertise of the two universities and the local Further Education college.</p>
<b>4.4</b>	<p>In order to ensure the optimal development of the sector, we would support further analysis to identify key market drivers; infrastructure requirements and skills needs to ensure that we can become world class players in this global market. As part of our investment package, we are proposing the development of a “green business park” at the city’s former landfill site at North Foreshore. This will provide an opportunity for clustering of secondary and tertiary companies to service the larger businesses in the adjacent area and beyond. We suggest that the Executive might explore the creation of an enterprise zone in this and the surrounding harbour area.</p>
<b>4.5</b>	<p>We agree that there is significant potential for the further development of the creative industries, as identified in the draft strategy. Recent infrastructural investments around the Titanic Quarter will help create a focal point for the further development of the film and television industry, capitalising on the success of recent projects such as “Game of Thrones.” The drive for greater local commissioning will create a demand for the development of additional content and this represents a significant business opportunities for local companies, many of whom are developing a track record in this field. We welcome the commitment to an investment of £4million in the Creative Industries Innovation Fund to underpin further development in this field.</p>
<b>4.6</b>	<p>We are working closely with our colleagues in Invest NI to explore the potential for establishing a digital hub in the city. This will create a focal point not only for the digital media businesses but also represents an opportunity to support greater social inclusion by providing access to communal facilities and services within the hub for the use of local communities. This project therefore supports both the “rebuilding” and the “rebalancing” themes of the draft strategy.</p>

4.7	The tourism industry in Belfast has seen significant growth in recent years. The gross value of Belfast tourism was estimated at £480million in 2010 <sup>3</sup> – an increase in value of over 500% in 10 years. There is an aspiration that the current revenue figure can be doubled by 2020, capitalising on the stimulus presented by major events in the coming years (e.g. 2012 Titanic; 2013 World Police and Fire Games and 2015 Tall Ships).
4.8	There is significant work to do to ensure that these challenging targets are met and that investments are made in the quality of service delivery. Belfast City Council has established a Tourism Forum which brings together the sector's key stakeholders to ensure a coordinated and informed approach to the development of the sector. Although this is still in the early stages of development, it has been useful in ensuring policy and funding alignment to maximise the impact of investment and to ensure targeting of resources. We would encourage the relevant government departments to continue their engagement with this forum. The Forum is supporting a Council-led programme which will work with over 300 local tourism and hospitality providers over the coming three years to improve customer service, enhance product development and develop new markets.
4.9	The business tourism market represents a significant opportunity for growth in the coming years. The current facilities in the city are inadequate for many conferences of an international scale and the need for integrated conference and exhibition facilities has been identified. An application for support to extend the current provision at the Waterfront Hall has been made and it is hoped that this can be funded by central and local government. If this project is realised, it will be a significant contributor to the growth of this sector and will have an impact beyond its immediate location in terms of business and employment generated. We would urge the Northern Ireland Executive to ensure that this and the other major capital schemes identified in our investment programme are given urgent attention by the relevant government departments and agencies and that efforts are focused on expediting their progress through the necessary administrative and statutory approvals processes.
4.10	The recent MTV event and the upcoming Titanic celebrations as well as the City of Culture, World Police and Fire Games and Tall Ships demonstrate the importance of event tourism to economic growth in the city and wider region. The MTV event and associated Belfast Music Week generated £22million of spend in the local economy. With these other major events in the pipeline, it is important to develop a coordinated approach to their promotion and development, in order to maximise the return to the local economy.
4.11	A report by Oxford Economics for Belfast City Council in 2008 <sup>4</sup> suggested that there was an absence of a clear sectoral roadmap for the economic future of the region. We consider that this is still an important element in maximising economic growth: identifying key sectors where the region can compete globally and putting place the support services (skills, infrastructure) to allow these to be addressed.

<sup>3</sup> Belfast City Council (2011), *Belfast Tourism Monitor 2010*

<sup>4</sup> Oxford Economics (2008), *Belfast Skills Demand and Supply*

<b>Business development and growth</b>	
<b>5.1</b>	Belfast City Council is focused on increasing the rates base in the city. By this we mean growing both the resident and business populations. With regard to the latter, we will do so by investing in a range of capital and revenue schemes that create an environment in which businesses can set up and expand – both in terms of physical infrastructure and business support services.
<b>5.2</b>	As indicated in our response to the Northern Ireland Executive's Economic Strategy: Consultation on Priorities for Sustainable Growth and Prosperity in February 2011, we are broadly supportive of the approach taken around the rebuilding and rebalancing themes. In light of the volatility of the economy at present, we suggest that constant evaluation of the impact of agreed initiatives will be critical to ensure that the strategy remains effective.
<b>5.3</b>	We already work closely with Invest NI and play a key role in "feeding through" potential client companies, as suggested by the Independent Review of Economic Policy. This is an important element of the "rebuilding" theme – helping companies improve their competency in innovation, R&D and exports with a view to enhancing their overall competitiveness and productivity. We acknowledge that there are other organisations and bodies working in this field and would be supportive of greater collaboration in order to reduce duplication and make the business support arena easier for the customer to navigate.
<b>5.4</b>	We are also engaged with DEL and OFMDFM to look at supporting measures which will help promote accessible employment opportunities, particularly in areas of economic disadvantage. As a Council, we have committed to creating a number of new employment and placement opportunities and we will work with our partner organisations to consider how these can be made available
<b>5.5</b>	We also consider that it will be important to target resources to enhance the volume and value of start ups. Recognising the importance of prioritising resources in this challenging climate, we accept that it may be appropriate to have access to a menu of targeted support, to be focused on those companies that demonstrate the most significant growth potential. The draft strategy acknowledges the challenge of creating more "high-flying" companies (strategy reference 5.41). While there are structural and historical reasons for this, we support initiatives to raise the ambition of new starts and invest in the infrastructure to allow this to happen.
<b>5.6</b>	An important part of creating this aspiration is to establish a positive image of entrepreneurship as a career choice. Many organisations are working at making this happen and there are many innovative practices in place across Northern Ireland. Belfast City Council is working with our Further and Higher Education partners in the city to support the Belfast Enterprise Academy – helping final year students understand the mechanics of operating a business and helping them progress their business idea. Start-up rates from the early stages of this programme are significant with almost one in two students starting up their own business on completion of their degree.

<b>5.7</b>	The Northern Ireland Science Park has been critical in creating an innovation ecosystem through its workspace and support programmes. It is also leveraging significant social capital through member and partner organisations and this is helping create some critical mass in the system. We welcome the proposal to consider the establishment of an open innovation centre at the Science Park as a means of developing greater partnerships and collaboration to support an additional uptake in R&D.
<b>5.8</b>	Access to finance is a key issue impacting on business growth (2.13 of strategy) and this is borne out in a recent survey of companies in Belfast where almost half of companies surveyed (48%) indicated that they would need some support with managing business finance. We welcome the recent announcements by Invest NI regarding the initiatives under its Access to Capital strategy – particularly the micro business loan fund and the Invest NI growth fund – and would encourage speedy implementation of these in order to address the lack of provision at present.
<b>5.9</b>	We support the proposed focus on increasing exports as a means of promoting sustainable growth. However it is important to acknowledge that, given that the economy is dominated by micro-businesses, many local companies have difficulty in taking the leap from selling locally to selling into external markets. We are working closely with our partners in Invest NI to create a support framework for these businesses through our “Exploring Exporting” programme and this will help achieve the targets set out in the draft strategy around first time exporters.
<b>5.10</b>	We support the consideration given within the draft strategy to the social economy and agree that there is significant potential within the sector to move organisations from a reliance on public funding towards a sustainable business model. We already include a target of 20% of participants in our business growth programmes to be social economy businesses and ensure that the mentoring support is tailored to meet their specific operating requirements. As indicated in our Investment Programme, we are currently exploring the potential for a targeted pre-enterprise social economy programme which will complement Invest NI’s social economy programme and help 60 community-based organisations to explore the potential of becoming social economy enterprises.
<b>5.11</b>	With regard to the proposals around corporation tax, Belfast City Council supports further exploration of the potential for introduction of a variable rate of corporation tax. In our response to HM Treasury’s consultation on rebalancing the Northern Ireland economy in June 2011, we commented that “corporation tax could be effective if it was part of a basket of investments and incentives geared towards improving productivity and creating economic growth”. As such, we consider that it could represent an important offering to potential inward investors but acknowledge that this needs to be accompanied by further investment in skills development, innovation and R&D and infrastructure development. This approach is reflected in the draft strategy’s proposals around the reduction in corporation tax (page 71).
<b>5.12</b>	We welcome the commitment to explore the implementation of social clauses for government capital schemes. We have had some experience of these through the Titanic Quarter and consider that there have been many lessons learned which should be disseminated across government. Consideration

	needs to be given to the content of the clauses as well as their management and monitoring. This needs to be done in the context of difficult market conditions for private sector employers and needs to include innovative approaches, for example, to help apprentices complete their apprenticeship across a number of schemes. Although the current focus is on capital schemes, we welcome proposals to extend social clauses to all government contracts. We acknowledge that consideration is currently being given by the Department for Environment (DoE) to allowing councils to take account of non-commercial clauses in awarding contracts and are open to considering how this can be done in the context of our capital programme and wider partnership projects.
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### **Employability and skills development**

<b>6.1</b>	Belfast City Council agrees that in order to rebuild the economy, there is a need for a concerted focus on creating employment opportunities. As identified in the draft strategy, we recognise that these are likely to consist of a range of (sometimes) short-term interventions focused on job creation, improving employability and re-skilling/up-skilling.
<b>6.2</b>	As with other parts of the region, Belfast has experienced a significant increase in unemployment since 2008. In the decade to 2008, there were an estimated 30,000 new jobs created in the city – many of which were filled by those residing in adjacent council areas. A recent report by Oxford Economics suggests that Belfast’s residential employment rate has fallen back to 2006 levels and that it is unlikely to return to 2008 levels until 2017 <sup>5</sup> . This suggests a period of “jobless recovery” and underlines the need to innovative employment creation initiatives to avoid permanent detachment from being in employment and to ensure that skilled employees are retained in the labour market.
<b>6.3</b>	The strong alignment between disadvantage and access to employment is highlighted in Belfast with the highest concentrations of unemployment and low skills levels found in those parts of the city where relative deprivation levels are greatest. Oxford Economics’ report suggested that 12 electoral wards – all of which are in the top 20 most deprived wards in Northern Ireland – are still expected to have employment rates of less than 50% in 2015. This represents a significant drag on the overall economic performance of the city and is the greatest inhibitor to economic competitiveness. In addition, it is clear that particular groups – including young people – are being adversely impacted by the downturn in terms of their ability to find a job. It is important to consider a range of targeted interventions for such groups, in order to ensure that they do not become long-term unemployed because statistics suggest that the amount of time spend out of the labour market can have an adverse impact on your ability to find a job. Given the scale of this phenomenon, it is important that we apply creative thinking to find a solution which will make an impact on the growing number of NEETs. Dedicated resources have been made available in other parts of the UK to support new initiatives and we would encourage the Northern Ireland Executive to do likewise.
<b>6.4</b>	A study undertaken by Oxford Economics on behalf of Belfast City Council in 2008 found that over half of net new jobs in Belfast over next decade will

<sup>5</sup> Oxford Economics (2011), *The competitiveness of Belfast*

	<p>require graduate qualifications while less than 1 in 7 will require no qualifications<sup>6</sup>. A similar report undertaken at Northern Ireland level sought to forecast future skills needs up to the period 2020.<sup>7</sup> This report noted that, if Northern Ireland had equivalent UK concentrations in sectors, the following could be achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12,000 more people in employment with sub-degree, degree and post-graduate qualifications</li> <li>• 30,000 more managers and 20,000 more professionals</li> <li>• 4,000 more STEM degree holders</li> <li>• 7,000 more creative and arts degree holders in the workforce.</li> </ul>
<b>6.5</b>	<p>In our response to the Northern Ireland Executive's Economic Strategy: Consultation on Priorities for Sustainable Growth and Prosperity in February 2011, we suggested that the most significant challenge in driving the long-term vision of the Northern Ireland economy was addressing the skills mismatch. We noted that this was, in our view, fundamental to building a sustainable, innovative, dynamic economy. At present, there appears to be a disjoint between skills training undertaken and those required by industry and this is illustrated by the statistics presented above. The implications of not addressing this are borne out in the missed employment opportunities. This issue cannot be overlooked – particularly at a time when employment creation is so difficult to achieve. We would particularly urge additional collaboration between Department for Education and Department for Employment and Learning/Invest NI on this work.</p>
<b>6.6</b>	<p>In addition to the technical skills noted above, the draft strategy suggests that there is likely to be a need for additional skills such as high standards of literacy, numeracy and ICT as well as greater management and leadership competencies. This need will be magnified if the projected growth in FDI as a result of changes in the corporation tax regime is realised. This need is particularly acute in small businesses where investment in management and leadership training tends to fall behind investment in more technical skills. If local companies wish to develop supply chain linkages with international companies, it will be important for them to invest in this type of training and support activity. At present, the provision of personal development training and company development support is not aligned and is the responsibility of a number of organisations and government agencies. Greater collaboration will be required in order to ensure that this happens in more systematic manner.</p>
<b>6.7</b>	<p>We welcome the commitment to enhancing investment in STEM subjects and consider that this is fundamental to the ambitions to rebalancing the economy. These subjects are required for the growth areas in which there is the greatest potential for wealth creation and productivity growth – such as those identified by MATRIX.</p>
<b>6.8</b>	<p>There are still many people who lack the essential skills required to access even lower paid employment opportunities. This is a major contributor to the low levels of economy activity which represent such a drag on the city's competitiveness. We recognise the additional levels of investment in recent years to address this issue but would encourage a more concerted and targeted approach around this issue if we are to make any real impact. The</p>

<sup>6</sup> Oxford Economics (2008), *Belfast Skills Demand and Supply*

<sup>7</sup> DEL (2009), *Forecasting Future Skills Needs in Northern Ireland*



	proposed welfare reform agenda is likely to mean that even more people will enter the labour market in the coming years and we need to have in place the training and supported employment activities to deal with these new additions.
<b>6.9</b>	In terms of the “rebuilding” priority, we consider that there is merit in looking at employment opportunities within lower value added sectors as a means to supporting access to the labour market for those individuals with low skills levels. If this is the case, there is the potential to look at a “skills escalator” approach whereby progression paths are created, thus creating a continual churn of new vacancies coupled with the incentive provided to those who do find work. This is particularly important where the financial impact of returning to work is – on paper – marginal. Regardless of the wider benefits of accessing employment, the incentive of an opportunity to earn more money is a useful “hook” to help people back into the labour market. It is important, however, to acknowledge that employers are having particular difficulty in affording to recruit staff at present so incentives such as the “Jobs Fund” are welcome in this regard.
<b>6.10</b>	We welcome the proposals to work on a city strategy for employability and have already commenced work on this with DEL. We consider that this will address some of the challenges identified in the strategy and will allow for greater coordination of delivery, without the need to invest significant additional resources. We also welcome the proposals for a single point of contact for employers. We consider that this resource should be able to provide access to the wide range of business support services available to local companies from all partners as there is significant confusion at present as to what is available. We acknowledge the challenge that this presents and would be happy to work with DEL and Invest NI to ensure that this operates successfully.
<b>6.11</b>	We consider that there is a need for better skills planning for the future growth industries identified in the strategy, so that we can not only attract but also retain and grow these businesses. We agree with the commitment that “more must be done to better anticipate and deliver the strategic skills and employability requirements and to respond to future economic challenges and opportunities” (strategy reference 5.33). We consider that the current approach is disjointed and are supportive of a more planned approach to skills supply and demand, including identifying the role that we can play in this regard.

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**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Strategic Policy and Resources Committee</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Green New Deal</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>17 February 2012</b>
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	<b>Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Shane McCourt, Finance and Performance</b>

**Relevant Background Information**

At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2011 it was agreed that further work would be undertaken to assess the potential of the Council's involvement in the Green New Deal scheme. This report provides an update on the progress of the work undertaken and resultant recommendations.

The 'Green New Deal' (GND) proposal is a joined up approach aimed at tackling the '*triple crunch*' of recession, rising energy prices and climate change by installing a series of energy efficient measures to combat fuel poverty.

The GND is targeted at homes that do not fall within the other "Warm Homes" type initiatives currently administered through the NIHE. The homeowner would be provided with a loan to provide energy saving improvements such as insulation and boiler replacement. The loan would be required to be repaid with interest using the energy savings achieved.

The scheme would be financed through £2.4m from the Council (£800k per annum for three years), £12m from central government and a £40m bank loan. The bank would be at no risk to bad debt.

**Key Issues**

A proposal and related financial model was provided by the representatives of the Green New Deal to the Council in December 2011 to evaluate and carry out a financial appraisal. A similar proposal was also presented to DSD. In reviewing the proposal council officers met with Green New Deal representatives on numerous occasions and also with DSD officials at the end of the process.

Following the appraisal a number of key issues were raised around the overall structure and financing of the proposal. They were:

**The potential for debt**

The level of debt within the model was 4% and was viewed as being low given the economic environment we are currently experiencing. At present the figures provided by Land and Property Services has a default debt rate of 11%. At this rate there would be minimal recovery of the investment and nothing would be recovered before year 11. Essentially a significant proportion of DSD and Council money would be required to absorb the bad debt.

**Target Group**

The business model is not based on local market research and it is not clear who the scheme will be targeted at. There are a number of “warm homes” schemes aimed at households in receipt of benefits and vulnerable pensioners. At the other end of the scale those households who can afford to pay for energy improvements are unlikely to require a loan. This leaves households in the middle bracket who are not in receipt of benefits and cannot afford to pay directly for energy improvements. There has been no market testing of this group to determine take up rates. Figures have been quoted using the Kirklees project but this scheme involved giving grants to households and not loans. It was fully funded by government and energy providers.

**Sustainability of the programme**

From year 4 onwards there is additional funding required to make the GND proposal sustainable. This would need to be financed by DSD/DFP and councils. No details of how this is to be achieved have been provided to the council.

**Running Costs and Associated Value for Money**

The current proposal is based on the scheme being run by Green New Deal. No detail has been provided around the running costs or how these could be changed to allow for an improved VFM proposal.

Members should note that similar concerns were raised by DSD when we met them on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

**Resource Implications**

None

**Decision Required**

Given the financial risk and potential reputational issues associated with the GND proposal it is recommended that at this stage Members do not proceed with the investment. Officers will continue to work with GND and DSD to develop a more feasible and sustainable scheme.

**Key to Abbreviations**

GND – Green New Deal  
 VFM – value for Money  
 LPS – Land and Property Services  
 DSD – Department for Social Development

**Documents Attached**

N/A





### Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality
<b>Date:</b>	Friday, 17 February, 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Mr. Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (Ext. 6314)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Mr. Gareth Quinn, Senior Democratic Services Officer (Ext. 6316)

<b>1.</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Members will recall that the Committee, at its meeting on 26th September, 2003, agreed to the criteria which would be used to assess requests from external organisations for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality. Subsequently the Committee at its meeting on 7th August, 2009, further amended the criteria so as to incorporate the new Key Themes as identified in the Council's Corporate Plan.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	The revised criteria has been applied to each of the requests contained within the appendix and recommendations have been made to the Committee on this basis.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	Provision has been made in the revenue estimates for hospitality.
<b>4.</b>	<b>Equality Implications</b>
4.1	N/A
<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	The Committee is asked to approve the recommendations as set out in the Appendix.

<b>6.</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
Officer responsible – Gareth Quinn	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
Not applicable.	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
Appendix 1 – Schedule of Applications	

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Audiences Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Theatre Association and Theatre Forum Ireland	All-Ireland Arts Conference Dinner  14 <sup>th</sup> June, 2012  Approximately 250 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together', 'Better opportunities for success across the City' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks  Approximate Cost £500
Belfast City Council, Parks and Leisure Department	City of Belfast International Rose Trials – Judges Reception and Dinner  19 <sup>th</sup> July, 2012  Approximately 150 attending	The use of City Hall and the provision of Hospitality in the form of a Civic Dinner	The City of Belfast International Rose Trials will be held during Rose Week. The Trials are renowned worldwide for attracting international rose growers in addition to a significant number of visitors.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together'.	The use of City Hall and the provision of Hospitality in the form of a Civic Dinner.  Approximate Cost
Common Purpose	Meridian Course Final Day and Award Ceremony  2 <sup>nd</sup> August, 2012  Approximately 50 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.	'Meridian' is a leadership programme that brings together a diverse group of leaders from the private, public, voluntary and community sectors. The participants learn how to improve their capacity to lead, effect change and expand their networks through the investigation of real-life challenges.  This event will recognise the achievements of those individuals which have successfully completed the Meridian Programme.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits.  Approximate Cost £125
Malaysian Students Society Northern Ireland	Malaysian Night 2012  10 <sup>th</sup> March, 2012  Approximately 400 attending	The use of the City Hall	Malaysian Night 2012 is the climax event of a week long programme called Malaysia and You 2012.  This programme consists of a series of events which includes a mini charity carnival, sports tournament, interactive bazaar and ends with a formal dinner which the	The use of the City Hall

			<p>organisers wish to take place in the City Hall.</p> <p>The aim of the programme is to promote cultural diversity, encourage charity activity and also to forge closer relationships between Malaysians and the citizens of Belfast.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and of 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	
Belfast Eagle Sea Cadets	<p>Belfast Eagle Sea Cadets Showcase Evening</p> <p>12<sup>th</sup> March, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 100 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event aims to recognise and showcase the contribution made by the Belfast Eagle Sea Cadets in helping young people develop values of leadership and teamwork.</p> <p>The event seeks to demonstrate the organisation's ethos of togetherness and exclusiveness by showcasing some of the work which has been undertaken.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together', 'Better opportunities for success across the City' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £250</p>
Loch Lao	<p>The Loch Lao Story</p> <p>18<sup>th</sup> March, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 500 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall</p>	<p>This will be a joint inter-city (Belfast / Dublin) event showcasing the range of talent of young people from 8-18 years of age.</p> <p>The event will take the form of a concert to perform the Loch Lao Story which tells the history of Belfast through music and narration as seen through the eyes of the black bird flying along the shores of Belfast Lough. The musical arrangement has been developed by Patick Davey, a local Belfast composer, and features tunes such as The Titanic Leaving the Lough, King Billy's March, the Viking Raid, the Blitz, the Blackbird.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City</p>	

			Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	
Volunteer Now	<p>Volunteer Now – Awards Ceremony</p> <p>28<sup>th</sup> March, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 150 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception	<p>This event seeks to recognise those volunteers who have demonstrated a commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society, their community, the environment or individuals.</p> <p>The event also seeks to promote the positive effect which volunteering has in combatting poverty, helping those who are disadvantaged and promoting social inclusion.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'Better opportunities for success across the City', 'Better support for people and communities' and 'Better Services – Listening and Delivering'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
Department for Regional Development	<p>Launch of Charge Points for Electric Vehicles in Northern Ireland</p> <p>29th March, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 200 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	<p>This event will launch the scheme which provides government funding to support the roll out of electric charging infrastructure, which is necessary to support zero carbon electric transport in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Belfast City Council has endorsed this scheme and is involved directly in supporting the roll out of the first phase of the project.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together, 'Better opportunities for success across the city' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'.</p>	The use of the City Hall
Youthcom – Crossing the Bridges Project	<p>Young People Trading Places</p> <p>29th March, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 200 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	<p>The event aims to provide an opportunity for young people from different communities to express their views to civic leaders regarding interfaces/ shared spaces, etc and provide a renewed respect for each other and their communities.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together' and 'Better</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>

			support for people and communities'.	
The Fostering Network	Foster Carer of the Year Awards Ceremony  14 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012  Approximately 70 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	This event seeks to recognise the work of individual foster carers and will recognise the commitment and lasting difference they make to children's lives.  The awards will acknowledge the support provided to young people in care and the role played by foster carers in their communities.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits  Approximate cost £175
Barnardo's Northern Ireland	'Dr. B's Kitchen' Awards 2012  17 <sup>th</sup> May, 2012  Approximately 150 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	This event will highlight the work of 'Dr. B's Kitchen' which trains young people from the city with learning difficulties to prepare them for a career in the catering industry. The scheme provides the young people with the opportunity to work and live independently and contribute socially or economically to their local communities.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together', 'Better support for people and communities' and Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits  Approximate cost £375
Belfast Media Group	Belfast Sports Volunteer Awards 2012  5 <sup>th</sup> July, 2012  Approximately 150 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception	This event seeks to recognise the achievements and contribution made by individuals who have given their time voluntarily to help support sport in order to ensure that young people can enjoy their games and fulfill their ambition.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks  Approximate cost £500
British Institute of Cleaning Science	Northern Ireland Cleaner of the Year 2012	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in	This event seeks to acknowledge the vital role of cleaners across various industries in Northern	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the

	<p>14<sup>th</sup> September, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 40 attending</p>	<p>the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>Ireland.</p> <p>The event will also aim to recognise those individuals who have been nominated within their respective industries for undertaking their duties to a high standard.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £100</p>
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### Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Request to use the City Hall to mark the centenary of the Signing of the Solemn League and Covenant
<b>Date:</b>	Friday, 17 February, 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext 6314)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Gareth Quinn, Senior Democratic Services Officer (ext. 6316)

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	The Joint Group of the Party Leaders' Forum and Historic Centenaries Working Group, at its meeting on 13 January, was advised that an application had been received from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland requesting the use of the City Hall for an event in April, 2012 to mark the centenary of the Signing of the Ulster Covenant.
1.2	The Working Group agreed that such applications for the use of the City Hall should be dealt with in the normal way and be subject to the existing Council policy on the use of the building and also the principles already agreed by the Historic Centenaries Working Group on 13 January, which are attached at Appendix 1.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has submitted an application form requesting the use of the City Hall to hold an event entitled 'Citizenship, Covenant and Christ' on 19 April, 2012.
2.2	The purpose of this event is to acknowledge the particular relationship between Presbyterian history and the signing of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant by holding an event which will include academics who will provide insight from different perspectives, a panel discussion and an question and answer session. The event seeks to provide a platform to acknowledge the centenary in a manner which promotes the fact that different opinions can be shared and discussed across civil society without fear or mistrust.
2.3	The event aims to provide opportunities to include a range of different perspectives and ideologies, rather than a single viewpoint, aiming to increase understanding and appreciation of other perspectives and identities. It will do this by involving historians and academics from across the island of Ireland who

	<p>will speak during the event from different perspectives as well as considering theological matters. A range of non-governmental organisations and groups will be invited to participate in the day and to bring a question from their perspective to the panel which will be made up of the above mentioned historians. Representatives of all the political parties will be invited together with representatives of all the churches across the Island.</p>
2.4	<p>The event aims to provide opportunities to include a range of different perspectives and ideologies, rather than a single viewpoint, aiming to increase understanding and appreciation of other perspectives and identities. It will do this by gaining input from the historians and academics which the organizers deem as being essential to making this event inclusive and broad in its perspective. One of the aims of the event is to provide a platform where people with different views of the past can talk and listen to one another.</p>
2.5	<p>The organisers are seeking to ensure that the event is non-exclusive and welcoming to all sections of the community in Belfast by inviting representatives from the churches, all political parties and a range of non-governmental organizations, such as 'Healing Through Remembering', 'Unionist Centenaries Committee', 'Ulster Scots Association' and 'Relatives for Justice', who have an interest in the past. There will be representation from across the Island in each of these spheres thus ensuring broad participation and bringing together in Belfast a significant and highly representative group of people.</p>
2.6	<p>The organisation has made it clear in their application that as information is released about the event, they will be keen to accommodate requests from other groups interested in participating and/or attending the event. The organisers hope that this event will help to recall other stories of the Signing of the Covenant and that together there can be a new and clearer focus on citizenship across the Island of Ireland.</p>
2.7	<p>Based on the information received, the application appears to satisfy both the criteria on the use of the City Hall and the principles agreed by the Joint Group of the Party Leaders' Forum and Historic Centenaries Working Group on 13 January.</p>

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	N/A

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality Implications</b>
4.1	N/A

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	The Committee is recommended to grant the use of the City Hall for the event on 19th April, 2012.

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
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Officers responsible:

Gareth Quinn, Senior Democratic Services Officer

March 2012

<b>7</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
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<b>8</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
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Appendix 1 : Principles agreed by the Joint Group of the Party Leaders' Forum and Historic Centenaries Working Group

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**Decade of Centenaries:**

On the 17 October 2011 and subsequently, by Strategic Policy & Resources Committee 21 October 2011, the Centenaries Working Group agreed the following principals in relation to how the forthcoming decade of centenaries should operate:

- Events supported by the Council should provide opportunities to **include a range of different perspectives and ideologies**, rather than a single viewpoint, aiming to increase understanding and appreciation of other perspectives and identities
- They should be **based on historic accuracy and robust academic expertise** – engagement with universities, museums, libraries, PRONI etc is essential to ensure this evidence base
- The interpretation of events should be in a **broad historical context** and understanding of the national and European setting of the time
- The Council should develop strong **links with other institutions** – i.e. museums, libraries, PRONI and other relevant organisations, to ensure that there is no duplication and that events and programmes are complementary
- We will provide/support a range **of different types of events** – from lectures, discussions, debates to films, drama, activities that attract schools and children/families etc – so that events can not only be educational but participative, creative and enjoyable

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**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Strategic Policy and Resources Committee</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Use of the City Hall for an E-Counting Demonstration</b>
<b>Date:</b>	17th February, 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext 6314)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	A request has been received from the Chief Electoral Officer for the use of the City Hall on 30th and 31st May, 2012 for the purpose of holding a demonstration of the electronic counting of votes.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	The Committee will be aware of the criticism which surrounded the length of time which was taken to announce the results of the Assembly and Referendum counts in May, 2011. The Chief Electoral Officer is keen to investigate the possibility of substantially reducing the time taken for the counting of votes in Northern Ireland elections by considering the introduction of the electronic counting of votes.
2.2	Such a system has been used for the last few years in Scotland and has been welcomed by all of the political parties.
2.3	The first stage in the consideration of such a change to electoral process is an information event by way of a demonstration of how electronic counting works. The demonstration lasts about an hour and a rolling programme of demonstrations would be held over a 2 day period. All elected MLAs and Councillors in Northern Ireland, together with Council and Assembly staff involved in election planning, would be invited to attend.

2.4	Any costs associated with the event would be met by Opt2Vote, the company which delivers the electronic counting package, and the Electoral Office. There would not be any costs accruing to the Council.
2.5	The Electoral Office recognises the importance of Belfast as the capital city of Northern Ireland and the City Hall as an iconic seat of local democracy and, as such, would be very keen to base the demonstration in the City Hall.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	None. All costs will be covered by Opt2Vote and the Electoral Office.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Implications</b>
4.1	None.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	The Committee is recommended to grant the use of the City Hall for the demonstration of E-counting on 30th and 31st May, 2012.

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
<p>Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager</p> <p>March, 2012</p>	





**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Strategic Policy and Resources Committee</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Date of the Annual Council Meeting in June, 2012</b>
<b>Date:</b>	17th February, 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext 6314)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	The Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) Act 1972, at paragraph 1(2) of Schedule 2, requires that the Annual Meeting of the Council be held in June each year with the exception of the year of the Local Elections.
1.2	The Council's Standing Orders provide that the Annual Meeting of the Council must be held in each year in accordance with the provisions of the Act. In addition, the Standing Orders provide that <b><u>other monthly meetings</u></b> of the Council " <i>shall not... take place on a Bank Holiday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday but shall be held on the next following weekday instead.</i> "
1.3	Although, traditionally, these restrictions have been applied when considering the date of the Annual Council Meeting each year, there is not any legal requirement to do so and the Annual Council Meeting can be held on any day in June.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	In June, 2012, there will be an additional Bank Holiday to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee which would mean that, should the normal restrictions be applied, the Annual Meeting of the Council would not take place until Wednesday 6th June.
2.2	However, that date coincides with the arrival at the City Hall at 5.00pm of the Olympic Torch and a large-scale civic event will be held with an estimated crowd of over 30,000 people in attendance. Obviously, it would not be appropriate to schedule the Annual Council meeting for 6.00pm on that evening.

2.3	It would be possible to hold the Annual Meeting on Friday, 1st June. This would not be in breach of any legal obligation as it would meet the provisions of the Local Government Act. It is, however, outside of the Council's normal procedure and would require the Committee's approval.
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<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	None.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Implications</b>
4.1	None.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	The Committee is recommended to agree that the Annual meeting of the Council in 2012 will take place on Friday, 1st June and to determine the appropriate time of the meeting.

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
<p>Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services manager</p> <p>April, 2012</p>	



**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Local Authorities Members Association – Spring Seminar
<b>Date:</b>	Friday, 17th February, 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Mr. Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (extension 6314)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Ms. Kate McCafferty, Democratic Services Assistant (extension 6308)

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	The Local Authorities Members Association (LAMA) is holding its Spring Seminar in Waterford, County Waterford from Friday 13th to Saturday 14th April.
1.2	The theme of the Seminar is 'The Role of Local Authorities in Enabling Economic Development'. Expert speakers at the Seminar will include Michael Walsh, Waterford City Manager, Ann-Marie Caulfield, President of Waterford Chamber of Commerce and Sinead Carr, Director of Services, South Tipperary County Council.
1.3	The Council has been represented at LAMA events for a number of years and representatives attending previous Seminars have felt that their attendance gave them a valuable opportunity to meet with Local Government Representatives from throughout Ireland to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern. The theme of this year's Seminar is particularly relevant given the current economic climate.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	The business of the Conference falls within the criteria set out in Section 38 of the 1972 Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act in that it involves issues connected with the discharge of the functions of the Council and/or affecting the district or its inhabitants.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>												
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <table> <tr> <td>Delegate Fee:</td> <td>£170</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accommodation Costs:</td> <td>£ 92</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Travel:</td> <td>£270</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Subsistence:</td> <td>£190</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>-----</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total per delegate:</td> <td>£722</td> </tr> </table>	Delegate Fee:	£170	Accommodation Costs:	£ 92	Travel:	£270	Subsistence:	£190		-----	Total per delegate:	£722
Delegate Fee:	£170												
Accommodation Costs:	£ 92												
Travel:	£270												
Subsistence:	£190												
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Total per delegate:	£722												

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality Implications</b>
	N/A

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	<p>It is recommended that the Committee authorises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the attendance at the LAMA Spring Seminar of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, the Council's representatives on the National Association of Councillors, Northern Ireland Region, the Democratic Services Manager (or their nominees) and a representative of each of the Parties on the Council not represented by the aforementioned Members; and</li> <li>▪ the payment of the appropriate travelling and subsistence allowances in connection therewith.</li> </ul>

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
<p>Officers responsible:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mrs. Julie Lilley, Democratic Services Officer.</p> <p>March, 2012</p>	



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Northern Ireland Local Government Association Subscription
<b>Date:</b>	Friday 17 February 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John McGrillen, Director of Development
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kevin Heaney (ext 6202)

<b>1.0</b>	<b><u>RELEVANT BACKGROUND</u></b>
1.1	The Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) acts as a voice and representation body for elected Members from local government; providing a forum for collective discussion on regionally significant policy issues and assisting with the formation of collective policy position as necessary. It acts as an interface between local government, as a sector, and the NI Executive, government departments, parliament and other key institutions.
1.2	NILGA is supported by all the main political parties in Northern Ireland with 25 of the 26 local councils being current members (with Newtownabbey not a member). It comprises of 147 elected representatives and a 27 (+ 5 observers) Executive Committee including a President and 4 Vice-Presidents.
<b>2.0</b>	<b><u>KEY ISSUES</u></b>
	<b><i>Role of Belfast City Council within NILGA</i></b>
2.1	Belfast City Council has currently 17 elected Members nominated onto NILGA with 1 Member designated as an Office Bearer and as members of the NILGA Executive (see Appendix 1). A number of BCC elected Members are represented on the established NILGA working groups such as 'Modernisation and Reform', Planning, Waste and Environment.
2.2	Whilst recognising the important role of NILGA as an advocate/champion for local government and in providing advice and policy support to the sector, the Council would not currently require or fully avail of the support provided by NILGA to the same extent as other councils. This is as a result of the level of internal capacity which exists within the Council, the capability to develop and coalesce around corporate positions on emerging policy issues and to secure direct access to the NI Executive, Ministers, central government departments and other important national and European institutions.
2.3	Notwithstanding, we are entering a period of significant change, with local government reform and the future of European Structural Funds under review. Whilst the Council will continue to directly seek to influence, shape and drive forward these and other critical matters for the economy and the sector, it will be important that we do not lose sight of the importance of engaging with and informing the wider local government sector's consideration and approach to such matters. The continued participation and engagement in NILGA will be an important strand of this. Some of the important issues which NILGA are seeking to influence on behalf of the LG sector and which the Council have a direct interest and focus include e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Shaping the future direction of local government reform</li> <li>ii. Shaping future planning policy and reform</li> <li>iii. Lobby for the development of an urban policy agenda/strategy which recognises and supports the strategic significance of urban areas as key regional economic drivers</li> <li>iv. Maximising the level of investment secured through European sources for Belfast. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaping the future direction of EU Structural Funds 2014-2020 – it is understood that there is 3.76b Euros agreed for 2014-2020 Structural Funds. Whilst the NI block allocation is still to be negotiated and agreed, £356m was secured in last round which</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>finishes in 2013. It is likely that the new NI allocation is of a similar scale.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Influence the allocation of other emerging European funding streams (e.g. Horizon 2020; Framework 7)</li> </ul> <p>v. Supporting the development of a new central/local government relationship</p>
	<b><i>Belfast City Council Annual Subscription Fee</i></b>
2.4	NILGA request an annual Belfast City Council subscription fee of circa <b>£107,500</b> (excluding VAT) which is calculated based on the relative strength of the penny rate product for councils. This equates to approximately 25% of NILGA's total subscription base.
2.5	Members will note that in considering its annual subscription fee to NILGA, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee previously agreed to pay a <b>reduced subscription fee of circa £76,500</b> for the periods 2009/2010 and 2010/2011. This subscription had been calculated on the basis of the Council's population size relative to the other councils. This reduced subscription fee represents 18.5% of NILGA's total subscriptions and is on par with the subscription contributions made by the larger/capital city councils in other jurisdictions towards their local government association (e.g. Cardiff contributes 17% towards the Welsh Local Government Association and Glasgow contributes 19% towards Convention of Scottish Local Authorities).
2.6	NILGA has been recently in contact requesting that the Council consider (i) the 2011/2012 annual subscription payment, which has not yet to be released and (ii) the incoming 2012/2013 subscription payment. Based on the previous precedent set by the Committee, Members are asked to consider whether they would wish to agree to pay the NILGA annual subscription fee for the periods 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 at the reduced £76,500 annual payment. This reflects the previously agreed BCC subscription payment and is similar to the contributions made by both Cardiff and Glasgow towards their local government association.
2.7	Now that local government reform appears to be back on the agenda, it will be critical that NILGA fundamentally review its future role and focus within the context of the new 11 stronger council environment. During the next 1-3 year transition period, it will be important that the Council continues to work alongside NILGA, its Executive Committee and Office Bearers to explore how the Association can evolve and provide maximum benefit to the sector post reform.

### 3.0 Resource Implications

#### Financial and Human Resources

If Members agree to pay the proposed reduced subscription fee for the periods 2011/2012 and 2012/13, the financial implications would include:

- £76,500 (excluding VAT) for 2011/2012; and
- £76,500 (excluding VAT) for the period 2012/2013.

Initial discussions with the Director of Finance and Resources has indicated that adequate funding remains in the 2011/2012 corporate subscriptions budget and the agreed 2012/2013 budget estimates to cover subscription payment if agreed by Members.

### 4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members are asked to consider the contents of the foregoing report and whether they would wish to agree payment of the NILGA annual subscription for the periods 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 at the reduced fee of £76,500.

### 5.0 Appendices

#### **Appendix 1: NILGA BCC Membership and Executive Committee Membership**

## Belfast City Council NILGA Membership – January 2012

1. Councillor Tim Attwood
2. Alderman Tom Ekin
3. Councillor Matt Garrett
4. Councillor Tom Haire
5. Councillor Deirdre Hargey
6. Councillor Tom Hartley
7. Councillor John Hussey
8. Councillor Mervyn Jones
9. Councillor Brian Kingston
10. Councillor John Kyle
11. Councillor Nichola Mallon
12. Councillor Patrick McCarthy
13. Councillor Jim McVeigh
14. Councillor Caoimhín Mac Giolla Mhín
15. Councillor Adam Newton
16. Alderman Jim Rodgers
17. Councillor Guy Spence



## Confirmation of NILGA Members (January) 2012

### Confirmation of Office Bearers

*President* Cllr Evelyne Robinson (Ballymoney, DUP)

#### *Vice-Presidents*

Cllr Sean McPeake (Magherafelt, SF)

Cllr Arnold Hatch (Craigavon, UUP)

Cllr Dermot Curran (Down, SDLP)

Cllr Tom Ekin (Belfast, AP)

### Confirmation of Executive Membership

#### **DUP**

Cllr Roger Burton (Dungannon & South Tyrone)

Cllr Mrs Freda Donnelly (Armagh)

Cllr John Hussey (Belfast)

Ald Maurice Mills (Ballymena)

Cllr Jenny Palmer (Lisburn)

Cllr Paul Robinson (Fermanagh)

Cllr Denny Vitty (Castlereagh)

Cllr Peter Weir MLA (North Down)

#### **Sinn Fein**

Cllr Sean Begley (Omagh)

Cllr Mickey Cooper (Derry)

Cllr Brendan Curran (Banbridge)

Cllr Caoimhín Mac Giolla Mhín (Belfast)

Cllr Sean McGuigan (Dungannon & South Tyrone)

Cllr Margaret McKillop (Moyle)

Cllr Mickey Ruane (Newry and Mourne)

#### **UUP**

Cllr Alex Baird (Fermanagh)

Cllr Mrs Joan Baird MBE (Banbridge)

Cllr Robert Burgess (Down)

Ald Jim Dillon (Lisburn)

Cllr Mrs Marion Smith (North Down)

#### **SDLP**

Cllr Seamus Doyle (Banbridge)

Ald PJ McAvoy (Ballymena)

Cllr John O'Kane (Fermanagh)

Vacancy (Derry)

#### **Alliance**

Cllr Alan Lawther (Antrim)

Cllr Stephen Martin (Lisburn)

#### **Chief Executives**

Mr Ashley Boreland (Ards)

Mr Thomas McCall (Newry and Mourne)

Mr David McCammick (Antrim)

Mr Daniel McSorley (Omagh)

#### **Observers**

Ald Michael Coyle (Limavady)

Cllr Eric Ferguson (Carrickfergus)

Ald Robert Gibson (Ards)

Cllr William King MBE (Coleraine)

Cllr Kieran McGuire (Strabane)

Cllr Mark McKinty (Larne)



**MEETING OF GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP**

Monday, 30th January, 2012

Members present: Aldermen Browne and Smyth; and  
Councillors Hargey, Hendron, Mallon  
and Reynolds.

In attendance: Mr. C. Quigley, Town Solicitor and  
Assistant Chief Executive;  
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager;  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer;  
Mr. K. Heaney, Strategic Planning and Policy Officer; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

**Appointment of Chairman**

The Members agreed that Councillor Mallon be appointed to act as Chairman of the Governance Working Group.

(Councillor Mallon in the Chair.)

**Work Plan for the Governance Working Group**

The Democratic Services Manager reminded the Members that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 4th November, had agreed to the establishment of an All-Party Working Group, comprising Members of that Committee, where appropriate, to consider issues surrounding the development of a Council Constitution. It had agreed also that the Working Group should, in the first instance, consider the revision of the Council's Standing Orders and the development of associated protocols. The Committee, at its meeting on 18th November, had established the following terms of reference for the Governance Working Group:

- (i) the revision of the Council's Standing Orders to make them relevant to the current modern governance arrangements;
- (ii) the development of Member-officer protocols to reflect the current Codes of Practice and to provide for a clear understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of each and to establish clear guidelines in relation to, for example, how issues were included on Committee agendas, how Member and Officer meetings outside of the formal decision-making structures should be facilitated etc;
- (iii) the development of the second part of the Conflicts of Interest policy relating to the roles and responsibilities of Members on outside bodies;

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**Governance Working Group,  
Monday, 30th January, 2012**

- (iv) initial consideration of the overall governance arrangements for the Council, including the current Committee system and the issue of the scrutiny function; and
- (v) any other part of the overall Council Constitution which was referred to it specifically by the Committee.

The Democratic Services Manager submitted for the Working Group's consideration the undernoted plan which set out the proposed work for the Group for the coming months:

**PROPOSED WORKPLAN FOR GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP**

Issue	Comments	Timetable					Who
		30th January	February	March	April	May	
<b>Overall Governance Arrangements/Council Constitution</b>	A general overall review of the Council's decision-making structures and the development of the Council Constitution.		<b>Initial report to Working Group</b>				Democratic Services, Policy & Planning, CMT
<b>Protocol on how issues appear on agendas</b>	The protocol will set out the various ways in which items of business appear on Committee agendas	<b>Report to Working Group</b>					Democratic Services Section
<b>Protocol on Member and officer meetings</b>	The protocol will set guidelines for Members and officers on how meetings, outside of the normal decision-making structures, should be conducted and the nature of the Member/officer relationship.			<b>Report to Working Group</b>			Democratic Services Section
<b>Conflicts of Interest Policy</b>	Part 1 already agreed by Council. Part 2 – dealing with Outside Bodies – to be considered by the Working Group			<b>Initial Report to Working Group</b>			Legal Services, Policy & Planning, Democratic Services
<b>Standing Orders</b>	Review of the Council's Standing Orders which govern the conduct of Council and Committee meetings.			<b>Initial Report to agree the scope of the Review</b>			Democratic Services, Legal Services

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**Governance Working Group,  
Monday, 30th January, 2012**

The Democratic Services Manager reviewed the main elements of the work plan and stated that it would be difficult to be certain as to how long it might take for discussions around the various issues to be completed. He pointed out that it could well be the case that consideration of the Member-officer protocols and the review of Standing Orders could take several months and could involve the need for Party Briefings to be held as part of the process. However, it was considered beneficial to place some timescale against each issue.

During discussion, Members made the following points:

- it was important to ensure that a completion date was identified for each issue set out within the work plan;
- it would be beneficial as part of the review of the Council's Standing Orders to examine those governing the Northern Ireland Assembly and other councils; and
- there was a need to examine the current governance arrangements relating to the Town Planning Committee, in view of the potential for additional powers being transferred to the Council in relation to the planning function.

In response, the Democratic Services Manager confirmed that the future role of the Planning Committee was under consideration currently. He stated that a revised work plan, setting out suggested completion dates for each issue would be submitted to the next meeting of the Governance Working Group and that it would build in sufficient time for Political Parties to consult on any changes prior to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee being requested to approve the various documents. He undertook also to submit to the next meeting of the Working Group an update on the current status of the Review of Public Administration.

Noted.

**Protocol on Issues Appearing on Committee Agendas**

The Working Group was advised that there had been some confusion recently surrounding the process by which issues had been included on Committee agendas. He reported the matter had arisen due to the fact that there was not an agreed system in place and, as a result, the Governance Working Group had been tasked by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to give consideration to the development of a protocol to enhance the process. He reported that a draft protocol had now been formulated which sought to set out clearly the means by which business would, in future, be included on Committee agendas. The protocol had been based upon the principle that officers took actions only where they had the appropriate authority to do so and that that was provided primarily through a Committee decision, which had been ratified subsequently by the Council.

**Governance Working Group,  
Monday, 30th January, 2012**

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He reviewed the main elements of the protocol, which stipulated that matters could appear on agendas arising from Corporate and Departmental Plans, as a result of the implementation new legislation or guidelines and as requests from the Council's several Committees and outside organisations. Items could be placed on agendas also as a result of suggestions from professional officers in terms of issues which would be of benefit to the City and also at the request of individual Members. In relation to individual Members, he explained that the protocol stated that it had been accepted practice for a number of years that an individual Member could request an issue to be raised at a Committee meeting and that these requests were made normally through the relevant Chief Officer, with the appropriate Chairman being informed of the issue when being briefed on the agenda for the meeting. Although the Chairman was responsible for the conduct of the Committee meeting, he or she did not have any authority to act outside the Committee and it was not appropriate for a Chairman to decide which items could or could not be included on the agenda. He explained that the protocol had set out specifically the following suggestions for use by both Members and officers in dealing with requests from individual Members wishing to have an item placed on a Committee agenda:

- any Member would be free to discuss matters with Chief or Senior officers of the Council and to seek their opinion on any suggestions which they might have for new policies or for a specific action to be taken;
- if, after those discussions, the Member wished the issue to be raised on a Committee agenda, then a specific request should be made to the appropriate Chief Officer;
- if the issue falls within the remit of the Committee and if it is considered that the action proposed to be taken is lawful, then the Chief Officer, after informing the appropriate Chairman, will arrange for the item to be included on the agenda for the next meeting indicating the name of the Member who will be speaking to the issue at the Committee.
- the issue will either simply appear on the agenda against the individual Member's name or, if the Chief Officer considers that it would be helpful to the Committee in considering the matter, a short covering report may be prepared which highlights that a named Member has asked that the issue is raised and give some important factual information. No significant resources, including officer time, will be committed to such preparatory work. Resources can only be committed once the Council has decided to take action.

Accordingly, he requested that the Working Group consider the draft protocol, following which it would, including any amendments, be submitted for approval to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

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**Governance Working Group,  
Monday, 30th January, 2012**

After discussion, during which Members raised a number of issues in relation to the draft protocol, the Democratic Services Manager undertook to submit a revised protocol to the next meeting of the Working Group and to incorporate any comments received from the Members of the Group.

**Dates of Future Meetings**

The Working Group noted that the Democratic Services Manager would, in conjunction with the Chairman, identify a number of dates over the next six months on which to hold meetings of the Group, details of which would then be circulated to Members.

Chairman



**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Standing Order 55 – Employment of Relatives
<b>Date:</b>	17 February 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ronan Cregan, (Director of Finance and Resources, ext 6083)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Jill Minne, Head of Human Resources, ext 3220

**Relevant Background Information**

To inform the Committee of delegated authority exercised by the Director of Finance and Resources to the employment of individuals who are related to existing officers of the Council.

The Director of Finance and Resources has authorised the appointment of the following individuals who are related to existing officers of the Council in accordance with the authority delegated to him by the Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub-Committee on 27 June 2005. The Committee is asked to note the appointments are authorised by the Director under Standing Order 55.

NAME OF NEW EMPLOYEE	POST APPOINTED TO	RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING OFFICER	NAME OF EXISTING OFFICER	DEPARTMENT
Patricia Brady	Casual Front of House Steward	Mother	Maura Brady	Development
Rory Gilmore	Casual Front of House Steward	Brother	Conor Gilmore	Finance & Resources

**Resource Implications**

Financial

Provision for this post exists within the revenue budgets of the relevant departments.

Human Resources

There are no Human Resource considerations. All appointments have been made on the basis of merit in accordance with the Council's Recruitment Policies.

Asset and Other Implications

There are no other implications.

**Recommendations**

Committee is asked to note the appointments authorised by the Director of Finance and Resources in accordance with Standing Order 55.

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**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Computer Based Administrative and Clerical Skills Testing Tender</b>
<b>Date:</b>	17 February 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance & Resources
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Paul Gribben, Head of ISB

<b>Purpose of Paper</b>	
1.1	To seek permission to procure computer-based administrative and clerical skills testing software.

<b>Relevant Background Information</b>	
2.1	In March 2003 the Policy and Resources Committee approved the introduction of computer-based administrative and clerical skills testing as part of the recruitment and selection process as certain prescriptive qualifications i.e. RSA Stage 11 Word Processing/ Typing had an adverse impact on male applicants wishing to apply for such posts.
2.2	An evaluation found positive improvements in terms of equality issues and high levels of customer satisfaction from council line management in terms of the standard of successful applicants appointed. Public survey results (with applicants) found the computer based approach to be perceived as a much fairer, systematic and objective way to recruit applicants and it was agreed that computer based testing should become an integral part of the Council's recruitment and selection processes for business support clerical posts.
2.3	The approach was endorsed by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and Disability Action.

<b>Key Issues</b>	
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current contract expires in August 2012.</li> <li>• The current call-off list for business support clerk posts expires in December 2012.</li> <li>• The current software (SkillCheck) is not compatible with the council's upgrade to Windows 7.</li> <li>• The system will provide the most efficient means of processing applications.</li> </ul>

<b>Resource Implications</b>	
4.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>Initial market research suggests that a 3 year contract based on the minimum supply of 2,500 tests p.a. (approx 227 – 277 applicants p.a.) would cost between £30k - £54K before customised configuration.</p>
4.2	<p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>A project team from HR and ISB have already been agreed to implement the project.</p>
4.3	<p><u>Asset and other Implications</u></p> <p>Web based system so no additional hardware requirements.</p>

<b>Equality Implications</b>	
5.1	<p>Computer-based administrative and clerical skills' testing was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee in March 2003 to address long-standing gender imbalance issues within the council at this particular level. This approach was endorsed by the Equality Commission for NI and Disability Action and it has proved very successful in terms of increasing the number of male applicants and appointees to this grade.</p>

<b>Recommendations</b>	
6.1	<p>That the council goes out to tender for a computer-based administrative and clerical skills testing software with a contract for 3 years with the option to extend for a further 2 years.</p>

<b>Decision Tracking</b>	
<p>Paul Gribben, Head of ISB October 2012</p>	

&lt;Item No.&gt;



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Application by the Ulster Branch of the Irish Guards Association to have a 'Walk for the Wounded' wreath laying event at the City Hall Cenotaph</b>
<b>Date:</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> February 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	G Millar, Director of Property & Projects
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	George Wright, Head of Facilities Management (Ext 6232/5206)

### Relevant Background Information

A request has been received from the Ulster Branch of the Irish Guards Association to have a 'Walk for the Wounded' wreath-laying event at the City Hall Cenotaph at 2pm on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2012.

Members will be aware that the authority delegated by the Committee to the Director of Property & Projects in respect of the use of the City Hall and grounds specifically excludes the Cenotaph and that consequently all such requests must be placed before the Committee.

The wreath-laying ceremony is the last part of a fundraising event which involves members of the Irish Guards Association walking the 128 miles from Dublin to Belfast from the 26<sup>th</sup> February to 3<sup>rd</sup> March. The purpose behind completing the walk is "to raise funds for Irish Guardsmen injured in the line of duty in recent conflicts such as Iraq, Afghanistan and other conflicts".

On reaching the City Hall the Association wish to have a short service at the Cenotaph. Approximately 50 people will attend. A piper and bugler will be present and there will be standard bearers representing both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland Irish Guards Associations.

### Key Issues

Organisers of the event will be liaising with the PSNI and the Parades Commission about obtaining the necessary approvals for parading to the City Hall.

The proposed event will not impinge on any other activities taking place in the grounds, although there might be a higher security presence than normal.

### Resource Implications

The organisers will be providing their own stewards and no staffing or other resources will be required from the council.

<b>Decision (s) required</b>
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The Committee is recommended to accede to the request from the Ulster Branch of the Irish Guards Association to have a wreath laying event at the City Hall Cenotaph as set out above.
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<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
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None
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<b>Documents Attached</b>
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Appendix 1 – Letter from Irish Guards Association dated 24 January 2012.
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**ULSTER BRANCH**  
**'Walk for the Wounded'**  
**26<sup>th</sup> February – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2012**

24<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Dear Joanne,

Following our telephone conversation last week I would like to provide you with details of our up and coming fundraising event which is a 128 miles walk from Dublin to Belfast 26<sup>th</sup> February – 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2012. The reason behind completing this walk is to raise much needed funds for Irish Guardsmen injured in the line of duty in recent conflicts such as Iraq, Afghanistan and other conflicts. The leg applicable to Belfast City Council is at the end of the event when members from the Irish Guards Association will be walking from Lisburn to Belfast commencing on the morning of Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2012. It is anticipated to be at Belfast City Hall at approximately 2pm (timings subject to change but should be confirmed nearer completion date). I will be informing the PSNI with all relevant details applicable to the whole event from where and when the walkers enter Northern Ireland and so they will be informed of all stages throughout.

On reaching Belfast City Hall it is the intention of the Association to lay a wreath, laying the wreath will be Major (Ret'd) Bert Smith MBE who is also completing the whole 128 miles from Dublin to Belfast. At the short service we also hope to have a Piper on Parade and a Bugler who is also participating in the walk, Royal British Legion Standard Bearer's representing the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Also we intend to have on Parade the Standard Bearer's from the Republic of Ireland and the Ulster Branches of the Irish Guards Association.

The 'Irish Guards Appeal Fund' was set up by Regimental Headquarters Irish Guards, London. As we are affiliated to the Regiment by Association it is our decision to raise money for this appeal fund. The Regiment is aware of this undertaking and are delighted that we are having planned this event for such a worthy cause. Details of this event can be found on <http://www.bmycharity.com/walkforthewounded>

I therefore respectfully ask for consent for the Irish Guards Association to lay a wreath at Belfast City Hall War Memorial on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2012.

If you need to get in touch with me then please contact me on 07746 530313.

Kindest Regards

Frank McCracken

Secretary

Ulster Branch

Irish Guards Association





## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>North Foreshore Giant's Park - Proposed licence to carry out Site Investigation Works</b>
<b>Date:</b>	17 February 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Gerry Millar, Director of Property & Projects, ext 6217
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Susan Quail, North Foreshore Unit Manager, ext 3441

<b>1.</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Members will be aware that a site of some 8.5 acres at the North Foreshore Giant's Park has been allocated to Arc 21 for the development of an organic composting facility. Arc 21 has procured Natural World Products Ltd as its preferred operator and a planning application for the proposed development will be lodged with the Department of the Environment Planning Service later this year. See site location map – Appendix 1.

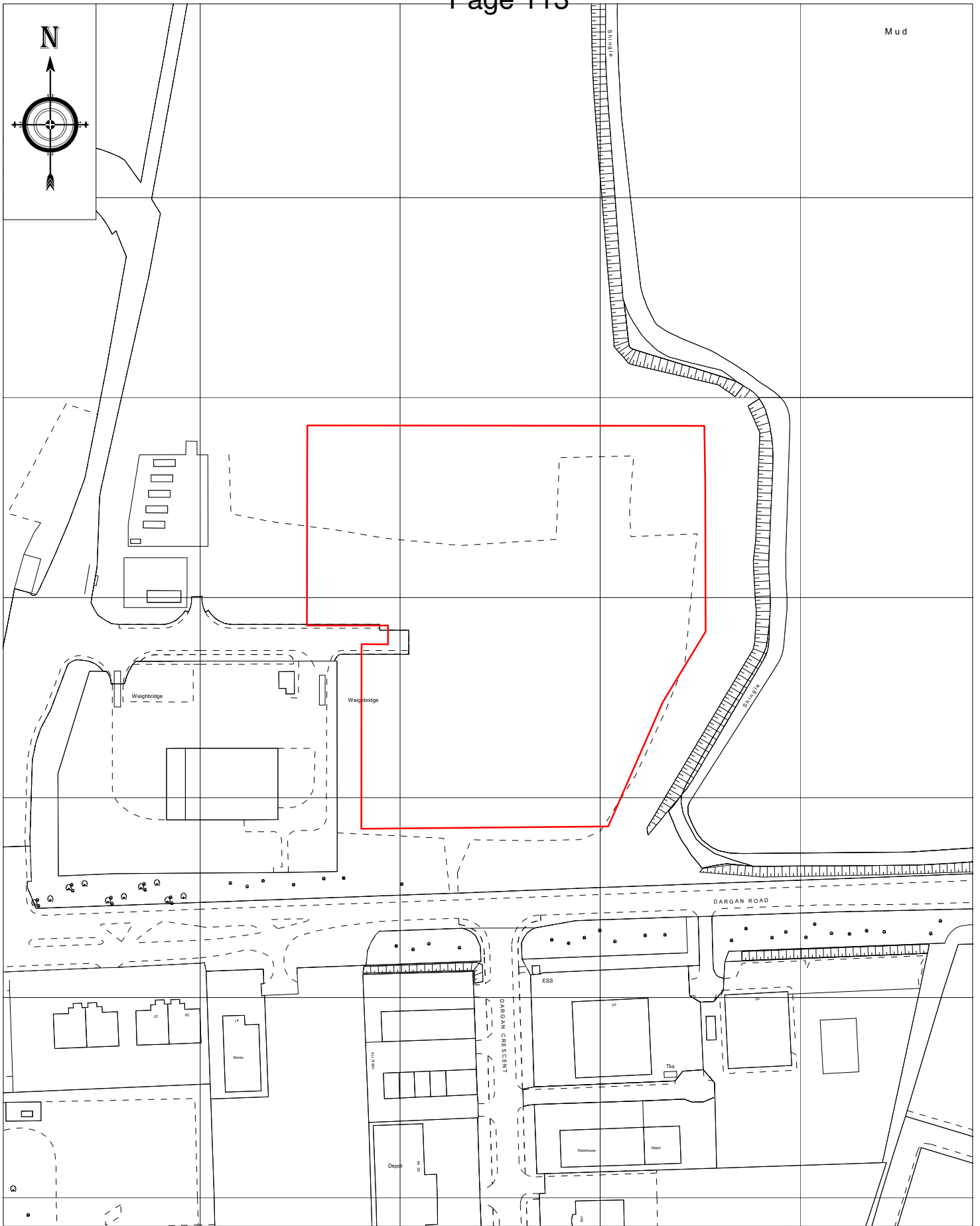
<b>2.</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	The planning application will necessitate site investigation works and Arc 21 has appointed Golder Associates to carry out the works and prepare a report.
2.2	Golder Associates has appointed a sub-contractor, Hanmar Site Investigation Services, who will require access to the site to drill boreholes and dig trial pits. The approximate location of these is shown on the attached site plan.
2.3	The sub-contractor, Hanmar Site Investigation Services will require a licence for Belfast City Council to carry out the works which will commence mid March 2012 and last for approximately 2 weeks. The contractor will be required to provide a methodology statement, a risk assessment report and insurance cover to the satisfaction of the Director of Property and Projects. The licence will also indemnify the Council against any claim which may arise as a result of the licensee's use and occupation of the site.

<b>3.</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>The licence will be for a period of approximately 2 weeks and will restrict the contractor to works in connection with drilling boreholes and digging trial pits. This is considered a reasonable request in furtherance of Arc 21's proposal to develop the site for organic composting. I propose a nominal fee of £1.00.</p> <p><u>Other Implications</u></p> <p>None</p>

<b>4.</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Considerations</b>
4.1	None
<b>5.</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
5.1	It is recommended that Belfast City Council grant a licence to Hanmar Site Investigation Services for the purpose of drilling boreholes and digging trial pits at the North Foreshore Giant's Park. The licence will commence mid March and last for a period of approximately 2 weeks. All works, including reinstatement works, must be agreed with the Director of Property and Projects prior to licence commencement.
<b>6.</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 – site location map



Mud



Based on the Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland map with the permission of the Director & Chief Executive. © Crown Copyright.

MAP REFERRED TO  
BELFAST CITY COUNCIL to HANMAR SITE INVESTIGATION SERVICES  
LAND AT NORTH FORESHORE, BELFAST

Produced by:-

Estates Management Unit,  
Belfast City Council,  
Property and Projects Dept.,  
Adelaide Exchange,  
24-26 Adelaide Street,  
Belfast BT2 8GD.

Date:-

08/02/2012

Scale 1:2500

Area: 8.5 acres

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**MEETING OF THE JOINT GROUP OF THE PARTY LEADERS  
FORUM AND HISTORIC CENTENARIES WORKING GROUP**

**Minutes of the Meeting of Friday, 27th January, 2012**

Members present: Councillor Hendron (Chairman);  
Aldermen Browne, Ekin, Rodgers and Smyth; and  
Councillors Attwood, Hanna, Kyle, Maskey,  
McVeigh and Reynolds.

In attendance: Alderman Stalford;  
Mr. P. McNaney, Chief Executive;  
Mr. C. Quigley, Town Solicitor and  
Assistant Chief Executive;  
Mrs. H. Francey, Good Relations Manager;  
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager;  
Ms. C. Wilson, Project Officer; and  
Ms. S. Robinson, Lord Mayor's Principal Officer.

**Apologies**

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Aldermen Newton. It was noted that Alderman Stalford was attending on Alderman Newton's behalf.

**Equality Impact Assessment Report  
on the Flying of the Union Flag**

The Chief Executive reminded the Working Group that, at its meeting on 13th January, it had agreed to receive at the meeting today a presentation from Ms. Denise Wheatley in relation to the Equality Impact Assessment Report on the Flying of the Union Flag.

It was reported that Ms. Wheatley was in attendance to present the report and she was welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman.

Ms. Wheatley reminded the Working Group that an Equality Impact Assessment had originally been carried out in 2003 and that the current document updated the work which had already been undertaken at that time. The new report focused on the updated opinions of the Equality Commission, the Human Rights Commission and Senior Counsel and also included a reference to a recent survey of visitors to the City Hall.

Ms. Wheatley went on to explain the additional information which had been ascertained from the above-mentioned groups which would impact upon the assessment report.

She explained that the draft report would require to be approved by the Council and then would need to be issued for public consultation. In relation to the assessment of the impact which the current policy may have, it would be necessary to examine the impact in terms of:

- the good and harmonious working environment
- access to services
- promoting good relations

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In relation to the impact on a good and harmonious working environment, the conclusion was that continued operation of the current policy could result in an adverse impact on employees from a Catholic and/or Nationalist background. In this regard, she stated that it should be noted that the Equality Commission was of the view that it was acceptable and appropriate for a local Council to fly the flag at its Civic Headquarters but that this rationale would not extend to every Council location. Additionally, legal opinion suggested that the risk of the policy in respect of the City Hall being successfully challenged in a discrimination claim by an employee of the Council was low but that there was a higher risk of a successful discrimination claim being brought in relation to the display of the flag at other locations.

In relation to the impact of the current policy with regard to access to services, Ms. Wheatley stated that she had concluded that there was no adverse impact. There was no direct evidence that people with a Catholic and/or Nationalist Community background were using the Ulster Hall, the City Hall or its grounds less than people from any other background.

In relation to the impact of the policy on promoting good relations, Ms. Wheatley concluded that the policy may give rise to an adverse impact on residents, visitors and employees with a Catholic and/or Nationalist community background. In addition, legal advice suggested that it might be difficult for a complainant to maintain a successful challenge in law against the Council under Section 75 provided that the policy decision gave proper weight to the desirability of promoting good relations.

Ms. Wheatley stated that, after conducting the research, her suggestions to the Council with regard to the options for the policy on the flying of the Union flag were as follows:

- there should be no flag flown at the Ulster Hall and the Duncrue Complex
- with regard to the City Hall, the following options were offered in descending order of effectiveness -
  - (a) fly the flag on designated flag days only
  - (b) fly the flag on designated days plus specified additional days
  - (c) no flag to be flown or a neutral flag to be flown
  - (d) both the Union flag and the Tricolour to be flown

Ms. Wheatley indicated that these suggestions were her own professional opinion based on the evidence which she had gathered. She acknowledged that others may look at the evidence and draw different results and that there was always a possibility that there was other evidence available which she had not been able to locate and take into consideration.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Wheatley for her informative presentation.

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Following a lengthy discussion on the matter, it was agreed that:

- (a) the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to proceed with the formal consultation process on the Equality Impact Assessment, based upon the best advice available from the Equality Commission and others as to the form which this should take;
- (b) a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Working Group in relation to a number of questions which had been raised in relation to the religious breakdown of the Council workforce and whether a question could be included within the survey of employees asking if staff would be opposed to the removal of the Union flag from the City Hall and other Council properties;
- (c) a further discussion on the Equality Impact Assessment would take place at the meeting to be held on 10th February, to be facilitated by Dr. Duncan Morrow.

#### **Deferral of Business**

Councillor McVeigh indicated that he had not expected to be discussing substantive issues in relation to the Equality Impact Assessment on the flying of the Union flag or on other matters on the agenda without the meeting being facilitated by Dr. Duncan Morrow. Accordingly, he proposed that the remainder of the business be deferred until the Working Group's meeting on 10th February. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Maskey.

On a vote by show of hands two Members voted for the proposal and seven against and it was accordingly declared lost.

#### **Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations**

The Working Group considered the undernoted report which had been prepared by the Democratic Services Manager:

##### **"1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 18 November, agreed that the Historic Centenaries Working Group and the Party Leaders' Forum should meet for an intensive series of meetings to discuss the establishment of a Council Diversity Strategy. A range of issues were referred to that Joint Group, including consideration of the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations in June, 2012. The celebrations will take place over the extended weekend of 2-5 June 2011 with the extra Public Holiday taking place on 5 June.**

- 1.2 The Joint Group, at its meeting on 13 January, 2012, decided that consideration of the Council's involvement in the Diamond Jubilee celebrations should be prioritised due to the limited time available before June for arrangements to be set in place.

2 **Key Issues**

- 2.1 The Council previously agreed to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002 by way of a Civic Reception and the establishment of a small-scale grants scheme for groups wishing to celebrate the Jubilee by way of street parties etc. In 2002 the Council established a budget of £100,000 for the celebrations. Approximately £30,000 of this was used for the Civic Dinner with a significant amount of this being paid to "celebrities" for their attendance at the event.

- 2.2 It is worth noting the current positions of the Government and Buckingham Palace to the Jubilee celebrations:

- 2.3 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) at Whitehall is responsible for co-ordinating the Government led aspects of the celebrations. At the moment, Government planning centres on:

- A series of visits by the Royal Family including Northern Ireland;
- A competition for the grant of city status to one town in the UK;
- A competition for the award of a Lord Mayoralty (or Lord Provostship in Scotland); and
- A commemorative Jubilee medal which is most likely to be focussed on the armed and emergency services.

- 2.4 In addition, the Big Lottery Fund is expected to announce that its People's Millions Programme for 2012 will focus on Diamond Jubilee projects.

- 2.5 Buckingham Palace has advised that the celebrations will be marked by grass roots community celebrations and national set-piece events. These include:

- The Queen will attend the Epsom Derby on Saturday 2 June;

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- A “Big Jubilee Lunch” initiative where communities will be encouraged to celebrate the Jubilee will be organised on Sunday 3 June;
- The Diamond Jubilee Pageant with international cultural displays in Windsor Castle over 10-13 May;
- The Thames River Pageant will take place on 3 June with up to 1,000 boats being led down the Thames by the Royal Barge;
- A televised BBC concert in Buckingham Palace on Monday 4 June will be followed by the Jubilee Beacon Lighting event.
- A service of Thanksgiving at St Paul’s Cathedral will be preceded by a Carriage Procession;
- The lighting of beacons across the UK and the Commonwealth on 4 June.

**2.6** Advice from the Government Department and from the Royal Household is that any celebrations should reflect the current economic climate and that wide-spread public involvement is more important than set-piece or special interest events.

**2.7** At an Assembly level, OFMDFM have advised that there will not be any regional funding for Jubilee events and that organisations planning for such events must ensure that they are self financing.

**2.8** Issues for discussion

The first thing which the Joint Group will have to decide is whether it wishes to recommend that the Council should support the Diamond Jubilee Celebrations. If this recommendation is forthcoming then there are a number of actions which have been proposed and which require the appropriate authority.

**2.9** Tree Planting – Saturday 2 June

The Jubilee Woods project has been chosen by the Queen as a charity and was launched by the Woodland Trust. The aim is to plant 6 million trees across the UK. As part of the Project, 60 ‘Diamond Woods’ will be planted to mark the Jubilee.

Whilst the Council would not have the available land to plant a wood, Andrew Hassard has confirmed that the Parks and Leisure Department could organise the planting of commemorative trees in each part of the city to mark the Jubilee. Small, local community events could be arranged at each of these plantings.

Costs for this could be covered through the Parks and Leisure departmental budget.

**2.10 Tea Dance(s) in City Hall/Ulster Hall – Saturday 2 June**

A Tea Dance could be organised in the City Hall – 500 maximum using both the Great Hall and the Banqueting Hall. This would include limited hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and traybakes. These are always popular with older people. We could organise the event in the Ulster Hall but this is both more costly and has reduced capacity.

Approximate cost - £5,600.

**2.11 “Big Sunday Lunch” Event – Sunday 3 June**

Nationwide “Big Sunday Lunch” events are being encouraged across the United Kingdom for 3 June. If the Council wishes to mark this it could do so by arranging an event at the City Hall. It should be noted that the Continental Market will be in operation in the City Hall grounds over the Bank Holiday weekend which effectively rules out the holding of a Jubilee event in the grounds at the same time. However, it is suggested that an event inside the City Hall could be arranged on the following basis:

- Main focus inside City Hall where all space would be utilized, similar in operation to Titanic Festival Weekend held over Easter period. All function rooms accessible as well as Marble and Rotunda. Rolling type events.
- Nostalgia, ‘trip down memory lane’ themed events mixed with activities for young people.
- Footage of Coronation could be shown on screen in Reception Room or Great Hall. Also possible to provide communications link between a large screen in Great Hall and what BBC showing on screen in grounds of City Hall.
- Stage in Great Hall could include Galaxy Showbands playing 1950’s type music with likes of George Jones/Max Bygraves type compere. Pete Snodden to appeal to younger audience.
- Actors circulating in period costume.
- Historical drama performances.
- Story telling about history of the era.
- Street entertainers, juggling, walking on stilts – internal and in grounds.
- Tours of City Hall to focus on royal portraits and artefacts.
- ‘Crown’ making and other art type workshops for kids.
- \* Option of community type stalls – Fire Service, PSNI, RNLI charitable orgs locally based and in existence longer than 60 years to link in with jubilee theme: key charities identified with Diamond Jubilee.



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In 2002 when the Council was celebrating the Queen's Golden Jubilee, the Council held a major Civic Dinner costing £30,000. Such dinners, no matter how they are shaped in terms of the guest list, are always seen as being selective.

The suggestions set out above would not be as costly as a civic dinner, would allow open admission to any member of the public wishing to attend and would undoubtedly attract greater support at a community level.

Approximate costs - £15,000.

**2.12 Jubilee Beacons – Monday 4 June**

The Council has been requested to take part in a UK-wide Beacon Lighting event on 4 June 2012. Discussions have been held with Events Unit and they advise that this could be arranged using the experience within the Council under the Bonfire Management Programme. The event location would need to be determined but one suggestion might be Cave Hill. The lighting of the Beacon would be co-ordinated with the lighting of other similar beacons in neighbouring Council areas.

The estimated cost of this is £6,000.

**2.13 Small-Scale Grants – Ongoing over the Jubilee Weekend**

Community Services have indicated that they could administer a small grants scheme. We would need to establish the levels of the grant available and whether grants would be open only to groups registered with the Council. Grants will only be paid on receipted expenditure.

A budget provision of £50k has been made in the Council's estimates for potential Diamond Jubilee events. If the above recommendations are accepted this would leave an amount of £23k available for small grants.

Experience of administering small grant schemes shows that the vast majority of grants are below £500 and the total amount paid out tends to be about £10k less than the amount approved. This would allow a potential grant pool of £30k if the committee is minded to approve such a proposal.

As part of the grant-aid, groups would be asked to evaluate the impact of the events and provide a short report to the Council on their programme. This would allow the Council to consider the contribution of these individual events to its stated aim regarding Belfast as a 21st century city which is shared, open and tolerant.

**2.14 Consideration of the Diversity Principles**

At its meeting on 13 January, the Joint Group agreed to systematically test the principles already agreed and their practical application in relation to the programmes related to key anniversaries. These principles, as adopted by Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, are attached at Appendix 1.

However it should be noted that the principles are designed to assess historic centenaries relating to events rather than an anniversary such as the Diamond Jubilee.

It is therefore suggested that the group may wish to consider the issue by referring to the Council's normal criteria for funding cultural events, an overview of which is attached at Appendix 2.

**3 Resource Implications**

**3.1** A budget within the Civic Hospitality code has been allocated for Diamond Jubilee celebrations and set at £50,000 in the draft estimates.

The costs associated with the proposed events are:

Tree Planting	0 (covered by Parks & Leisure)
Tea Dance	£5,600
Big Sunday Lunch	£15,000
Beacons	£6,000
Small-Scale Grants	£30,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£56,600</b>

**4 Equality and Good Relations Implications**

**4.1** The Diamond Jubilee celebrations are being considered in the context of a wider diversity policy for the Council.

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**5 Discussion required**

**5.1 The Joint Group is asked to consider the following:**

- **Are the proposed actions outlined for the Diamond Jubilee programme satisfactory?**
- **Are the Group happy for the funding to be considered under the Council normal funding criteria for cultural events?**
- **Given the time constraints do the Group agree to make an early recommendation to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee?"**

Following a lengthy discussion, the Working Group agreed to the following course of action.

(Councillors McVeigh and Maskey wish to be recorded as abstaining from the decision.)

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to:

- (a) agree that the Council should mark the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty the Queen in June, 2012;
- (b) agree that a series of tree planting events would be held in various parts of the City on Saturday, 2nd June and that local community events be arranged at each of the plantings;
- (c) a tea dance being organised in the Ulster Hall on Saturday, 2nd June;
- (d) the holding of the event in the City Hall on Sunday, 3rd June, as outlined in the report;
- (e) agree to the organisation of the beacon lighting event on Monday, 4th June at the Cave Hill;
- (f) agree that a small scale grants scheme be organised, whereby groups registered with the Council could apply for funding for Jubilee events over the Jubilee weekend. The grants would only be paid on the basis of receipted expenditure and groups applying would be required to abide by criteria to be agreed by the Working Group.

**Operation Banner**

The Working Group noted the contents of a report in relation to the decisions which had been taken previously by the Council regarding a memorial to mark the ending of Operation Banner.

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It was agreed that the provision of a memorial would be considered within the context of the wider discussion on memorabilia which the Group was undertaking in relation to memorabilia in the City Hall generally. Which discussion to be concluded by the end of March in accordance with the agreed work programme.

Noted.

**Work Plan for the Development  
of a Council Diversity Strategy**

The Working Group approved the undernoted Work Plan for the ongoing discussions in relation to the development of a Council Diversity Strategy.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Agenda items</b>
27 January	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presentation of draft EQIA report on the flying of the Union Flag</li> <li>2. Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations</li> <li>3. A report on a suitable means for the Council to mark the ending of "Operation Banner".</li> <li>4. Work plan for Joint Group</li> </ol>
10 February	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Discussion on EQIA reports x 2 and timescale to proceed – Flags and Memorabilia, including consultation process</li> </ol>
24 February	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Use of the Irish language</li> <li>7. Use of the Ulster-Scots language</li> <li>8. Use of minority ethnic languages</li> </ol>
9 March	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Expressions of distinctiveness within local areas and neighbourhoods (i.e. including public art, signage and symbolism)</li> <li>10. How the Council deals with homecoming parades</li> <li>11. Update report on the celebration of the Decade of Centenaries</li> </ol>
23 March	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Discussion on final report to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee</li> </ol>

**Centenary of the Signing of the Solemn League and Covenant**

The Chief Executive drew Members' attention to two letters which had been received recently from the County Grand Lodge of Belfast concerning that organisation's plans to celebrate the centenary of the Signing of the Solemn League and Covenant in 2012. A report on these matters would be prepared for the Working Group's consideration.

Noted.

Chairman



**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resource Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Political Nominations on the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP) and the Four District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships (DPCSPs)</b>
<b>Date:</b>	Friday, 17th February, 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Suzanne Wylie, Director of Health and Environmental Services, Ext. 3260
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Siobhan Toland, Head of Environmental Health, Ext. 3281

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	The Council is required, under Part 3 of the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, to establish the Belfast PCSP and the four DPCSPs. The Council must, under this legislation, make the political appointments, so far as is practicable, to reflect the strength of the Parties on the Council.
1.2	The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed at its meeting held on 18th November, 2011 to appoint a PCSP consisting of nineteen Members (10 political and 9 independent); and to appoint the Political Members to the four DPCSPs (24 in total) based on the Council's system of proportionality.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>												
2.1	<p>The allocation of the 10 political places on the main PCSP is as follows:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Sinn Fein Party</td> <td align="right">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Democratic Unionist Party</td> <td align="right">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social Democratic &amp; Labour Party</td> <td align="right">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alliance Party</td> <td align="right">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ulster Unionist Party</td> <td align="right">1</td> </tr> </table>	Sinn Fein Party	3	Democratic Unionist Party	3	Social Democratic & Labour Party	2	Alliance Party	1	Ulster Unionist Party	1		
Sinn Fein Party	3												
Democratic Unionist Party	3												
Social Democratic & Labour Party	2												
Alliance Party	1												
Ulster Unionist Party	1												
2.2	<p>The breakdown of the total number of political places amongst the Parties on the four DPCSPs is:</p> <table> <tr> <td>Sinn Féin</td> <td align="right">8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Democratic Unionist Party</td> <td align="right">7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Social, Democratic and Labour Party</td> <td align="right">4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Alliance</td> <td align="right">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ulster Unionist Party</td> <td align="right">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Progressive Unionist Party</td> <td align="right">1</td> </tr> </table>	Sinn Féin	8	Democratic Unionist Party	7	Social, Democratic and Labour Party	4	Alliance	3	Ulster Unionist Party	1	Progressive Unionist Party	1
Sinn Féin	8												
Democratic Unionist Party	7												
Social, Democratic and Labour Party	4												
Alliance	3												
Ulster Unionist Party	1												
Progressive Unionist Party	1												

2.3	<p>A meeting was held with the Party leaders on 6th January and the following political composition of the four DPCSPs was agreed using a d'Hondt based table of choices:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="252 271 1398 510"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="252 271 539 309">North</th> <th data-bbox="539 271 826 309">South</th> <th data-bbox="826 271 1114 309">East</th> <th data-bbox="1114 271 1398 309">West</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="252 309 539 510">2 SF 2 DUP 1 SDLP 1 UUP</td> <td data-bbox="539 309 826 510">2 SF 2 DUP 1 SDLP 1 ALL</td> <td data-bbox="826 309 1114 510">2 SF 2 DUP 1 SDLP 1 ALL</td> <td data-bbox="1114 309 1398 510">2 SF 1 DUP 1 SDLP 1 ALL 1 PUP</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	North	South	East	West	2 SF 2 DUP 1 SDLP 1 UUP	2 SF 2 DUP 1 SDLP 1 ALL	2 SF 2 DUP 1 SDLP 1 ALL	2 SF 1 DUP 1 SDLP 1 ALL 1 PUP
North	South	East	West						
2 SF 2 DUP 1 SDLP 1 UUP	2 SF 2 DUP 1 SDLP 1 ALL	2 SF 2 DUP 1 SDLP 1 ALL	2 SF 1 DUP 1 SDLP 1 ALL 1 PUP						
2.4	<p>The individual Party nominations for the Belfast PCSP and the four DPCSPs have now been received and a list is provided at Appendix 1 along with the agreed allocation of Chairmanships of the four DPCSPs. The Council is required under the legislation to formally appoint the political Members to the PCSP and to the four DPCSPs.</p>								

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	None

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Implications</b>
	None

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	The Committee is recommended to approve the appointment of the Political Members to the Principal Belfast PCSP and its four DPCSPs as set out in Appendix 1.

<b>6</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	<p>PCSP – Policing and Community Safety Partnership  DPCSP – District Policing and Community Safety Partnership</p>

<b>7</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	<p>Suzanne Wylie, Director of Health and Environmental Services  24th March, 2012</p>

<b>Documents Attached</b>	
Appendix 1	Political Nominations and the appointment of Chairmen to the Principal Belfast PCSP and its four DPCSPs

**Appendix 1****Nominations to the Four District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships****24 Places to be Nominated – 16 as of Right, 8 to be Allocated Using D'hondt****North Belfast DPCSP – 6 Places**

Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr M. E. Campbell
Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr Maskey
Democratic Unionist Party	-	Cllr McKee (Chairman)
Democratic Unionist Party	-	Cllr Thompson
Social Democratic and Labour Party	-	Cllr Convery
Ulster Unionist Party	-	Ald Browne

**South Belfast DPCSP – 6 Places**

Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr Hargey
Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr O Muilleoir
Democratic Unionist Party	-	Cllr Patterson
Democratic Unionist Party	-	Ald Stalford
Social Democratic and Labour Party	-	Cllr Mullan
Alliance Party	-	Ald Ekin (Chairman)

**East Belfast DPCSP – 6 Places**

Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr Hargey
Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr O Donnghaile
Democratic Unionist Party	-	Cllr A Newton
Democratic Unionist Party	-	Cllr Robinson
Social Democratic and Labour Party	-	Cllr Hanna (Chairman)
Alliance Party	-	Cllr Jones

**West Belfast DPCSP – 6 Places**

Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr Corr
Sinn Fein Party	-	Cllr Garrett (Chairman)
Democratic Unionist Party	-	Cllr Kingston
Social Democratic and Labour Party	-	Cllr Attwood
Alliance Party	-	Cllr Hendron
Progressive Unionist Party	-	Ald Smyth

**Nominations to the Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership**

**10 Places Available**

**Sinn Fein Party (3 Places – 2 to be Nominated Plus 1 Chairman of DPCSP)**

- Chairman of DPCSP – Cllr Garrett
- Cllr McVeigh (Chairman)
- Cllr Austin

**Democratic Unionist Party (3 Places – 2 to be Nominated Plus 1 Chairman of DPCSP)**

- Chairman of DPCSP – Cllr McKee
- Cllr Hussey
- Cllr Spence

**Social Democratic & Labour Party (2 Places – 1 to be Nominated Plus 1 Chairman of DPCSP)**

- Chairman of DPCSP – Cllr Hanna
- Cllr Keenan

**Alliance Party (1 Place – 0 to be Nominated Plus 1 Chairman of DPCSP)**

- Chairman of DPCSP – Ald Ekin

**Ulster Unionist Party (1 Place – 1 to be Nominated)**

- Ald Rodgers



**Allocation of Chairmanships of the Four District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships****Year 1**

North Belfast Sub-Group	-	DUP
South Belfast Sub-Group	-	ALL
East Belfast Sub-Group	-	SDLP
West Belfast Sub-Group	-	SF

**Year 2**

North Belfast Sub-Group	-	SDLP
South Belfast Sub-Group	-	SF
East Belfast Sub-Group	-	DUP
West Belfast Sub-Group	-	ALL

**Year 3**

North Belfast Sub-Group	-	SF
South Belfast Sub-Group	-	SDLP
East Belfast Sub-Group	-	ALL
West Belfast Sub-Group	-	DUP

**Year 4**

North Belfast Sub-Group	-	SF
South Belfast Sub-Group	-	DUP
East Belfast Sub-Group	-	SF
West Belfast Sub-Group	-	SDLP

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**Belfast City Council**

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Nomination to the Northern Ireland Policing Board of Independent Members</b>
<b>Date:</b>	17th February, 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Suzanne Wylie, Director of Health and Environment Services, Ext. 3260
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Siobhan Toland, Head of Environmental Health, Ext. 3281

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	The Council is required, under Part 3 of the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 to establish the Belfast PCSP and the four DPCSPs. The legislation requires that a Public Appointments process is undertaken in order to appoint the Independent Members to the Partnership and, in accordance with the Statutory Code of Practice on the Appointment of Independent Members to the PCSPs/DPCSPs, the Council has appointed a short-listing and interviewing panel for the purpose of determining which of the independent applicants are deemed to be suitable for appointment.
1.2	The Statutory Code, at paragraph 64, requires the Council to formally nominate to the NIPB those deemed to be suitable for appointment by the interview panel.
1.3	The interviewing panel will commence its work on 17th February with the completion of interviews on 9th March. This would result in the list of suitable candidates being tabled at the Strategic Policy and Resource Committee meeting on 23rd March and approved and adopted by Council at its meeting on 2nd April.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	Bearing in mind the tight timescales that the NIPB is working to in relation to this appointment process, the NIPB's Interim Chief Executive has written to all Council Chief Executives requesting that, providing that the appropriate Council agreement can be secured, Councils try to expedite this element of the process as quickly as practicable.
2.2	To ensure that the NIPB's final appointment panels can proceed with the appointment stage without undue delay, it is suggested that authority is delegated to the Strategic Policy and Resource Committee to approve at its meeting on 23rd March, on behalf of the Council, the list of suitable candidates.

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
	None

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Implications</b>
	None

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	That the Council be recommended to delegate authority to the Strategic Policy and Resource Committee to approve, on behalf of the Council, the list of suitable candidates for consideration by the NIPB as Independent Members of the Belfast PCSP/DPCSPs.

<b>6</b>	<b>Key to Abbreviations</b>
	PCSP – Policing and Community Safety Partnership DPCSP – District Policing and Community Safety Partnership NIPB – Northern Ireland Policing Board

<b>7</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	Suzanne Wylie, Director of Health and Environmental Services  24th March, 2012