

Public Document Pack

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

18th April, 2014

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room (Room G05), City Hall on Friday, 25th April, 2014 at 10.00 am, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

2. Democratic Services and Governance
 - (g) Request for the Use of the City Hall – Friends of the Irish Guards (Pages 1 - 2)
3. Local Government Reform
 - (b) Community Planning - Procurement of Support (Pages 3 - 6)
6. Human Resources
 - (c) Contractor to undertake Interim Manager Director duties at the Waterfront Hall (Pages 7 - 12)
 - (d) Organisational Development and Design (Pages 13 - 18)
8. Good Relations and Equality
 - (a) Minutes of Meeting of Joint Group of Part Group Leaders and Historic Centenaries Working Group (Pages 19 - 20)

10. Investment Programme

- (d) Leisure Transformation Programme (Pages 21 - 108)

Minutes of meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 19th October, 2012

- (f) Future City Conference – Planning for Growth (Pages 109 - 112)

Minutes of meeting of the Development Committee of 2nd and 16th October, 2012

- (g) Belfast Bursary Fund – proposed amendments to eligibility criteria (Pages 113 - 118)

Minutes of meeting of the Health and Environmental Services Committee of 3rd October, 2012



Belfast City Council

Report to	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Request for the Use of the City Hall – Friends of the Irish Guards
Date:	25th April, 2014
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (Ext 6314)

1	Relevant Background Information
	A request has been received by the Friends of the Irish Guards organisation seeking the use of the City Hall on 31st October, 2014.

2	Key Issues
	<p>The organising committee requesting the use of the City Hall wish to use this opportunity to promote the 1st Battalion Irish Guards within the local community.</p> <p>The Friend of the Irish Guards, who were formed in April 1900, is requesting the use of City Hall to host a Gala Ball to commemorate the role of the Irish Guards from WW 1 to the present day. They plan to invite dignitaries from central and local government as well as senior ranking army officers from London.</p> <p>The organisers wish to celebrate the achievements of the many people in the Regiment that hailed from Belfast and to mark the charitable work it has been involved with in schools, hospitals and nursing homes.</p> <p>Belfast City Council hosted a similar type Gala Ball in 2012 to bid farewell to the Irish Guards who were deployed to Afghanistan.</p> <p>Normally, any request for an event which references a major centenary such as the commencement of World War I would be referred in the first instance for consideration by the Joint Group of the Party Leaders' Forum and the Historic Centenaries Working Group. However, it is unlikely that a meeting of that Working Group will take place prior to August and the proposed event would require a significant lead-in time for organising. Accordingly, the Committee is requested to consider the application.</p>

	The proposed event would appear to meet the criteria established by Committee for the granting of the use of the City Hall.
--	---

3	Resource Implications
	None. The organisers are simply requesting the use of the City Hall for the event and do not require the provision of any Civic Hospitality.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
	None associated with this report.

5	Recommendations
	The Committee is recommended to grant the use of the City Hall on 31st October for the Gala Ball for the Friends of the Irish Guards organisation.

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Community Planning – procurement update
Date:	25 th April 2014
Reporting Officer:	Suzanne Wylie, Director of Health and Environmental Services
Contact Officer:	Sharon McNicholl, Corporate Planning and Policy Manager
1.0 Purpose	
1.1	To update Members on the ongoing preparations for community planning and to seek approval to procure external expertise to support the development of the community planning framework and vision for Belfast.
2.0 Background	
2.1	In November 2013, SP&R agreed an outline budget to support Local Government Reform (LGR), which included setting aside resources for community planning in the form of expertise and practitioner support in designing of process, delivery structures and approach to community planning at a city, thematic and local area level; and to support capacity building and awareness.
2.2	Earlier this year, STC (15 Jan 2014) and SP&R (2014) agreed a work programme designed to ensure the council was prepared for the duty of community planning. The programme has four key strands: <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Start to develop the city vision and long-term objectivesii. Develop an approach to community planning at the local leveliii. Develop the right governance, structures and accountability frameworksiv. Ensure effective communications and build capacity to support community planning
2.3	Work has commenced on aligning this programme to other relevant Local Government Reform related work such as planning and regeneration as well as concurrent work on the strategic development of the city centre. STC has agreed a detailed monitoring process for all LGR work which will also provide a monitoring framework for the development of community planning.
2.4	On the 9 th April, the STC agreed the inclusion of tenders within its expenditure controls to support community planning; namely (i) the development of the city vision and community planning outcomes framework for Belfast; and (ii) the development of local area community planning.
2.5	This report sets out more detail regarding the proposed expenditure and seeks authorisation from SP&R to commence the procurement process for securing the external support.
3.0 Key Issues	
<i>City Vision and Community Planning Outcomes Framework for Belfast</i>	
3.1	Members have agreed that creating an evidence-based and shared vision for Belfast that is aligned to the achievement of agreed outcomes is essential to effective community planning. It will also set an overarching framework in which to develop and support neighbourhood development and will form the central plank for community planning in the longer term. To

help us develop and secure commitment we are proposing to commission external support, or a consortium of support, that will enable us to develop and facilitate a robust and collaborative process for developing and agreeing:

- a. the city vision
- b. shared outcomes
- c. performance monitoring process

This will be a Member-led process which will include community planning partners and other stakeholders as well as extensive training and capacity building on outcomes based accountability.

3.2 Furthermore, the role of the external support contract will be to advise and help council develop:

- 1) A common agenda (short term) and shared vision for Belfast (long term)
- 2) A draft high level outcome based framework and vision for Belfast – for presentation to new council / Community Planning Partnership during 2015.
- 3) An aligned performance framework that takes account of regional requirements, council corporate planning and performance management and those of our community planning partners i.e. shared accountability mechanisms
- 4) Information to support effective governance and delivery structures both at city level and within Council.

3.3 Other key requirements will be to ensure

- Effective engagement with stakeholders across the city;
- Alignment and complimentary to the emerging statutory guidance requirements;
- Innovation, sustainability and deliverability;
- Learning to inform partnership building and future partnership governance structures;
- Impact is felt on the ground in local communities;
- Negotiation with central government.

3.4 The work to develop the vision and outcomes for the city will also help inform and shape the Local Development Plan, i.e. the spatial plan for the city, and will ensure that the statement of community involvement takes account of community planning. It will also help ensure the impact of the city centre strategy is maximised across the city, and will help direct and inform the wider strategic context for local area planning. The previously agreed community planning budget will therefore be used to buy in expertise and experience to ensure that the community planning process creates not only an outcomes led strategic plan for Belfast but also supports the effective use of partnerships, resources, investment and regeneration powers to drive forward city growth and address issues of deprivation and inequality.

Local Area Community Planning

3.5 The second key strand of work relates to the practical outworking of community planning at a local or neighbourhood level. Practice elsewhere (particularly in Scotland, Wales and in English cities such as Manchester) provides substantial evidence that suggests we need to consider the implications of community planning at the local level and how to integrate local and city community planning objectives. At the local level there is often a strong relationship between community planning and neighbourhood regeneration (physical, social and economic). Community planning, community development, spatial planning and regeneration are all mutually reinforcing processes and new functions for these are passing to us from

Government.

3.6 As with the city-wide vision, Members have agreed that specialist external expertise is procured to support this work which will be led by Members through their Area Working Groups the strands of work will include:

- Strategic support and capacity building for Members and partners;
- Local area geographies
- Local governance and partnership structures
- Framework for developing and agreeing local area planning and outcomes
- Developing shared service planning and coordination at local level
- Developing an agreed approach and framework for local area interventions.

4.0 Resource Implications

6.1 The development costs for community planning, including the procurement processes outlined above, have been factored into the budget estimates for 2014/15 and agreed through STC and Council.

5.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

7.1 None at present.

6.0 Recommendations

8.1 Members are asked to agree that a tender process is now undertaken to procure the specialist support required to develop the Council's community planning processes at a city and local area level in line with previous council decisions.

7.0 Documents attached

None.

This page is intentionally left blank



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	Contractor to undertake interim operations manager duties at Waterfront Hall
Date:	25 April 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development , Ext 3509
Contact Officers:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, Ext 3509

1.0	Purpose of report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to request permission to deviate from Standing Orders and to accede to Standing Order 62a exceptions in relation to contracts by direction of the Council acting on a recommendation of a Chief Officer that the exception is justified in special circumstances. (Attached at Appendix 1)
2.0	Background
2.1	Members will be aware that the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Investment recently announced funding support from the Northern Ireland Tourism Board (NITB) and the ERDF Programme of £18.5m towards the development of new conference and exhibition facilities at the Belfast Waterfront Hall. The Council is now in receipt of a Letter of Offer from NITB, which sets out a series of conditions associated with the projected economic benefits set out in the Economic Appraisal submitted by the Council in its application for the above funding.
2.2	The Director of Development previously reported to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it was anticipated that the Letter of Offer would require the Council to fully examine a range of operating models and would require the Council to deploy an operating model which provided the maximum economic return to the City.
2.3	At its meeting on 24 th August, 2012 the Committee agreed that the Director conduct a soft market testing exercise to establish any potential private sector interest. Four companies subsequently responded to this exercise expressing an interest in operating the new facility.
2.4	In parallel with this, a consultancy firm, Excellence in Work, were engaged to provide recommendations on the future operational structures should the operation ultimately remain in-house. This work will be completed by the end of April 2015 and a report will be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee on this work.
2.5	Given the uncertainty around future funding and the future operational model the Development Committee agreed to the recruitment of an Interim Head of Waterfront Hall to oversee operations during any interim operational period. Despite 2 recruitment exercises it has not been possible to appoint a suitable candidate with the necessary commercial experience to fill the post.

3.0	Key Issues
3.1	As stated above, the Council is now in receipt of the NITB's Letter of Offer. The conditions therein require the Council to "fully test a range of operating options for the Project to ensure the operating model deployed gives the greatest return to the economy in line with the targets set out in the Business Case." These options range from enhancing the current operating model through to the outsourcing of the operator to an established private sector operator.
3.2	In addition the Council is required to "provide a transition plan acceptable to NITB outlining the operational and management arrangements within the transitional period.
3.3	The project plan projects the new facilities being open for business in May 2016. It is important that we immediately develop a sales strategy to build on the business already secured for 2016 and in future years.
3.4	Successful achievement of the sales targets is essential to meet the targets set out in the business case, but is also central to our objective of reducing the operating deficit at the Waterfront Hall.
3.5	Geoff Fenlon, the principal consultant from Excellence in Work, has a proven track record in successfully delivering and managing large-scale conference facilities including the International Conference Centre in Birmingham, the Edinburgh International Convention Centre and the Dublin Convention Centre. In developing the internal operating model he has secured the co-operation and respect of both staff and the trade unions.
3.6	It is recommended that in the absence of a Managing Director that the Council enter into a contract with Excellence in Work to procure Geoff Fenlon's services to act as Interim Head of the Waterfront Hall for a period of 4 months during which time he will support the Director of Development develop the necessary sales strategy, support the development of the options appraisal and the development of the transition plan as set out in the condition of the Letter of Offer from NITB. He would also assist the Waterfront Team and Project Team prepare operational plans to facilitate the ongoing business of the Waterfront whilst construction takes place.
3.7	Support will also be given to the Director of Development and the Assistant Chief Executive in preparing job descriptions and person specifications for a permanent Managing Director for the new facility and on other changes to the job description, as may be required to meet the future business needs of the Conference and Exhibition Centre.
3.8	It is believed that this exception from the Standing Orders is justified in the circumstances, given that the recruitment exercise has failed twice. Given the time constraints, it would not be possible to conduct a procurement exercise for this service.

4.0	Resource Implications
Human	
The Director of Development and the Assistant Chief Executive will work closely with the appointed contractor over a period of 4 months from 1 st May, 2015.	
Finance	
The expected costs associated with undertaking this type of project are in the region of £30K and will be met from the Development Department's revenue budget. This will extend the commission of Excellence in Work to a total budget of £60K.	

5.0	Equality Implications
An Equality Impact Assessment in relation to this appointment of the contractor.	
6.0	Recommendations
Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and –	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to accede to Standing Order 62, (a) exceptions in relation to contracts by direction of the Council acting on a recommendation of a Chief Officer that the exception is justified in special circumstances for the appointment of the Contractor Excellence in Work. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to the development of an options appraisal for the operation of the Waterfront Hall and a transition plan, as required by the Letter of Offer from NITB. 	
7.0	Appendix
Appendix 1 – Standing Order 62a	
8.0	Decision Tracking
The Director of Development will be responsible for the continued progress of this appointment	

This page is intentionally left blank

EXCEPTIONS

62 Exceptions from Standing Orders relating to contracts can only be allowed:-

- (a) by direction of the Council acting on a recommendation of a Chief Officer that the exception is justified in special circumstances; or
- (b) by a Chief Officer certifying that there is an extreme urgency, and provided that he/she has first consulted the Chairman of the appropriate Committee and the Director of Corporate Services, and that the action is subsequently reported to the next meeting of that Committee;
- (c) in the case of purchases or sales by auction or at public fairs or markets, or from or to a Government Department, Local Authority or other public body.

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

**Minutes of the Joint Group of the Party Leaders' Forum
and Historic Centenaries Working Group**

Friday, 4th April, 2014

Present:	Councillor Hendron (Chairman) Aldermen Ekin and Rodgers; Councillors Attwood, McVeigh and Reynolds.
In attendance:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive; Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive (Designate); Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure; Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager and Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.
Agenda Item 1 a	Apologies
	Apologies were reported Alderman Browne and Councillors Hanna and Hutchinson.
Agenda Item 2	Minutes
	The minutes of the previous meeting held on 29th November were agreed.
Agenda Item 3	Declarations of Interest
3.1	No declarations of interest were reported.
Agenda item 4	WWI Centenaries Event
4.1	The Working Group was advised that a request had been received from Jeffrey Donaldson MP and also Chair of the Northern Ireland WW1 Centenary Committee, to hold a reception at Belfast City Hall and a candlelight vigil at the Cenotaph on the evening of Monday 4 th August, 2014 to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War.
4.2	The twin themes that have been adopted in Northern Ireland for the centenary commemorations were 'Remembrance and Reconciliation.'
4.3	The evening of Monday, 4th August would begin with a special Service of Remembrance at St Anne's Cathedral, commencing at 7.00pm. Following that service the Centenary Committee have requested that a reception be hosted by the Council in the City Hall, beginning around 9.00pm.
4.4	At approximately 10.15pm guests would then join the public at the

	Cenotaph for a short act of remembrance and candlelight vigil, leading up to 11.00pm, the time that war was declared. The vigil in Belfast would take place at the same time as similar events across the UK.
4.5	Having regard to the fact that soldiers from all over the island of Ireland fought in the war, the committee would issue invitations to the Taoiseach and Tániste, representing the Republic of Ireland. The First and Deputy First Ministers of Northern Ireland, the Secretary of State and other special guests would also be invited to attend.
4.6	The Working Group agreed to commend the request to provide hospitality on Monday 4th August to mark the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.
Agenda Item 5	Request for the Use of the Ballymacarrett Walkway
5.1	The Director of Parks and Leisure advised that request had been received from the Orangefield Community Association seeking permission for the use of the car park at Ballymacarrett Walkway as and assembly point for a centenary march on 9 th May, 2014
5.2	In addition, the organisation was requesting permission to erect two historic plaques in Orangefield Park and King George V Playing Fields.
5.3	The Group agreed that officers undertake discussions with the organisation to ascertain further details and that a report in the matter be submitted to the Parks and Leisure Committee, if necessary.
Agenda Item 6	Waste Collections at Twaddell Avenue protest site
6.1	The Chief Executive (Designate) provided the Members with an update in relation to waste collections at the the Twaddell Avenue protest site.
6.2	After discussion, the Group noted the information which had been provided and agreed that officers continue to undertake discussion with the appropriate parties.



Belfast City Council

RESTRICTED

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Leisure Transformation Programme – Progress update Overview paper
Date:	25 April 2014
Reporting Officers:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources Jill Minne, Assistant Chief Executive and Head of Human Resources
Contact Officers:	Caroline Wilson, Neighbourhood and Development Manager Colin Campbell, Principal Solicitor

1.0	Relevant background information
1.1	<p>At its meeting in February, the Committee agreed that its preferred business model was the Non Profit Distributing Organisation (also referred to as the leisure Trust). Authority was also granted to continue consultation with staff and the trade unions on the preferred business model and in particular a series of protections for transferring staff and the affordability of these options. It was also agreed by Committee that an Equality and Best Value consultation would be prepared for consideration.</p> <p>This ‘in principle’ decision was ratified by Council at its meeting in March. At the same meeting, Council also decided to give the trade unions another six weeks to develop an in-house option, while preparatory work continues for the leisure Trust model.</p>

2.	Key issues
2.1	<p>Purpose and structure of papers</p> <p>There are a range of issues that need to be presented for Committee’s consideration, in advance of formally initiating discussions on the business planning and the partnership agreements with the leisure Trust. The attached papers set out a series of issues for Committee’s consideration. The issue papers are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 1: Leisure Trust update • Paper 2: Trade Union engagement update including APSE in-house model report • Paper 3: Outcomes and performance management

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper 4: Legal, financial equality assurances <p>These series of papers will inform the development of the partnership agreement, and all of the associated agreements in relation to funding, staff transfer, leasing and management. These will subsequently be reviewed independently for due diligence purposes, prior to presentation to Committee in August/September.</p>
<p>2.2</p>	<p>LTP: Strategic Principles</p> <p>In January 2013, Committee agreed a series of guiding principles for the LTP. In discussion with Members, these have been refined over the last 12 months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5* service for 3* prices – an affordable and innovative ‘best in class’ customer and community-focussed service • Focus on health and well-being outcomes: work with others to improve the health of the population by enabling more people to be more active, more often • More than sport: contribute to wider social, environmental and economic regeneration outcomes, linked to the Council’s emerging community plan • Value for money: maximise efficiency and income generation opportunities, reducing dependency on Council rate-based funding • Democratically accountable: working in partnership with the Council to deliver public benefit and accountable to elected Members to deliver real change in local neighbourhoods • Well-connected: well-run, well used leisure facilities which are fit for purpose, attractive and welcoming, with proactive community outreach and marketing • People: staff who are well-trained, customer-focussed and participate in the growth of the business • Balanced investment: a hierarchy of facilities and services which are welcoming and safe, promoting access for all within each quarter of the city • Partnership: flexible to maximise strategic opportunities in the city, working collaboratively. <p>It is recommended that these refined principles are used as parameters to inform the development of the partnership agreement and business plan with the Trust.</p>
<p>2.3</p>	<p>Capital programme</p> <p>Phase I</p> <p>Members will be aware that the SP&R Committee, at its meeting in June 2013, agreed a £105million capital expenditure affordability limit for the LTP. Members also agreed that as part of the programme that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there will be balanced investment across the city and that each city quarter will have wet, dry, health and fitness facilities that cater for a diversity of activity • there will be no rates increase to support the financing of the programme and

revenue savings will form a key element of the financing budget

- the programme will be phased over a 10 year period.

Members are aware that the plans for the new assets under phase 1 of the Leisure Transformation Programme are at an advanced stage with work already commencing on site at Girdwood, designs being finalised for Olympia and the design brief in development for Andersonstown. A separate report on the status of these projects is also on the agenda for consideration by Committee today.

Next phases of capital development

The anticipated savings from the transformed business model will be integrated into any funding agreement with the Trust. This will therefore contractually guarantee delivery of the savings by April 2016. Based on previous work undertaken by Deloitte in its options appraisal report, **a reduction of £2m in the Council funding for 2016/17 will be included in the funding agreement with the Trust, thereby releasing approx £23.50m as required by the capital financing strategy.**

Work will soon need to start to develop Phase II of the programme. As with all capital projects and in line with the projects progressing under Phase I, these will be subject to the council's agreed capital stage approval process where decisions on which projects progress are taken by SP&R.

Members are asked to note that consultation will be a key part of the development of these new facilities and that there will be further work with Members via the AWGs and party group briefings and with the public and other stakeholders. In discussion with Members, it has been noted that consideration is given to the potential to invest in a city centre facility, to increase the visibility of the Trust, as well as providing an invaluable revenue-generator to subsidise work in local neighbourhoods.

It is envisaged that further detail on these discussions, including seeking authority to move these projects to the next Stage (Stage 2) will be brought to Committee in the late summer/early Autumn.

It is anticipated that decisions on Phase III will be taken subsequent to that.

Members are asked to note that the Trust has the potential to avail of alternative sources of funding for capital projects including Sport NI funding which the Council cannot access.

Proposed upgrade/refurbishment programme

While phases II and III are being developed, it is suggested that consideration may be given to an uplift/refurbishment programme at existing centres, including those transferring (e.g. Robinson Centre) in order to ensure their continued usage, positive customer experience and that the buildings remain at the required standards for health and safety. This may include essential M&E work, the installation of access controls, the refurbishment of reception areas, etc. and any such programme will be developed in consultation with the Trust and Members and will be subject to Committee's agreement. Conditions surveys have just been initiated and a future report will be brought back to

	Committee with the appropriate business case for consideration.																		
2.4	<p>Human resources implications</p> <p>Members will note that there are considerable number of significant human resources issues in relation to the transfer of staff, many of which are dealt with in the attached paper on TU engagement.</p> <p>Committee will recall that it approved a TU request to introduce a voluntary redundancy process in October 2013. This process is ongoing and 134 expressions of interest have been received. All staff who have expressed an interest in voluntary redundancy have now received details of their financial information and may now formally apply for voluntary redundancy (before 30 April 2014). It is anticipated that officers will be in a position to put a proposal to Committee regarding voluntary redundancies in August, based on an affordability and analysis of relevant criteria.</p>																		
2.5	<p>Next steps</p> <p>There is considerable work to be undertaken over the next 8 months to mobilise the decision to transfer the leisure service to a trust operation. As an overview, this includes:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>May 14</td> <td>Formal establishment of Trust and preliminary governance arrangements</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 14</td> <td>Conditions surveys</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July 14</td> <td>Business planning and drafting agreements – management; funding; outcomes specification; leasing; transfer; etc. Staff/TU, equality and Best Value consultations</td> </tr> <tr> <td>August 14</td> <td>Due diligence testing – financial and legal assurance process</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sept 14</td> <td>Committee/Council decision to transfer service</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oct 14</td> <td>Pre-transfer planning initiated:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nov 14</td> <td>– Staff training and development</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dec 14</td> <td>– Marketing planning and community outreach – Infrastructure upgrade e.g. reception ‘look and feel’; online and IT systems; gym equipment; performance reporting systems – Implementation of customer ‘quick wins’ e.g. children’s free swimming sessions and local employability initiatives</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1 Jan 15</td> <td>Transfer of service and implementation of agreed business plan Commence performance monitoring</td> </tr> </table> <p>This will be supported by the resources already agreed by SP&R in August 2013.</p> <p>Throughout this period, there will be intensive consultation and engagement with staff and trade union representatives.</p>	May 14	Formal establishment of Trust and preliminary governance arrangements	June 14	Conditions surveys	July 14	Business planning and drafting agreements – management; funding; outcomes specification; leasing; transfer; etc. Staff/TU, equality and Best Value consultations	August 14	Due diligence testing – financial and legal assurance process	Sept 14	Committee/Council decision to transfer service	Oct 14	Pre-transfer planning initiated:	Nov 14	– Staff training and development	Dec 14	– Marketing planning and community outreach – Infrastructure upgrade e.g. reception ‘look and feel’; online and IT systems; gym equipment; performance reporting systems – Implementation of customer ‘quick wins’ e.g. children’s free swimming sessions and local employability initiatives	1 Jan 15	Transfer of service and implementation of agreed business plan Commence performance monitoring
May 14	Formal establishment of Trust and preliminary governance arrangements																		
June 14	Conditions surveys																		
July 14	Business planning and drafting agreements – management; funding; outcomes specification; leasing; transfer; etc. Staff/TU, equality and Best Value consultations																		
August 14	Due diligence testing – financial and legal assurance process																		
Sept 14	Committee/Council decision to transfer service																		
Oct 14	Pre-transfer planning initiated:																		
Nov 14	– Staff training and development																		
Dec 14	– Marketing planning and community outreach – Infrastructure upgrade e.g. reception ‘look and feel’; online and IT systems; gym equipment; performance reporting systems – Implementation of customer ‘quick wins’ e.g. children’s free swimming sessions and local employability initiatives																		
1 Jan 15	Transfer of service and implementation of agreed business plan Commence performance monitoring																		
2.6	<p>Best Value considerations</p> <p>Under the Local Government (Best Value) Act (Northern Ireland) 2002, the Council is under an obligation to make arrangements for continuous improvements in the way in</p>																		

	<p>which its functions are exercised. Therefore, there is an obligation to consult in relation to Leisure Transformation, and these consulting obligations will be met through the equality consultation process as well as specific engagement with end users using media such as the Council’s website and social media. Officers will continue to take legal advice on this matter to give the appropriate assurance to Committee.</p>
2.7	<p>Communications</p> <p>A communications and engagement plan is already in place for both internal and external communications in relation to the decision to establish a trust. A key messages document has been appended to this report which sets out the themes for communication with the wider public, as well as employees. Multiple channels will be used including City Matters, staff engagement exercises and team briefings and the website.</p>

3.0	<p>Decisions required</p> <p>Having considered this Overview paper, Committee is asked:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To review and agree the LTP strategic principles and, on this basis, authorise officers to draft the business plan and various agreements with the Trust for consideration by Committee in September 2014 2. To confirm the affordability limit for the next phase of capital development and agree the process for agreeing Phases II and III of the LTP capital programme 3. To authorise officers to develop an interim upgrade/refurbishment programme within existing resources, for consideration by Committee 4. To authorise officers to proceed with the work plan, as outlined at 2.5 above <p>Having considered Issues paper 1: Leisure Trust governance update paper, Committee is asked:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. To agree the draft objects for the new leisure trust and authorise its establishment 6. To grant authority to take preparatory steps to transfer service, as per legal advice set out, including the issue of the contract award notice and to enter into a contractual relationship with the Trust to ensure the effective delivery of the service <p>Having considered Issues paper 2: Trade Unions engagement update paper, Committee is asked:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. To review the recommendations of the TUs in-house model report and confirm the ‘in principle’ decision already made in relation to the Council’s preferred business model option as the non-profit distributing organisation/leisure trust 8. To agree that the initial staff protections outlined be integrated into any partnership agreement with the Leisure Trust and authorise officers to continue engagement and negotiation on these issues <p>Having considered Issues paper 3: Outcomes and performance management, Committee is asked:</p>
------------	--

9. To give feedback and agree the indicative outcomes framework for the purposes of preparing a partnership agreement and business plan with the Trust.
10. To agree those services for inclusion in the transfer i.e. the operations of 10 leisure centres and facilities within their immediate curtilage e.g. adjacent 3G pitches as well as the leisure facilities at Girdwood Park

Having considered **Issues paper 4: Financial, legal and equality assurances**, Committee is asked:

11. To approve the equality framework for integration into the business planning and agreements development process,
12. To agree outlined consultation approach to include consideration of the Council's Best Value obligations

4.0 Resource Implications

This is a major physical and service transformation process and the implications for resources (staff, assets and financial) will be fully scoped and assessed as part of the business planning process, with continuous engagement with staff and trade union reps.

5.0 Equality Implications

In line with Council policy the programme has been screened and an EQIA recommended including a consultation approach. See Paper 4 + appendix for detail.

6.0 Abbreviations

LTP – Leisure Transformation Programme

NPDO – non-profit distributing organisation

TUPE – Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006

TUs – Trade Unions

7.0 Issues papers and appendices

- Appendix 1: A Belfast Leisure Trust – some key messages

Issues Paper 1: Leisure Trust update

- Appendix 2: Diagram on influence and control over leisure Trust

Issues Paper 2: Trade Unions engagement update

- Appendix 3: APSE Solutions: Belfast Leisure In-House Transformation Option April 2014

Issues Paper 3: Outcomes and performance management

- Appendix 4: Draft outcomes framework based on the Council's existing Value Creation Map/corporate priorities
- Appendix 5: Illustrative performance monitoring dashboard

Issues Paper 4: Legal, financial equality assurances

- Appendix 6: Leisure Transformation Programme: Promoting Equality of Opportunity &

This page is intentionally left blank

A new Leisure Trust for Belfast – some key messages

18 April 2014

1. What is the Council's political ambition for the leisure trust?

- We want a **5* service for 3* prices** – an affordable and innovative 'best in class' customer and community-focussed service for the city
- We want to safeguard the longer term sustainability of the service – providing much better chance of **job security for employees**, as well as career progression and creating new jobs.
- Social values are just as important as financial performance – **tackling health inequalities** will be a core focus for the new trust.

2. Why does this need to be done now?

- **£8m subsidy** to the rate-payer every year – a subsidy of this magnitude can no longer be borne by the rate-payer.
- Savings have to be secured to help **finance the major investment programme**

3. Will the Council lose control?

- No. Councillors will remain '**democratic guardians**' of the services provided – setting the direction and determining the level of funding provided for the Trust
- The Trust will be accountable to the Council through regular performance reports and an annual review
- This will be a partnership within which to **target services to local needs** – rather than one-size fits all
- The Trust will need to consult with the Council to produce an agreed Business Plan, and the Council will agree the funding amount when it is satisfied that the plan meets the Council's objectives.

4. Is this privatisation by the back door?

- No. The Belfast leisure trust will be a charitable organisation – our services and funding must work for the public benefit – **no surplus will ever go to private shareholders but will be re-invested back into communities.**
- The new trust has to be a 'good employer' – now and into the future.
- Various references are made to the leisure 'business' but this does not mean abandoning the public service ethos. It just means that the service will be run using some of the best practice from the business sector – such as performance measurement and reporting.

5. What are the benefits of a Belfast leisure trust?

- **It is a single focus organisation** – giving a guaranteed step change
- **Savings can be assured, via contractual mechanisms**
- Financial benefits – particularly VAT and access to grants that Council can't access

6. What about our staff?

- Gives much more security for future of the business – **growth is our ambition**

- New trust will give opportunities to **grow the business** and this means a better chance of job security and career progression for staff and the possibility of more jobs and apprentices
- The existing terms and conditions of current employees can be protected through legislation (TUPE)
- The Trust are totally committed to working with TUs on the issues that are important to them - like pensions, job security and the avoidance of compulsory redundancy.

7. What does 'protected by TUPE' mean?

- 'TUPE' stands for the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006. The Regulations protect employees' terms and conditions of employment when a business is transferred to a new employer.
- When a transfer takes place, staff will automatically become an employee of the new organisation. Their continuity of employment is preserved, as are their terms and conditions of employment. Wages, holidays and shift allowance are part of existing terms and conditions.
- In relation to the question of how long terms and conditions should remain the same, there is no length of time specified in the legislation.

8. Will the Council still own the leisure centres?

- **Yes.** The Council will always remain the owner of its capital assets, which will be leased to the Trust.

9. Shouldn't we agree leisure locations – possibly have fewer, to save money – before we change the business model?

- Historic legacy of division in the city means that we have more centres than we should need. Elected Members have a vision for reducing this; but **shared facilities will take time.**
- The **business model decision is the catalyst for change.** Without modernising the service, there is no impetus to modernise our asset base.
- Delaying a decision to approve further work on the Trust option will result in a missed opportunity to deliver assured savings and service improvement

10. What are the health problems you want to tackle?

- In some parts of Belfast, the average life expectancy is nearly 10 years less than NI average
- Working with partners, we want to **tackle health inequalities** in the city e.g. through GP referral programme
- Healthy physical activities can be promoted outside of the leisure centres – with the centres becoming 'health hubs' for local communities. A place to become more active in other ways – involving walking groups for example in local parks
- People who may feel isolated in the own homes can use the leisure centres in different ways – including a place to meet people socially, volunteer and join new groups

11. Don't we have the internal capacity for change?

- We have to ask ourselves –“If change had been possible, **why didn't we do it before?**” The small changes made to date have been marginal and slow and very difficult to achieve.
- Internally driven change may be possible with a lot of goodwill, but it would require **intensive resource** at a time when Members and staff are in the midst of trying to deliver Local Government Reform, deliver its Investment programme and meet its ambitious efficiency targets.

12. Why leisure?

- The **leisure industry has changed dramatically over the past 10 years** – customers demand better services and facilities, they have choices, and running a leisure service is now far more complex and competitive. The reality is that we run a service which has not changed with the times. Customer expectations are more sophisticated.

13. What will a Belfast leisure trust look like?

- The mission will be to pursue a **wider public good** i.e. working with others to improve the health of the population, especially those most in need
- Governance structures will incorporate **representation from elected Members, staff and trade unions**, as well as strategic partners and industry experts
- It will have the ability to deliver social clauses e.g. apprenticeships for wider benefits

14. Where else does this?

- There are now over **120 leisure trusts** throughout UK.
- The majority of council owned leisure centres across the UK are no longer operated by in-house teams
- **30% of UK public leisure centres are run through trusts** – and this is a growing trend – with Trusts operating over 1600 facilities, with a combined turnover of more than £1billion and employing around 50,000 staff.

15. What next?

- Intensive period of business planning
- Training and development for our staff
- Getting all the **proper assurances** on the legal and financial implications as well as meeting our Best Value and Equality obligations
- Councillors agreeing the new business plan and partnership agreement with the Trust

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 2: Democratic accountability and influence

How the Trust is influenced and how their activities can be controlled by the Council



This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank



Belfast Leisure In- house Transformation Option

Report for Belfast City Council

This report has been prepared by Sue Finnigan, Andrew Uprichard and Andy Mudd in April 2014

Version 3.0





APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence) is a not for profit local government body working with over 300 councils throughout the UK. Promoting excellence in public services, APSE is the foremost specialist in local authority front line services, hosting a network for front line service providers in areas such as waste and refuse collection, parks and environmental services, leisure, school meals, cleaning, housing and building maintenance.

APSE provides services specifically designed for local authorities, such as benchmarking, consultancy, seminars, research, briefings and training. Through its consultancy arm APSE delivers expert assistance to councils with the overt aim of driving service improvement and value for money through service review and redesign. APSE delivers in excess of 100 projects a year and clients benefit from the consultancy's not for profit ethical approach to consultancy services.

Report for Belfast City Council

Contents

1.Executive summary.....	4
2.Introduction and Scope.....	10
3.Current Performance and Service Provision.....	11
4.Methodology.....	12
5.What will an in house service look like?	19
6. Staffing.....	21
11.Programming and Consultation.....	28
12.Infrastructure	29
13.Income Generation Opportunities	29
14. Financial Summary	33
15.Conclusion	34
Appendix 1 – Analysis of options.....	36
Appendix 2 – Staff SWOT analysis.....	39

Association for Public Service Excellence
2nd floor Washbrook House
Lancastrian Office Centre
Talbot Road, Old Trafford
Manchester M32 0FP
telephone: 0161 772 1810
fax: 0161 772 1811
email: enquiries@apse.org.uk
web: www.apse.org.uk

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 APSE has been commissioned to undertake an expert view on Belfast's leisure estate options presented in the Deloitte Report dated February 2013.
- 1.2 The review is to include:-
 1. The development of evaluation criteria to support a political decision regarding the future operating model for leisure provision in Belfast. To include areas such as value for money, feasibility, benefits and scale/complexity of change and capacity.
 2. Develop a transformed in-house service model including governance arrangements
 3. Work in conjunction with a panel or reference group composed of key leisure staff
 4. Identify the level of savings and where they can be made
 5. Liaise or engage with relevant Council officials in respect of access to all information
 6. To consider a sustainable model which can demonstrate the capacity to deliver a minimum of £2m efficiencies by March 2016, as per the Council decision of 1 July 2013.
 7. Develop an analysis of the range of governance options and legal frameworks most appropriate to Belfast City Council's vision for leisure transformation
 8. Development of a business case and presentation of a final recommendation based on the above findings.
 9. Prepare a final report by the 11th April 2014, in advance of the SP&R Committee meeting on 18th April 2014.
- 1.3 It should be noted that this review is undertaken in the context of an extremely short timescale and with limited resources; hence some of the areas of the report are not worked up in detail as would normally be the case when undertaking the development of a new service structure and review.

Current Performance and Service Provision

- 1.4 The Deloitte reports have provided an analysis of the current performance and service provision and so it is not our intent within this report to reiterate that information. We are broadly in agreement with the content of the reports as far as they relate to the analysis of current service provision, it is, however, our intention to challenge a number of assumptions that have been made in the Deloitte report of the inability of the In House option to be able to deliver the same level of savings required as an NPDO model, with the exception of the VAT element.
- 1.5 The assumption made on staff savings was based on detailed work done at Andersonstown Leisure Centre which is in fact not representative of the whole of the service. The assumption was made that the whole of Leisure Service could make a reduction in staff costs of 25% i.e. £2.1million and generate additional income of £350,000.
- 1.6 A further assumption was made that the In House model would only be able to generate savings of 5% i.e. £425,754, whereas the NPDO could deliver 19% i.e. £1.596, 576 not including VAT.
- 1.7 If the In House option is able to make timely decisions and manage the service without referring constantly back to central services i.e. the governance is improved, there is no real reason why the In House service should not realise the level of savings required.
- 1.8 It is our intent to focus on the changes required to deliver a successful and sustainable in house service model which will deliver the outcomes required by Belfast City Council.

1.9 This review has been undertaken in line with the guiding principles already agreed by Members, which are:

- Quality
- Focus on health and well-being outcomes
- Value for Money
- Balanced investment and accessibility
- Partnership
- Affordability

Methodology

1.10 APSE has:-

- Investigated the options regarding future governance of an In House service
- Undertaken a desk top analysis of current and potential performance
- Worked with staff to identify new ways of working, and opportunities for improvement
- Identified new potential income streams
- Calculated, where possible, financial impacts on the revenue budget

Governance

1.11 One of the key elements of change required to deliver a successful In House service is a change to the governance arrangements in order to speed up the decision making process and to provide managers with the autonomy to manage.

1.12 As part of the Review of Public Administration In Northern Ireland (RPA) the Local Government Bill currently completing its passage through the Northern Ireland Assembly will transform the decision making process of all local authorities in the province.

1.13 We consider that the governance arrangements for the transformed in house service should:

- maximise the ability of the service to meet its objectives
- streamline the decision making process to support this
- delegate appropriate authority to management to meet service objectives
- retain overall member control of the service at an appropriate level
- enable overview and scrutiny by elected members of the service
- Engage local elected members in reviewing service delivery in their district electoral areas.

1.14 Whilst the governance arrangements for the new local authority are a matter for it to decide we consider that any of the permitted governance arrangements under the Bill will enable a new structure such as the one outlined below to be put in place:

- Full Council sets the Leisure Service operating budget for the year.
- The scheme of delegation for the new Council establishes a Leisure Services Board (LSB) - comprised of a politically balanced smaller number of elected members responsible for the management of the service under its budget and could include other non-elected members with relevant expertise and experience.
- A Leisure Services Senior Management Team (SMT) is given delegated authority to manage the service reporting to and accountable to the LSB with certain decision making matters also reserved to the LSB. LSB to meet regularly.

- Oversight of the Leisure Service and its performance to be carried out by a Performance Review committee (PRC) on a periodic basis (say 4-6 times a year). The LSB Chair and key officers in SMT to attend with service presentations 2 times per year.
 - Local service delivery issues to be reviewed and discussed with local elected members 2-3 times per year in a Local Leisure Forum (LLF) based on District Electoral Areas.
 - LSB, PRC and LLFs to be transparent and accountable and open to the public but LSB business likely to require regular [Part 2] commercial and confidential business with restricted access.
- 1.15 The adoption of such a structure would enable the transformed in house service to be more responsive, make operational decisions swiftly, be held accountable to elected members and have its service performance properly reviewed and scrutinised within a democratically accountable framework, under the continued ownership and control of the Council.
- 1.16 Unions will also play a part in the governance arrangements through the negotiation process working much more closely with management on an ongoing basis.

Future Strategy

- 1.17 APSE has identified the need to develop a strategic approach to leisure provision linked to, but wider than, the corporate strategy to inform the future direction of leisure across all communities, voluntary sector, public sector and private sector provision and to ensure maximum impact for Belfast from the capital investment programme.
- 1.18 A city wide Leisure Strategy would form the basis of the community planning process in relation to leisure facilities and would enable resources to be utilised more effectively by reducing duplication.
- 1.19 The Leisure Strategy would firmly link the service to the developing government changes linking public health, neighbourhood development, community planning and social care.
- 1.20 Leisure is still a key driver of community cohesion and health benefits linking this more openly to a clear cohesive shared strategy would enable the Council to clearly show its commitment to the communities it currently serves and will assist in bringing together the new communities which will be joining Belfast as part of RPA.
- 1.21 There is little, or no, profile for the Leisure Centres and their offering in Belfast at the current time, raising the profile by working with partners, stakeholders and communities to develop a new Leisure Strategy could provide a catalyst for improved partnership and neighbourhood working, as has happened in other local authority areas where this process has been undertaken.

Support Services changes

- 1.22 Key areas and processes that are in need of change in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the front line leisure service business are HR, Marketing, Finance, Maintenance and Sports/physical activity development.
- 1.23 Each of these areas is currently centralised and as such they do not have the necessary focus to ensure the delivery of an effective front line service.
- HR needs to be streamlined with autonomy passed to managers.

- Marketing and Finance resources should be moved back into Leisure to provide the necessary focus required to manage and develop the service effectively.
- Maintenance plans should be developed jointly as part of the business planning process and should support the developments required to improve the customer experience in the centres. A sinking fund should also be identified in order to ensure ongoing higher levels of service provision.
- Active Belfast – Sports Development needs to be more focussed on developing the attendances at the leisure centres. There needs to be dedicated Swimming Development, Health and Fitness and Memberships roles in order to drive the attendances upwards from a commercial perspective. These roles have been added into the new staff structure for the Leisure Centres however it is recognised that there may already be some capacity in Active Belfast for these roles. For the purposes of this report we have assumed that that is not the case. There does however still need to be far more interaction and cross service working between the Active Belfast team and the Leisure Centres in the future. This should be built upon as the service develops, linking more proactively into their local communities.

Staffing

- 1.24 The In House service will require strong leadership, business management skills and commercial acumen to drive the changes forward and will need the autonomy to make quick decisions in order to move the service forward in the timescale agreed.

Leadership

- 1.25 Key to the future success of the service is the development of a clear business improvement plan which is performance focussed, the implementation of which is led by a strong leader able to implement change and new management systems.

Leisure Centre Staffing

- 1.26 There is a need to change the inefficiency of the current staff structure and working practices as detailed in the main body of this report and as outlined in the Deloitte report.
- 1.27 A new draft staffing structure has been developed as a starting point to the transformation process. The intention is to move the service from reactive to proactive and whilst some roles have been deleted new roles have also been added. The restructure needs to be applied in the context of changing working practices, changing rotas and shifts, more flexible job roles, reduced opening hours, new centre programmes and a focus on changes to swimming and health and fitness.

Potential Savings from staffing

- 1.28 It is proposed to negotiate savings on shift allowances, weekend enhancements, agency costs and overtime.
- 1.29 Overtime will be managed out by reducing the number of opening hours at the centres, redistributing rotas and using part time staff to cover for sickness, holidays etc. however there may be a need to negotiate a flexibility allowance to replace shift and weekend working allowances for those staff currently affected by any reductions in shift or weekend enhancements.
- 1.30 Taking into account the current figures (as provided by BCC) for overtime, shift allowance, weekend enhancements and agency payments and also allowing for a revised flexible working allowance, we have identified potential savings in the region of

£1,037,222. The realisation of this figure is dependent on the outcomes of negotiations regarding revised terms and conditions.

- 1.31 If only overtime and agency work are managed out completely then the savings figure will be in the region of £732,214.
- 1.32 The summary of changes to job roles is included in the main body of the report.
- 1.33 APSE has also looked at the potential changes to the staff structure based on changing the emphasis from reactive to proactive and changes to opening hours, shifts etc.
- 1.34 The main changes would be reductions in duty managers, changes to participation roles, leisure assistants and reception staff but an increase in health and fitness staff, a new Health and Fitness Coordinator role, a new swimming development role, a new Memberships and Sales Coordinator and a budget of £40,000 for contracts for specialist coaches. As a result of changes we have identified further saving in the region of £438,947.

Programming and Consultation

- 1.35 The realisation of savings and the potential for increased income will be dependent on making changes to the current activity programmes i.e. phasing out activities which are not popular and replacing them with new initiatives, balancing programmes between leisure centres and coordinating opening times across partner centres.

Customer and Community Consultation

- 1.36 Customer and community consultation is a prerequisite of managing any community facility i.e. we should be providing what the community wants. The admin staff will be utilised to develop ongoing consultation and feedback processes in order to improve the customer experience.

Opening Hours

- 1.37 There is potential to reduce the opening hours of some centres without any real impact on the community and which would assist in achieving staff savings. All centres should be scrutinised to establish the viability of their current opening hours e.g. some centres are viable in the early mornings, others are not, and some are more viable than others on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

Leisure Centres

- 11.1 We are proposing that the feasibility of Loughside LC should be investigated further. Current income in 2012/13 was £19,815 set against expenditure of £ 195,599. A loss of £175,784. The feasibility of retaining the leisure centre and taking a more proactive approach to the management and programming of the facility should be explored, the future potential assessed. Should the facility be withdrawn from the leisure portfolio this would result in a saving to the authority of £175,784 including staff costs, £ 52,268 without staff costs. For the purposes of this report we have included the staff reductions in the main area of the staffing report.

Infrastructure

- 1.38 Investment will be required in IT systems regardless of which option is adopted. There needs to be far greater use of intelligence if performance is to improve.
- 1.39 Gym equipment will also need a sinking fund if we are going to increase the level of health and fitness memberships and compete with the private sector on standards.

Income Generation Opportunities

1.40 The main income generators are

Swimming Lessons,

Health and Fitness,

Admission Fees,

Reduce Free use for over 60's,

Increase vending,

Increase parties

Ensure Summer Schools break even by means testing the charges

Reduce 'free use' of facilities by other local authority departments

Training – develop a training service which can be sold to others

Work more closely with schools

Increase secondary spend

Increase events and other community activities

Increase partnership activities with public health.

1.41 These are just some of the ways in which income can be increased, more details of which are in the main body of the report.

Financial Summary

1.42 This is the financial summary of the areas we have covered in the report. It should be noted that these figures will to be worked on in more detail, these are the overview figures available in the short timescales given to undertake this piece of work.

1.43

Savings/Income generation	Expenditure Savings	Potential Income Generation
Staffing overtime and agency	£ 732,214	
Staff Structure savings	£ 911,807	
Total Potential Savings	£ 1,644,021	
Increase of 10p on all admissions prices		£110,719
Swimming Lessons		£ 81,000
Health and Fitness		£ 306,000
Over 60's		£ 90,000
Vending		£ 60,000
Total Potential Increased Income		£ 647,719

Total Potential Reduction in Revenue		£2,291,740
---	--	-------------------

The total potential reduction in revenue budget identified to date would indicate that the service is able to move towards achieving the financial figure of £2m as identified. The current estimated potential figure is in the region of: £ 2,291,740

Conclusion

- 1.44 We have been able to highlight the areas in which change can be made and although there is still detailed work to be undertaken behind the figures, i.e. new staffing rotas, changes to opening hours and charges to be agreed, changes to terms and conditions of staff etc., the saving of £2m on the revenue budget bottom line should be able to be achieved. The caveat to this is that all parties will need to be in agreement to the changes i.e. Members, staff and unions, if agreement is not reached by any one of these partners then the ability to achieve significant change will be lost. Suffice to say that agreement and negotiations with staff and unions will still need to be undertaken by the NPDO option. If any one of these factors is not changed then there will be little potential for the transformation to succeed. The VR process will also be an influence on the level of savings which may be achievable in the short term.
- 1.45 The levels of change are considerable and it is clear that the current staff that we have spoken to are in support of change and are willing to work with the Council proactively to make that change happen. The added advantage for the in house option are:-
- that the potential reduction on revenue/increases income over £2m will remain within the Council, this will not be the case with the NPDO option
 - that the Council will retain the services for the longer term enabling it to take a more cohesive approach to community service delivery in the future.
- 1.46 It is our considered opinion that with the right leadership, the changes in governance and cooperation between staff, unions and the Council that the in house bid can achieve the outcomes required. If these elements cannot be resolved then the In House service will not be able to succeed however if agreement is reached and a new way forward agreed together with protocols for future working relationships then the service has immense potential. At this stage it should be said that the unions seem willing to negotiate constructively to work towards achieving an in house option.
- 1.47 The level of work involved however should also not be underestimated and it is unlikely that the In House team could deliver the level of change without external support. However contrary to the Deloitte report there do appear to be staff willing to undertake some of that work and influence the future of the service.

2. Introduction and Scope

- 2.1 APSE has been commissioned to undertake an expert view on Belfast's leisure estate options presented in the Deloitte Report dated February 2013.
- 2.2 The review is to include:-
- 1) The development of evaluation criteria to support a political decision regarding the future operating model for leisure provision in Belfast. To include areas such as value for money, feasibility, benefits and scale/complexity of change and capacity.

- 2) Develop a transformed in-house service model including governance arrangements
 - 3) Work in conjunction with a panel or reference group composed of key leisure staff
 - 4) Identify the level of savings and where they can be made
 - 5) Liaise or engage with relevant Council officials in respect of access to all information
 - 6) To consider a sustainable model which can demonstrate the capacity to deliver a minimum of £2m efficiencies by March 2016, as per the Council decision of 1 July 2013.
 - 7) Develop an analysis of the range of governance options and legal frameworks most appropriate to Belfast City Council's vision for leisure transformation
 - 8) Development of a business case and presentation of a final recommendation based on the above findings.
 - 9) Prepare a final report by the 11th April 2014, in advance of the SP&R Committee meeting on 18th April 2014.
- 2.3 It should be noted that this review is undertaken in the context of an extremely short timescale and with limited resources; hence some of the areas of the report are not worked up in detail as would normally be the case when undertaking the development of a new service structure and review.
- 2.4 APSE has used information passed to us by BCC staff and unions on the understanding that this information is accurate.
- 2.5 The review has been undertaken as the development of the in house bid and NOT as a critique of the NDPO option. APSE have however reserved the right to comment in the Deloitte report and the assumptions made against the options included in their report, as they impact on the development of the In House option.

3. Current Performance and Service Provision

- 3.1 The Deloitte reports have provided an analysis of the current performance and service provision and so it is not our intention within this report to reiterate that information. We are broadly in agreement with the content of the reports as far as they relate to the analysis of current service provision, it is, however, our intention to challenge a number of assumptions that have been made in the Deloitte report of the inability of the In House option to be able to deliver the same level of savings required as an NPDO model, with the exception of the VAT element.
- 3.2 The assumption made on staff savings was based on detailed work done at Andersonstown Leisure Centre which is in fact not representative of the whole of the service. The assumption was made that the whole of Leisure Service could make a reduction in staff costs of 25% i.e. £2.1million and generate additional income of £350,000.
- 3.3 A further assumption was made that the In House model would only be able to generate savings of 5% i.e. £425,754, whereas the NPDO could deliver 19% i.e. £1.596, 576 not including VAT.
- 3.4 If the In House option is able to make timely decisions and manage the service without referring constantly back to central services i.e. the governance is improved, there is no real reason why the In House service should not realise the same level of savings as the NPDO.

- 3.5 We have worked through the Strategic Evaluation criteria highlighted in the Deloitte report and compared the revised In House model to the NPDO. A summary of the comparison issues is attached **at Appendix 1**.
- 3.6 The In House option is unable to deliver on the VAT savings, other than that, given the right governance and direction we see no reason why the In House team should not deliver the same level of savings as the NPDO. They will be delivered by the same staff, using the same resources; the only significant difference is the governance and the potential lead officer.
- 3.7 It is our intention to show that there is potential to change the governance structure and with this in mind and all parties working together, i.e. Council, staff and unions, changes can be made. All parties will need to work closely together in order to ensure the process moves forward without delay.
- 3.8 It is our intent to focus on the changes required to deliver a successful and sustainable in house service model which will deliver the outcomes required by Belfast City Council.
- 3.9 This review has been undertaken in line with the guiding principles already agreed by Members, which are:
 - Quality
 - Focus on health and well-being outcomes
 - Value for Money
 - Balanced investment and accessibility
 - Partnership
 - Affordability

Impact of Local Government Reform e.g. Boundary changes

- 3.10 Due to the current lack of information available regarding sites transferring into BCC as part of the RPA changes, we have not taken into account the impact of those sites on future service delivery. Suffice to say, the impact has not been considered to date in the Deloitte reports either.

4. Methodology

- 4.1 An assessment was undertaken of the potential governance of an in house service which is detailed in Section 4 of the report. This takes into account the changes in legislation which will impact on Northern Ireland in the next 12 months and therefore can affect the way the in house service is managed in the future.
- 4.2 APSE then commenced the review process with an initial desk top assessment based on work undertaken by Deloitte during 2013, analysis of documentation provided by Belfast City Council (BCC) and an analysis of APSE's Performance Networks data. Our report is based on the assumption that the figures provided by all parties are correct.
- 4.3 APSE then facilitated a workshop with key operational staff from the service that will be affected by the changes to the service provision and also a number of trade union representatives.
- 4.4 Following on from the workshop APSE undertook a number of impromptu conversations with a variety of front line staff to try to establish a feel for the level of willingness for change.
- 4.5 Follow up one to one meetings were undertaken with key managers at various levels across BCC.

- 4.6 A further more detailed meeting was undertaken with key operational staff to clarify changes in practical terms and to establish the potential for real change to the services. This meeting provided an operational input into both the practical potential and inevitably, the likelihood and willingness of staff to implement change to the level required by the transformation plans. There has been ongoing dialogue with a number of key staff throughout the process.
- 4.7 Dialogue was also undertaken with Trade Unions on their willingness to embrace transformational change should the in house bid be successful.

Staff Workshop

- 4.8 The staff workshop was made up of an explanation of the various service options available and an outline of the level of change that will be required regardless of which option is taken forward. It was within the context of the assumption of transformational step change that we asked staff to undertake a SWOT analysis and to be open and honest about the potential for identifying both savings and income generation across the service. The issues highlighted in the workshop are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 4.9 It should be acknowledged that amongst the staff we met there is an acceptance that change is inevitable and indeed, that the majority of the staff we were in contact with welcomed the changes. There was a willingness by the staff we met to help to not only deliver that change but to influence it in the planning stages. There were however obvious concerns as to how they would each be personally affected, e.g. reductions in overtime etc.
- 4.10 A number of staff have undertaken further work with APSE to assist in the provision of forecasts/income generation ideas/changes to staffing levels etc.
- 4.11 The VR process is also in the process of being undertaken by BCC with all leisure centre staff.

Context

- 4.12 Throughout the process we have been minded to ensure that the review and recommendations we make will be within the context of what is achievable within the current period of broader change taking place across Northern Ireland at the present time.

5. Governance - What changes need to be made?

Shortcomings of the NPDO Governance structure

- 5.1 The Deloitte report highlighted delays in decision making in the current structure and suggested that these could be resolved through an NPDO structure with a smaller board comprised of people with relevant skills and expertise and including elected members.
- 5.2 A smaller focused decision making body has much to commend it in terms of speedy decision making and clear lines of accountability for the service. However under the NPDO proposal the Council would cease to be the owner of the service, elected member involvement would be severely diminished (with fewer than 20% of the board

members) and transparency and accountability to the public would also be reduced, with the public's right to attend meetings also removed.

- 5.3 The Council would continue to be required to provide substantial revenue support to the service and to make the significant capital investment it is committed to for the benefit of an NPDO entity which is independent and accountable only under the terms of its contract. Any elected members on the NPDO board would in that capacity always have to act in the best interests of the NPDO rather than represent the Council's interest.
- 5.4 The transformed in house service option, as well as addressing identified issues in service delivery, also needs to improve the speed and efficiency of decision making whilst retaining democratic accountability and transparency in the decision making process.

Current Governance Position

- 5.5 The Council's Constitution reflects the legislative basis on which all local authorities in Northern Ireland currently operate which is grounded in the Local Government (Northern Ireland) Act 1972. This provides for local authority governance on a committee based system and represented the then standard approach across the whole of the United Kingdom.
- 5.6 Currently responsibility for leisure services under the Council's constitution is split between full Council and two of the Council's Standing Committees, Strategic Policy and Resources and Parks and Leisure.
- 5.7 The full Council is the overarching decision-making body. Each of the committees submits draft budget proposals to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee as part of the annual budget-setting process. The decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is in turn subject to approval by the Full Council.
- 5.8 The Full Council considers the decisions of the Standing Committees at each of its monthly meetings. The Council can adopt the decisions or amend them. In practice, most decisions by committees are approved by Full Council but it is common for a small number of decisions each month to be either rejected or amended or referred back to the relevant committee for further consideration.
- 5.9 Any decisions taken by the Standing Committees cannot be implemented until they have been ratified by the Full Council, except where committees have been granted delegated authority to make decisions.
- 5.10 The committees themselves are large bodies with 20 Councillors each and although they meet regularly are not designed to support swift decision making. Whilst most of the decisions affecting the leisure service fall to the Parks and Leisure Committee some are outside of its remit falling instead to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.
- 5.11 This division of responsibilities between the Standing Committees can be characterised as leading to fragmented and protracted decision making and comments to this effect

appeared in the Deloitte report. Moreover fusing the executive and scrutiny functions in a single committee increases the possibility of failing to fully discharge either of these roles appropriately.

The Opportunity for Change

- 5.12 As part of the Review of Public Administration the Local Government Bill (the Bill) currently completing its passage through the Northern Ireland Assembly will transform the decision making process of all local authorities in the Province.
- 5.13 The traditional committee system approach to governance has been systematically removed in England Scotland and Wales in successive waves of reform, largely replacing it with models based on cabinet or executive decision making or through elected mayors.
- 5.14 Section 7 of the Bill contains powers to delegate any of a local authority's functions (save for rate setting, setting an affordable borrowing limit and monitoring it, borrowing money or acquiring or disposing of land) to a committee, sub-committee or officer. Section 11 permits any such committee to include persons who are not elected members of that authority (as non-voting members).
- 5.15 Section 19 of the Bill requires a council to operate a committee system unless it decides by qualified majority (80% of members present and voting) to operate executive arrangements or prescribed arrangements. Whilst these are matters for determination for the new council any of them, when adopted will enable a more effective governance structure to be introduced for leisure services without diluting transparency and democratic accountability.
- 5.16 We consider that the governance arrangements for the transformed in house service should:
- maximise the ability of the service to meet its objectives
 - streamline the decision making process to support this
 - delegate appropriate authority to management to meet service objectives
 - retain overall member control of the service at an appropriate level
 - enable overview and scrutiny by elected members of the service
 - Engage local elected members in reviewing service delivery in their district electoral areas.

Proposed New Structure

- 5.17 Whilst the governance arrangements for the new local authority are a matter for it to decide we consider that any of the permitted governance arrangements under the Bill will enable a new structure as the one outlined below to be put in place:
- Full Council sets the Leisure Service operating budget for the year.

- The scheme of delegation for the new Council establishes a Leisure Services Board (LSB) - comprised of a politically balanced smaller number of elected members responsible for the management of the service under its budget and could include other non-elected members with relevant expertise and experience.
- A Leisure Services Senior Management Team (SMT) is given delegated authority to manage the service reporting to and accountable to the LSB with certain decision making matters also reserved to the LSB. LSB to meet regularly.
- Oversight of the Leisure Service and its performance to be carried out by a Performance Review committee (PRC) on a periodic basis (say 4-6 times a year). The LSB Chair and key officers in SMT to attend with service presentations 2 times per year.
- Local service delivery issues to be reviewed and discussed with local elected members 2-3 times per year in a Local Leisure Forum (LLF) based on District Electoral Areas.
- LSB, PRC and LLFs to be transparent and accountable and open to the public but LSB business likely to require regular [Part 2] commercial and confidential business with restricted access.

5.18 The adoption of such a structure would enable the transformed in house service to be more responsive, make operational decisions swiftly, be held accountable to elected members and have its service performance properly reviewed and scrutinised within a democratically accountable framework, under the continued ownership and control of the Council.

Arrangements for Performance Improvement

5.19 Part 12 of the Bill details the arrangements to be made for performance improvement in the new councils commencing with the general duty, as follows:

(1) A council must make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions.

(2) In discharging its duty under subsection (1), a council must have regard in particular to the need to improve the exercise of its functions in terms of:

- (a) strategic effectiveness;
- (b) service quality;
- (c) service availability;
- (d) fairness;
- (e) sustainability;
- (f) efficiency; and
- (g) innovation.

5.20 It goes on to talk about establishing objectives for improvement and put in arrangements to secure those objectives. It states that the Department may by order specify factors or performance indicators by reference to which a council's performance in exercising functions can be measured and standards or performance standards to be met by councils. The Department must consult with relevant bodies before doing so.

5.21 The Bill notes that councils must make arrangements for the collection of information which will allow it to:

- assess whether it has met its improvement objectives during a financial year;
- measure its performance during a financial year by reference to those performance indicators specified by the Department and self-imposed performance indicators applicable for that year;
- assess whether it has met during a financial year those performance standards set by the Department and self-imposed performance standards applicable for that year.

5.22 Section 91 states that each council must use the information it collects to compare its performance in exercising the functions to which the information relates with its performance in exercising those or similar functions during previous financial years and so far as is reasonably practicable, the performance of other councils in exercising those or similar functions during the financial year to which the information relates and during previous financial years. It must also use the information to assess whether it could improve its performance in exercising its functions and in the light of that assessment, decide what steps it will take to improve its performance in exercising its functions.

Improvement planning and publication of improvement information

5.23 The Bill goes on to say that each council must make arrangements for the publication of:

- the council's assessment of its performance during a financial year, in meeting the improvement objectives it has set itself which are applicable to that year, by reference to performance indicators and standards;
- the council's assessment of its performance in exercising its functions during a financial year as compared with its performance in previous financial years and so far as is reasonably practicable, the performance during that and previous financial years of other councils;
- details of the information collected in respect of a financial year; and
- what the council has done to discharge its duties in relation to that year

5.24 Those arrangements must be framed so that the information is published before 30th September in the financial year following that to which the information relates or such other date as the Department may specify by order.

5.25 The council must make arrangements for the publication of a description of the council's plans for discharging its duties in a financial year together with, if the council thinks fit, its plans for subsequent years in an "improvement plan" and those arrangements must be framed so that the information is published as soon as is reasonably practicable after the start of the financial year to which the plan must relate or as soon as is reasonably practicable after such other date as the Department may specify by order.

5.26 Unions will also play a part in the governance arrangements through the negotiation process working much more closely with management on an ongoing basis.

6. Future Leisure Strategy

6.1 The operation of the current Leisure Service also needs to be considered within the wider strategic context of Northern Ireland.

- 6.2 The current in house service is delivered through the Parks and Leisure Departmental Plan which links to the current Belfast City Council corporate objectives and links to the corporate Values.
- 6.3 There does not seem to be a strategic approach to investment in Parks and Leisure from a Belfast wide perspective. The level of capital investment coming into the city together with the increase in provision being brought in through RPA are key drivers which should ensure that future investment and service delivery is coordinated in a strategic way in order to avoid potential continuation of, and inevitable business failure through over provision.
- 6.4 Whilst consideration needs to be taken of the current political situation in Belfast, a more strategic approach would seem sensible in light of the impending development of future community planning and the need for the Council to prove continuous improvement.
- 6.5 Current provision not only competes against the private sector and new builds but also against community facilities (some of which are also funded by BCC).
- 6.6 Consultation with communities on the services they require, and will use, are key to developing future business plans for both new and existing facilities. A 'one size fits all' approach is no longer sustainable.
- 6.7 This review is seen as an opportunity to begin to change the programming of leisure centres to suit their communities and to provide a community hub for services through the development of partnership working.
- 6.8 A more proactive approach to partnership working is required throughout the leisure centres as well as clear development of cross service working with both Parks and Active Belfast as one cohesive unit. Links to the Public Health Agency, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and Education need to be strengthened from the Leisure Centres' perspective. Included within this is the opportunity to develop closer working relationships with the Community Development staff who are also working in neighbourhoods to support communities on a day to day basis.
- 6.9 The development of a coordinated approach to service provision between local agencies, voluntary managed facilities and activities, and BCC would be a major step forward. It is understood that the coordinated approach will have to be developed in the context of Belfast's changing communities.
- 6.10 This would be one of the advantages of retaining the services in house i.e. the opportunity to develop a cohesive Leisure Strategic Plan that encompasses the whole of the new Belfast City Council area and will be led by the City Council as Community Leader. It will help to strengthen the links with the existing communities and will inform the Community Planning Process for the future.
- 6.11 The Leisure Strategy would firmly link the service to the developing government changes linking public health, neighbourhood development, community planning and social care.

- 6.12 Leisure is still a key driver of community cohesion and health benefits linking this more openly to a clear cohesive shared strategy would enable the Council to clearly show its commitment to the communities it currently serves and will assist in bringing together the new communities which will be joining Belfast as part of RPA.
- 6.13 There is little, or no, profile for the leisure centres and their offering in Belfast at the current time, raising the profile by working with partners, stakeholders and communities to develop a new Leisure Strategy could provide a catalyst for improved partnership and neighbourhood working, as has happened in other local authority areas where this process has been undertaken.

7. How will we achieve change?

- 7.1 BCC have already allocated finance towards the transformation of the service, whether that is to an NPDO or In house provision. We are aware that the NPDO model is currently being worked on 'at risk' by the Council in view of the decision 'in principle' by Members to go ahead with the NPDO model.
- 7.2 Additional resources and external support will be required to implement the changes required whichever option is agreed. From the in house perspective it is recommended that there be an external project manager brought in to drive the change forward together with resources to support the HR and Finance functions until the setup of the new in house structure and working practices is in place. This resource will ensure a new staff structure is implemented together with new performance management and service improvement processes to deliver improved efficiency, an improved customer experience, more effective marketing and communications and proactive staff development.
- 7.3 The in house service (as with the NPDO) will need strong leadership, commercial acumen and business planning skills to deliver the level of change required and will need the autonomy to make decisions without deferring back to all members and other Belfast City Council departments via long winded processes which impact on the ability of managers to react to external impact and business changes.
- 7.4 We will only achieve change by working together to shared outcomes and goals, sections 8 – 12 detail the actions required to achieve change.

8. What will an in house service look like?

- 8.1 Key to the future success of the service is the ability to develop a strategic business planning approach which is performance focussed and that balances a community and commercial approach to service delivery. This will provide clarity of purpose for the service, the Leisure Services Board, the Leisure Services Management Team and the community.
- 8.2 The new In House Service will need to have autonomy over the decisions it is able to make, and the timing of those decisions, in order be able to respond to change and external market forces. We suggest that the management be set up as detailed in the Governance section of the report.

- 8.3 The staff will have changed their working practices, terms and conditions, and will be more focussed on performance management and customer care. They will have adopted a more commercial approach to service delivery and will be focussed on working as a team to achieve shared goals and agreed standards. The managers will manage in a consistent manner based on an agreed business plan with consistent procedures and practices across all sites.
- 8.4 The in house service needs to be able to control its own Marketing and Communications, Human Resources and Finance functions rather than the current approach of going through a four or five layered decision making process for decisions.
- 8.5 It is anticipated that staff roles may need to transfer back into Leisure from the Parks and Leisure HR and Finance teams and from Marketing and Communications in order to focus on the business improvement of the Leisure Services.
- 8.6 Another option for consideration would be to look at setting up the whole of the Parks, Leisure, Active Belfast and Community Development Section as one section with the autonomy to make decisions as detailed in the governance section whilst retaining transparency and accountability to the community.

9. Support Services Changes

Human Resources

- 9.1 The current recruitment process is lengthy with two tiers – one at Parks and Leisure level and one at corporate level, this adversely affects the ability of the service to deliver its front line services effectively as decisions are made at various levels throughout the process. The process is unwieldy and can take months to go through every layer by which time the front line service has deteriorated, or large amounts of overtime or agency staff have been paid to keep the service going.
- 9.2 The autonomy to make decisions on HR functions within budget constraints should be devolved to the Leisure Management Board working closely with the Leisure Management Team within the agreed business planning process. This needs to change as part of the governance reengineering process.
- 9.3 Leisure managers will also need to take responsibility for managing and developing their teams using recognised performance management systems. Each level of manager needs to be clear that it is their responsibility to deal with underperformance, manage sickness and absence levels, develop staff and address customer care, as much as it is to comply with Health and Safety legislation.

Marketing and Communications

- 9.4 The Marketing & Communications budget should be devolved back to Leisure together with the FTE equivalent time of a member of staff from the corporate centre to undertake the work (this will be cost neutral to this exercise). There is no reason why the corporate guidelines cannot be adhered to by someone focusing on the leisure demand. A specific leisure service marketing and communications plan desperately

needs to be developed and should include the use of digital technology, new media as well as making use of the customer databases and membership data.

Maintenance

- 9.5 The planned maintenance programme needs to be agreed with Property Services as part of the business planning process. The maintenance of the buildings is a key issue to ensuring the quality of the customer experience and again it cannot afford to be waiting for weeks for repairs to be undertaken. Clear maintenance plans and roles need to be drawn up for any remaining in house maintenance personnel.

Active Belfast/Sports Development

- 9.6 The Sports Development roles need to be focussed on developing the attendances at the Leisure Centres, developing stronger links with the local communities. Part of this role is currently undertaken by Active Belfast however there needs to be a more direct focus on increasing participation in the Leisure Centres either by developing the roles of the current Sports Development team or by adding an outreach team to the Leisure Centres themselves.
- 9.7 It is suggested that there needs to be a Health and Fitness Development Officer, a Swimming Development Officer and a Membership Sales Officer focussing on the business development aspects of the LC's.
- 9.8 These roles have been added into a suggested new staffing structure for the LC's however it is recognised that there may already be some capacity within the current development staff to take on these roles. This should be explored further to determine any additional staff requirements for the LC's.

10. Staffing

Leadership

- 10.1 Key to the success of the future service is a Leader/Driver/Chief Executive Officer who will ensure the implementation of, not only a new business plan, but lead and develop the team to deliver a new staff structure and staff development, new performance management and improvement systems, new quality control systems, new IT systems, Information Management Systems and new marketing and communication systems as well as proactive programming of centres and community outreach work.
- 10.2 The CEO will need to ensure that the staff team work together to implement the transformation of the service. (This equally applies to the NPDO option as the CEO of the NPDO will have the same staff with which to transform the service as the In House bid).
- 10.3 There is a need to change the inefficient current staff structure and working practices as detailed below in the report and as outlined in the Deloitte report.

Leisure Centre Staffing

- 10.4 Additional HR support as well as financial support may be required to support the timely implementation of this process, although preliminary discussions with HR – Organisational Development indicate that, subject to prior negotiated agreement, a new structure could quite easily be implemented with support from their section in the timescales identified. The key will be agreement on new terms and conditions.
- 10.5 Managers will need to be up skilled to enable them to produce and implement a cohesive business plan with their teams which include clear targets and performance management systems. Managers will need to understand their role in the development and leadership of the service if the transformation is to succeed. All staff need to be made aware of their role in the delivery of that plan through an effective new PDR process. Performance targets will be set and measured to ensure continuous improvement.
- 10.6 This process is likely to be led, initially, by an external body with the expertise to transform processes within the short timescales required. This will also be the case in an NPDO setup.
- 10.7 Individual PDR's will also identify the aspirations of the current staff and provide a basis for future service and succession planning when new and refurbished centres are completed.
- 10.8 Centres will also be required to work towards recognised industry quality accreditations.
- 10.9 One way to deal with the changes required would be to negotiate more flexible working arrangements and new job descriptions for each of the current roles, to manage out overtime by using more part time and casual staff, reduce the opening hours of some of the centres, thereby reducing core opening hours, reduce the level of agency staff by introducing part time contracts, and negotiate around shift allowances and weekend enhancements.
- 10.10 Sickness levels and holidays would also need to be managed more closely by line managers.
- 10.11 The staff turnover in Belfast does not appear to be fast enough to be able to change working practices by replacing existing staff contracts with new ones when staff leave. In order to improve the business performance in the agreed timescale a more flexible approach is required regardless of whether the NPDO or In House option is implemented.

Enhanced rates

- 10.12 The payment of enhanced rates for working unsocial or irregular hours has generally decreased considerably across Leisure Services over the last 10 -15 years as more and more local authorities find themselves needing to take a more commercial approach to the delivery of their services.

10.13 As part of this process we have recognised the needs to overhaul the ways of working within an In House leisure option. This will be the case in the future regardless of which option is taken forward.

Potential Savings from staffing

10.14 It is proposed to negotiate savings on agency costs, overtime, shift allowances and weekend enhancements.

10.15 Overtime will be managed out by reducing the number of opening hours at the centres, redistributing rotas and using part time staff to cover for sickness, holidays etc.

10.16 There is potential to negotiate more flexible working arrangements.

10.17 The current figures paid for enhanced working are listed in the table below:-

Expenditure Area	
Overtime	-£ 810,098
Agency Staff	-£ 299,583
Sub Total	-£1,109,681
Weekend Enhancements	-£ 359,330
Shift Allowances	-£ 345,678
Total	£1,814,689

10.18 Taking into account the current figures (as provided by BCC) for overtime, shift allowance, weekend enhancements and agency payments there is potential to negotiate a significant reduction in these figures. For the purposes of this report we have assumed that the overtime and agency working will reduce, thus realising a saving in the region of £1,109,681. The realisation of this figure is dependent on the outcomes of negotiations regarding revised working practices.

10.19 It is proposed to negotiate reductions in the staffing costs by:- reducing opening hours where there is little or no demand, working more flexibly and increasing the number of part time and/or casual posts.

10.20 Holidays, sickness and training cover are not included in the salary budgets and so an additional salary budget allocation will need to be added to the salaries out of the overtime budget in order to ensure no overtime is required to be paid. Therefore a figure of approx. 5% i.e. £377,467 needs to be added back into the savings. Sickness will aim to be managed via sickness procedure down to 5 days.

10.21 Agency staff will no longer be used on a regular basis but a bank of casual and part time staff, i.e. an in house bank of staff, will be created and will cover the hours usually given to the agency but on a standard rate of pay. This can work in house if the recruitment processes are shortened and the autonomy to recruit given to the CEO, however it is dependent on being able to respond quickly to situations. This will result in a saving of approximately 30% of the current agency expenditure.

10.22 If we remove overtime and agency payments but retain weekend enhancements and shift pay the savings will be approximately £732,214.

Removal of only overtime and agency but retain weekend enhancements and shift pay

Summary	
Total overtime and Agency	£1,109,681
Less Additional budget required to cover holidays, training , sickness at plain time based on 5% of current staff costs (approx.)	- £ 377,467
Total Savings (Approx)	£ 732,214

The figures are indicative at this current time.

10.23 This does not include changes to the staff structure, which will be in addition as detailed below. It should be clear however that this figure should only be used as a guide. Any changes to staff terms and conditions, as already mentioned, will be subject to further negotiation and more detailed work around shift allowances, etc.

Summary changes to working procedures

- Job roles to be more flexible
- Job roles and duties to be managed on site
- Clarity and consistency to be applied across all sites.
- Duty Managers to have a more flexible role
- Leisure Assistants roles to be broadened to include lifeguarding, cleaning, vending machine stock, etc. and to include covering other sites
- Key LA's to be trained up to cover Casual Duty Officer.
- Receptionists and admin to support membership sales and swimming development
- BS clerk to cover reception, swimming bookings and sales as and when required.
- Reception to also cover health and fitness sales, bookings, customer consultation, admin duties
- Cleaners to be flexible where they work
- Casual Bank of staff to be established to provide cover instead of overtime -. Detailed analysis needs to be undertaken of possible part time/casual hours required
- Annual leave application process to be set up to ensure equity
- No future use of agency – hours to be given to part time or casual staff
- There is a need to try to adopt part time contracts rather than casual for the majority of hours including coaching and classes.

Staffing levels and job roles

10.24 We have based our calculations on the current staff structure provided by BCC management. As we have not had time to undertake a complete analysis of the staffing hours we have based our suggestions on what would be considered reasonable in a similar leisure centre.

10.25 The reductions are also based on the premise that, where possible given the low attendances, leisure centre opening hours will be reduced dependant on demand.

10.26 We have also taken into consideration the need to develop the service and have added staff where there is a need to increase income by focussing on service delivery.

10.27 We have also looked to widen job descriptions of all staff and increase the flexibility within roles.

10.28 We have only taken a high level review of swimming lessons and swimming programmes and so we have left the swimming staff levels the same with the exception of a new Swimming Development Coordinator. A full detailed review of swimming lessons and programmes needs to be undertaken and linked to the Boost membership in order to maximise use of pool time and maximise income from swimming lesson.

Draft changes to staff structure and suggested grades (Note new grades have not been through JE)

Current Position	Current Grade	New Position	New Grade	Approx. Difference incl on costs + or - £
Leisure Operations Manager(1)	PO8	New CEO role (1)	PO8	-
Area Managers (5)	PO3	Area Managers (3)	PO3	- £ 103,852
Finance Manager (1)	-	Transferred from BCC (1)	-	
Participation Manager (2)	PO3	Partnerships Officer** (1)	SO2	- £ 60,806
Duty Manager Participation (3)	SO2	Physical Activity ** Outreach development (3)	Sc 5	- £ 39,912
Leisure Duty Officer – facilities (31)	SO2	Leisure Duty Officer – facilities (27)	SO2	- £ 172,184
F/T Leisure Attendants (86)	Sc2	F/T Leisure Attendants (70)	Sc 2/3	- £ 364,384
P/T Leisure Attendants (69) based on 50% hours	Sc 2	P/T Leisure Attendants (60)	Sc 2/3	- £ 102,483
H & F Coach (17)	Sc 4	H & F Coach (23)	Sc 4	+£ 151,360
Swim Teachers (11)	Sc 4	Swim Teachers (11)	Sc 4	-
Plant Fitter (8)	Sc 5	Plant Fitter (4)	Sc 5	-£ 118,968
Car Park Attendant (1)	Sc1c	Car Park Attendant (0)	Sc1c	-£ 16,473
BA (9)	Sc 6	Business Development/ Memberships/ Sales	Sc 6	-
BS Clerk (11)	Sc 3	BS clerk /Sales (8)	Sc 3	-£ 72,378
F/t Receptionist (18)	Sc 3	F/T Customer Service Assts (16)	Sc 3	-£ 48,252

P/T Receptionist (43) 50%	Sc 3	P/T Customer Service Assts (40)	Sc 3	-£ 33,298
Playroom Att (3)	Sc 1b	Playroom Att (3)	Sc 1b	-£ 61,233
P/T Tennis Coach (3)	Sc 4	P/T Tennis Coach	Sc 4	-
Marketing and Communications role		To be transferred from central resource back to leisure centres		0
		Coaches – bank of specialist coaches - p/t contracts	BUDGET	+£ 40,000
Total potential savings with new staff structure				-£1,002,863

Figures in brackets denotes numbers of posts

Area Managers to control 3 sites each – size of sights to be distributed evenly

**Partnerships Role – to lead on the development of partnership and community development activities linked specifically to outreach from the leisure centres to increase attendances

Receptionists and admin to support membership sales and swimming development.

New Roles

There needs to be a focus on business development and therefore there will be a necessity for income generation roles to drive the business forward. It is not known whether these roles already exist within the central development team. If that is the case they need to be more focussed on the leisure centres, if not, then the creation of these roles should be considered as a necessity.

New Posts				
		Swimming Development Coordinator (1)	Sc 6	+ £ 30,352
		Health and Fitness Dev Officer (1)	Sc 6	+£ 30,352
		Memberships/Sales – central role (1)	Sc 6	+£ 30,352
Total additional expenditure on new posts				+£ 91,056

Total Staff Structure Savings

Total savings on old structure	£ 1,002,863
Less New posts created	£ 91,056
Potential Total Savings	£ 911,807

Staff Development and learning

- 10.29 PDR's need to be meaningful and realise staff development potential whilst also addressing performance issues. All staff will have clear performance measures as part of the process and be clear on the outcomes and standards expected of them. Equally staff should expect to be managed in an effective, supportive and consistent manner.
- 10.30 Staff will have development plans, part of which will include learning and training contracts which will be managed effectively and which should also assist in the development of both the member of staff and the service.
- 10.31 Staff, especially at Duty Officer level and above would benefit from formal mentoring and from benchmarking and working with peers at sites where performance is excellent. Belfast staff could quite easily learn from best practice and should be given the opportunity as part of their new development programme to do so on an on-going basis.

Commercial Skills

- 10.32 All staff need to be made aware of upselling and specific roles trained in a more commercial approach to service delivery. Key customer facing roles will be identified and will be expected to undergo relevant training in order to increase sales.
- 10.33 Teams and individuals will be aware of their targets and standards from their PDR's and will be expected to achieve those targets.
- 10.34 Quality Assessments e.g. QUEST, APSE Performance Networks
- 10.35 All centres should strive to achieve QUEST and to improve through the APSE Benchmarking Service
- 10.36 Significant changes to staffing will need to take place in both the NPDO and In House Model.

11. Programming and Consultation

- 11.1 The Programming and opening hours of the centres are a key part of ensuring the delivery of the staff changes and savings. It is possible to more effectively programme the sites to ensure optimum staffing levels whilst balancing that with the needs of the relevant communities.
- 11.2 There is little consultation with communities relating to the programming of the sites and as such this is an area which should be commenced as soon as is feasibly possible thereby feeding into the changes which are going to take place over the next year.
- 11.3 Classes which are not viable after 4 weeks should no longer be programmed. Classes should as a minimum cover the costs of the trainer.
- 11.4 There may be a need to revise some of the programming policies more in line with the individual needs of the local communities around the centres rather than a blanket approach. Centres could be grouped together, as appropriate, to provide coordinated services at differing times.
- 11.5 Again this is an exercise which should be supported by community consultation and in which the staff are willing to get involved.

Leisure Centres

- 11.6 When assessing the current sites and the future investment plans for Leisure one of the anomalies that seem to exist is the Loughside Leisure Centre. It is not promoted anywhere; it is underused bringing in only £19,815 in 2012/13 with an expenditure of £195,599. Staff costs alone for the centre are £123,516 which cannot justify the level of income received. Exploring the feasibility of retaining the leisure centre and taking a more proactive approach to the management and programming of the facility, by assessing the feasibility of externalising the management of this facility to the community or ceasing to provide the facility. Should the facility be withdrawn from the leisure portfolio this would result in a saving to the authority of £175,784 including staff costs, £ 52,268 without staff costs. For the purposes of this report we have included the staff reductions in the main area of the staffing report.

Changes to opening hours

- 11.7 In 2006 a report was taken to members to increase opening hours of the leisure centres with a view to increasing income. A short review of the opening hours and the resultant attendances would indicate that there is definitely a case for reviewing the current opening hours again and focussing on the hours which are most suited to the local community and the are supported by a reasonable level of usage. The most popular sites currently for early mornings are: Andersonstown, Grove Wellbeing Centre, Falls LC, Olympia LC and Avoniel LC. Attendances at other sites are limited. Also there are sites which would benefit from being more flexible with their programming in order to

provide the facilities when they are required by the public but close them at times when there is no identified demand and also begin to balance provision across partner centres rather duplicating sessions and staffing costs.

- 11.8 A review of the opening hours should be undertaken to assist in reducing the unnecessary staffing and overtime levels.

12. Infrastructure

Information technology

- 12.1 It is apparent that the Management Information Systems are either not effective or are not being used to their full potential. Public are using the centre without registering i.e. there is no swipe card system and so intelligence on usage is not being captured. Specific software for memberships, swimming development, fitness programmes, marketing intelligence, etc. are all available and are used in high performing services. An assessment of the current IT systems together with the ability of the staff to make the most of those systems, needs to be done and potential investment from the Capital programme needs to be identified. Systems should be standard across all sites and should interface with any new technology built into new centres in the future.
- 12.2 Investment will be required in this whether the service is an NPDO or In House model.

Maintenance plans and sinking funds

- 12.3 Maintenance plans need to reflect the fact that leisure is a front line service. The CEO of the new organisation should have the autonomy to influence the maintenance programme and also to plan long term for future improvements.

Equipment investment

- 12.4 If the service is to improve and compete effectively with the private sector, investment must be made in keeping gym and other key equipment up to date. Leisure must have the ability to control its own future by enabling sinking funds; future equipment development funds etc. in order to grow the business and respond to exercise trends. Investment in new gym equipment will need to be made in some cases in order to increase memberships and class attendances. Invest to Save schemes should be introduced.

13. Income Generation Opportunities

- 13.1 There are many ways of improving income generation some of which we have included in this report. Due to the short timescale which APSE was allocated to undertake this review we are able in some instances to provide reasonably accurate figures based on assumptions from other services however in some instances staff have also made suggestions on how they may be able to take services forward but have not had the time to work up detailed proposals or business cases to support those ideas. APSE has

however included those ideas in order that they are captured for future reference and also to indicate the level of commitment by some staff to improving the service.

- 13.2 As stated in the Deloitte report the key areas for income generation for larger leisure centres tend to be swimming lessons and Health and Fitness membership.

Swimming Lessons

- 13.3 The level of income for swimming lessons using APSE Performance Networks data across 8 centres for 2012/13 was £132,913.
- 13.4 The Boost membership scheme offers free swimming lessons to people who join up as members of Boost. There is no additional income or grants from anywhere to offset the free lessons, pool time or swimming teacher time therefore these lessons are a direct cost to the centre. It is unusual to offer lessons free as part of a membership and we have been unable to find any other facilities that do so.
- 13.5 38% of the swimming lessons provided in Belfast centres were provided through the membership scheme i.e. they were provided free of charge, had the lessons been paid for the additional income would have been £81,462 without any additional outlay by the centres. This level of income could have been achieved without doing anything additional other than charge for the service as the lesson sessions were already happening. This being the case there is even more scope for increasing income from swimming lessons if the service was promoted properly and charged for accordingly. The balance between public swimming and lesson time may have to be made across centres so that swimming lessons can be booked into the centres where there is demand and public swimming moved to nearby centres where there is less demand for lessons but still demand for public swimming.
- 13.6 The decision to provide free swimming lessons with membership should be reviewed as a matter of urgency, and if not stopped completely then at least limited to how long it can continue.

Swimming review

- 13.7 There is real scope to address the way in which swimming lessons are currently managed and also subsidised and whether that subsidy should be coming from the centres themselves at a time when they are being asked to reduce costs.
- 13.8 A swimming review should be undertaken and a swimming Coordinator post established to sell the services, improve the take up and income generation and coordinate the lessons across all the centres. There is scope to increase the number of swimming lessons in some centres and reduce them at others which may impact on public swimming times in some centres but should ensure that there is public swimming in at least one centre in a community.

Health and Fitness

13.9 The level of latent demand for fitness has already been assessed for the Andersonstown Leisure Centre in the piece of work undertaken by Leisure Database. The report indicated a potential to increase membership by just under 40% at Andersonstown.

13.10 The total number of members across all the centres, according to figures provided by BCC is currently in the region of 6800. If we assume that with additional sales staff/promotion etc. as included in the new staff structure that an increase of 15% is achievable, to 7820, this would result in an increase in income of approximately £306,000 per annum.

13.11 It should be noted that the rule of thumb levels of membership per station would mean membership levels should be in the region of 8475.

Admission Fees

13.12 If all admission fees were to be increased by an additional 10p the resulting income generated would be in the region of £110,719. This should be a serious consideration.

Free Use for over 60's

13.13 Leisure Centres in Belfast currently offer the over 60's free use of the centres before 11am Monday to Friday.

13.14 Figures provided by BCC show that 91,375 people used the facilities under this scheme in 2013/14.

13.15 Examples of other nearby leisure centre charges are:-

- Lisburn CC - Lagan Valley Leisure Plex - £4.50 swimming session, £3.00 casual gym
- Newtownabbey BC - £ 1.50 swimming session, £4.50 casual gym, £2.80 classes

13.16 Whilst we would not wish to see a reduction in usage a nominal charge of £1.00 would still provide exceptionally good value compared with nearby centres and would be likely to realise in the region of £90,000 per year. It is recommended that this charge be introduced as once again the centre is not receiving any income to assist with staffing levels etc. during this time.

Vending

13.17 Vending is another area where the sites do not take advantage of the potential for income generation. We understand that the current contract for vending is able to be renewed on an annual basis therefore within the timescales identified it should be possible to negotiate a different provider for vending with a reasonable return in sales. Current vending levels are minimal.

13.18 APSE PN data indicates that vending and catering can realise anything between £0.19p per head up to £1.26 per head in the best facilities.

13.19 If we assume a return of 0.05p per head across all sites, based on PN data that would realise in the region of £60,000 per annum, 0.10p would realise £120,000.

13.20 Further exploration of this option is required but for the purposes of this report we have assumed the lowest figure of £0.05 spend per head which is well below the lowest figures elsewhere.

Parties

13.21 With the exception of Grove the income from parties is low. Once again there is potential to increase the income through community promotion and marketing of the services and facilities locally.

13.22 The total income from parties across 10 centres is currently £95,995. £37,400 of which is taken at Grove, staff are aware that there is potential to increase the income levels. Parties should be programmed into a new revised centre programme for the future and promoted locally. The projected increase in income has not been quantified at this stage.

Summer Schools

13.23 Last year's summer school made a loss of over £50,000. Given the extremely low prices charged for this service at a minimum the operating costs should be covered and prices reduced where necessary through means testing. There is potential at some of the more affluent sites to make a small return on the summer school however at the moment all services should at least cover their costs unless subsidised by funding from elsewhere.

Pricing structures/recharges

13.24 There are numerous examples of 'free use' being given to activities which are either being booked by other internal departments outside leisure and not recharged, or are booked as part of the Active Belfast initiative. Whilst the Active Belfast initiative is something to be supported, costs involved in supporting the delivery of grant aided schemes need to start taking into account the delivery costs incurred by the leisure centres and the staff time involved in set up/delivery etc. These costs can usually be built into grant applications and therefore should be passed on to the centres. It is unclear whether all the costs are being passed on at the moment. As an example the Ozone Centre alone provided £9000 worth of free use last year for various activities for which they would have incurred venue and staffing costs but were not recompensed.

GP Referral Scheme

13.25 It is unclear how the GP referral scheme is paying for the staff time allocated by the Health and Fitness staff at the centres. We understand that a grant is given to the centres to provide the service. In light of potential changes to staffing this scheme needs to be reviewed to ensure that costs are being covered. This is also a scheme that the centres are more willing to support and get involved with dependant on cost recovery. There is a will to try to ensure that GP referrals convert to members for the longer term. Clarity is required on the charging and recharging mechanisms relating to GP referrals and to what extent the centres are expected to subsidise the scheme.

Training

13.26 There are well trained staff within the Leisure Centres who could potentially offer training, not only internally, but to external agencies e.g. NPLQ. Colerain already offer this service in the north with charges in the region of £250 per head. There is a member of staff who is keen to develop this and is willing to do the research to provide a business plan to move the proposal forward. Other leisure services provide accredited training for coaches, first aid, personal training etc. and have established accredited training centres within their sites. Centres also provide coaching in different sports throughout the year as sessional programmes for both adults and children. At this time there are no financial figures to support this proposal although figures can be obtained from other sites to evidence the business plan.

13.27 Other potential developments include:-

- Develop more use of the facilities by schools and develop a closer working relationship with education.
- Increase the opportunities for other secondary spend i.e. swimming goggles, costumes etc
- Explore potential to provide other activities with public health e.g. tea dances, craft sessions etc.

14. Financial Summary

Summary of Financial impacts identified earlier in the report

All figures in the table below are estimated and will need further work to confirm their accuracy.

Savings/Income generation	Expenditure Savings	Potential Income Generation
Staffing overtime and agency	£ 732,214	
Staff Structure savings	£ 911,807	
Total Potential Savings	£ 1,644,021	
Increase of 10p on all admissions prices		£110,719
Swimming Lessons		£ 81,000
Health and Fitness		£ 306,000
Over 60's		£ 90,000
Vending		£ 60,000
Total Potential Increased Income		£ 647,719

Total Potential Reduction in Revenue		£2,291,740
---	--	-------------------

The total potential reduction in revenue budget identified to date would indicate that the service is able to move towards achieving the financial figure of £2m as identified. The current estimated potential figure is in the region of: £ 2,291,740

15. Conclusion

- 15.1 Given the opportunity across the leisure services relating to new investment, the potential for the in house service model under a strong leader with the necessary transformational skills required and with changes to governance there is real potential for change. The lead officer, i.e. CEO or Head of Service, will be crucial to the success of the In House service. It remains to be seen whether the skills are currently in house or not. It is evident that the current governance arrangements have impeded on the ability of current managers to manage change but equally it is also apparent that some of the basic management requirements together with a lack of consistency within the current management are impacting on the front line service delivery and staff morale.
- 15.2 We have been able to highlight the areas in which change can be made and although there is still detailed work to be undertaken behind the figures i.e. new staffing rotas, changes to opening hours and charges to be agreed, changes to terms and conditions of staff etc., the saving of £2m on the revenue budget bottom line should be able to be achieved. The caveat to this is that all parties will need to be in agreement to the changes i.e. Members, staff and unions, if agreement is not reached by any one of these partners then the ability to achieve significant change will be lost. Suffice to say that agreement and negotiations with staff and unions will still need to be undertaken by the NPDO option. If any one of these factors is not changed then there will be little potential for the transformation to succeed.
- 15.3 If these elements cannot be resolved then the In House service will not be able to succeed however if agreement is reached and a new way forward agreed together with protocols for future working relationships then the service has immense potential. At this stage it should be said that the unions seem willing to negotiate constructively to work towards achieving an in house option.
- 15.4 The In House option will also leave the Council in a stronger place to move forward in a more strategic way linking the services more effectively to Parks and Active Belfast , as well as Community Development and Neighbourhoods , so services will be aligned to effectively deliver on Community Planning and continuous improvement in the future. The lessons learnt from the transformation of leisure will be more able to be shared across other services.
- 15.5 There is no better time to keep the service in house than with the impending development of new facilities however there must be the autonomy to manage in order that the service improvement succeeds.

- 15.6 It is also our opinion that the operational challenges facing the service transformation by the In House bid are the same as would be faced by the NPDO. The NPDO would also have to select an external board and set itself up as a legal entity which is likely to be challenging in the timescales identified.
- 15.7 It is our considered opinion that with the right leadership, the changes in governance and cooperation between staff, unions and the Council that the in house bid can achieve the outcomes required. If these elements cannot be resolved then the In House service will not be able to succeed.
- 15.8 The level of work involved however should also not be underestimated and it is unlikely that the In House team could deliver the level of change without external support. However, contrary to the Deloitte report there do appear to be staff willing to undertake some of that work and influence the future of the service.

Appendix 1 – Analysis of options

The Deloitte report summarised the key issues of the Models which they compared in their report. APSE have used those comparisons to repeat the exercise basing the facts of the In House model on the suggested way forward for the In House service as we have outlined it in this report. We have used the arguments for the NPDO model from the original report and made changes to the In House Option.

It should be noted that the differences between the two options are minimal, the main one being that of the VAT savings. Each option will need external support to deliver it on time. The in house option may need to build in external support for a little longer to support the change process, whereas the NPDO will bring in a new CEO to lead change. Whichever option is agreed it will be crucial to have a strong and knowledgeable leader.

Scope to Maximise Service

In House	NPDO
Dedicated external support to be brought in to support the process	Dedicated external support brought in to support the process (GLL/Deloitte)
Changes required to Council governance – will have to happen anyway linked to RPA	Independent board to be set up New Legal entity required
Additional Savings/revenue not necessarily ring-fenced for leisure	Additional Savings ring-fenced for leisure
Additional savings/revenue may go back into Council	Additional savings will not go back into Council
Will need strong management to drive through change	Will need strong management to drive through change

Improving Customer Experience

Will require time and support from all levels of management to develop skills	Independent organisation however staff will still require time and support from management to develop skills
Change of governance arrangements should release time to focus on service delivery and customers	Will have focus as it will be an independent organisation
Will introduce effective performance management systems	Will introduce effective performance management systems
Will improve management of KPI's and monitor continuous improvement	Will improve management of KPI's and monitor continuous improvement
New MIS, booking, membership, customer access systems	New MIS, booking, membership, customer access systems
More focussed marketing techniques	More focussed marketing techniques
With the right new manager it will eliminate the need for senior Council management time	Will eliminate the need for senior management time
Changes in governance will ensure more arms-length approach to service delivery	Single focus organisation without competing pressures
Changes in current job descriptions to provide customer focus	
Additional roles to focus on community development/memberships and swimming development	

Access to new board with related skills	Access to board business skills
---	---------------------------------

Increasing Participation

New staff structure will provide emphasis on increasing involvement with local communities	
Can build on past successes	Can build on Council's past successes
More focussed Public Value organisation	Single focus public value organisation
Existing partnerships already working with considerable number of third party organisations in community development	Natural Partner for many third party organisations
Can address significant areas of participation weakness	Will also need to address significant areas of participation weakness
Some grants not available but can work with external organisations to access grants	Additional grants may be available
Easier to work across in house services to increase participation	Will be able to use surpluses as match finding for Council grant applications
Surpluses will go back into the Council and so will still be used for public value but not necessarily leisure	Ring fencing of surpluses for public value purposes
Difficult to link performance incentives to participation	Easier to link performance incentives to participation

Developing Staff and Improving Employability

Initial external support and mentoring for Head of Service to support and implement change	CEO appointment provides opportunity to bring in skills/drive
Staff will be given clear and consistent management and autonomy to manage	Dedicated Finance Manager
Governance changes to speed up decision making processes	Team skills enhanced through board
Less reliance on Corporate support. Managers freed up to focus more on business needs	Managers freed to focus solely on business needs
Dedicated finance officer	Objects could include use of local supplier and promotion of apprenticeships
Team skills enhanced through new autonomy, new board, mentoring and benchmarking	Access to grants/ commercial sponsorship
Subsiding of target groups aligned to a new Leisure Strategy	Subsidising target groups taken in context of public value approach
Leaner decision making processes with new governance	Leaner decision making processes
Apprenticeships available to LA	

Deliverability by March 2016

Is able to make radical change in the timescales if all parties are in agreement	Also needs radical change and buy in from staff
External resource brought in to support the process. Will need some management time	External resource brought in to support the process. Will need some management time
Needs to compete with pressures of LGR – autonomy will ensure service managers are focussed on leisure	Importing refreshed and skilled leadership
Will need a leader with drive and leadership to implement. Will need external support initially.	Over 100 examples of successful delivery of NPDO model
Many examples of successful in house service delivery which can be benchmarked	
Many examples of significant financial	Many examples of significant financial

improvement	improvement
Internal view that, subject to agreement, staff changes can be made easily. Other changes can be made subject to some external support as staff are now willing to change	Legal view that transfer can be achieved quickly

Appendix 2 – Staff SWOT analysis

Strengths

Highly qualified staff in some areas
Knowledge of customers/local community
Established relationships with customers
Good provision for school/reasonably priced
Concessionary rate available to allow access for all
Dedicated staff resource
Good services in our community
Understanding & willingness to change
Qualified membership exists
Services are free to N.I.
Ideas to increase income & business improvement
Team workers/ good PR/communications
Good customer feedback/personal connections
Inclusiveness / established policies in place
T & C'S
Creative/ flexible/organised/efficient
Committed to leisure services
A lot of experienced/willing staff
Comprehensive programme
Local knowledge
Cradle to Grave service (customers)
In-house training
Good working conditions/ retention of staff, high
Safe environment/ staff trained/child protection etc.
Pricing

Weaknesses

Lack of leadership
No real leisure strategy
Structure/shifts don't suit centres
Operate a 1 size fits all policy-doesn't work
Time it takes to fill vacant posts

Excessive use of agency staff
Service too centralised, too much bureaucracy
Too much interference from Councillors
No accountability for anyone e.g. Compliance manager
Disjointed service/ programming too similar in centres
Number of freebies in centres to detriment of paid bookings
Top heavy centrally
Participation separate to sports development
Control of comms style –dysfunctional
Summer scheme too cheap –where does income go?
£56k deficit
Competition between centres – swimming –decisions
Senior management/ poor decisions
Slowness in decisions
Payment policy/charge all for service
Services are free to N.I.
Lack of Autonomy
Revenue/grants not all going to leisure fully
Structures wrong
Active leisure comp. GP Ref £40k
Communication/ both to customers & internal
No Strategic plan
Interaction with other services
Performance monitoring
Age of buildings
Not competitive/ pricing etc.
Mind set of Council
Too Centralised – 2layers
Budget
Development
HR
Maintenance
Marketing/advertising
60+ users free of charge
Lack of investment

PDP's under-utilisation of staff
Senior management-no direction/no leisure experience
Council is funding competitors
Use approach of 1 size fits all/centres are all individual
1 manager to 2 sites

Opportunities

More training opportunities for personal develop
Develop specific centre programs
Re-discover centres of excellence
Improve community relations
Influence the decision making process
Input in to pricing policy
Revision of opening hrs. -centre specific
Need centres to work together
Revise events/inter-centre activities
Look at programs for specific age groups not currently catered for
E.g. u5's oak's teenagers
Change of role for staff/training
Try to influence change
Motivational flexibility
Advancement
Improved communication
To increase income/better strategies/sales/marketing
Outreach to communities/schools/business/sports groups
Secure Belfast leisure provision for the future by maximising usage
Change centre programs to reflect the needs of the community etc.
Staff involvement in future service provision/purchasing of equipment
Control access to centres
Increased I.T Support – better ways of admin/comm.
To get the right staff structure
Create flexible workforce
Income increase
-Summer scheme prices

- M/ship sales
- Make a Splash (price –free as part of m/ship)
- 60+ pay a nominal fee
- 1 to 1 coaching by centre coaches – not private lessons
- Crèche facilities
- Review of opening hours
- Centres of excellence
- Revamp programme
- One entity/joined up co-operation between centres
- Secondary spend/vending machines currently leased out
- Outreach: e.g. water safety, obesity first aid
- Improved I.T. /WI-FI/Technology
- Funding – environmental
- Increase school swim program in some centres

Threats

- Lack of investment in current facilities
- Private sector
- Saturation
- Aged equipment
- Decision makers have lack of practical leisure experience
- Lack of funding
- Time
- Politics in Belfast
- Private sector competition
- Resources £/time/equipment
- Internal leisure politics
- Buildings/age/fit for purpose
- Age/profile/skills base/planning
- BCC funding other organisations that are in direct competition with the centres
- Politicians/Senior management
- Private gyms
- Divided communities with different needs
- Resources/inability to move with new trends
- Decreasing budgets in schools – transport costs etc.

Threats to other council depts.

Costs of flexibility – additional training etc.

**LOCAL SERVICES
LOCAL SOLUTIONS**

By virtue of paragraph(s) 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 4: Trust Outputs and Outcomes

The council will take a lead role in improving quality of life for the people of Belfast by making the city and its neighbourhoods better places to live in, work in, invest in and visit

Environment

Care for Belfast's environment and help create a sustainable, clean and green place for everyone to live

Making the City Cleaner & Greener

- Contribute to air quality action plan for Belfast
- Promote active travel
- Increase energy efficiency
- Promote sustainable leisure operations

Manage waste Responsibly

- Promote zero waste direct to landfill

High Quality Urban and Local Environment

- Provide 5* Leisure Facilities & Services
- Maintain quality buildings and public realm
- Provide safe and accessible infrastructure
- Provide spaces which encourage all citizens to use
- Contribute to local neighbourhood improvement plans
- Promote use of Council parks through walking clubs and other outdoor-based activities

Economy

Create a vibrant, sustainable and inclusive economy

Support Employability and Skills Development

- Create leadership programmes
- Improve workforce development
- Provide training & employment schemes for staff
- Provide knowledge, skills courses & programmes
- Maintain IIP accreditation
- Improve staff satisfaction

Support Local Procurement

- Increase use of local suppliers
- Increase use locally produced goods

Communities

Improve quality of life across all communities

People are Healthier

- Increase levels physical activity
- Improve general physical health
- Improve mental well being

Invest in Our Neighbourhoods

- Increase local employment opportunities
- Increase work placement opportunities
- Provide job clubs
- Provide training & employment schemes

Engaged and Active Communities

- Increase number of clubs & sessions
- Engage with and as a Stakeholder
- Increase volunteering opportunities
- Increase number of community outreach programs
- Increase number of community events

Reduce Inequalities and Tackle Disadvantage

- Create a locally focused business plan
- Create targeted pricing plans
- Create targeted marketing plans

Positive Relations and Shared Space

- Increase number of Good Relations projects
- Increase space for community events and groups

A Safer City

- Increase programs targeting anti social behaviour

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 5: Performance Management

(Illustrative Figures only)

Belfast NPDO KPI Dashboard

- Target Being Achieved
- 90% Target Being Achieved
- Target Not Being Achieved
- ↑ Performance Improving
- ↓ Performance Staying about the same
- ↔ Performance Declining

Health

	Target	Previous	Current	RAG	Trend
% of Customers Meeting Physical Activity Guidelines	75%	68%	69%	●	↔
% of Customers who Describe their Activity as Sedentary	25%	35%	28%	●	↓
% of Customers engaged in Moderate or Vigorous Activity	60%	57%	59%	●	↑
% of Customers with above average Physical Health score	75%	58%	58%	●	↔
% of Customers with above average Mental Health score	80%	55%	60%	●	↑
% of Customers within recommended weight band for their height	80%	55%	56%	●	↑
% of completed GP referrals	95%	75%	80%	●	↑

Social

% of turnover spent on locally produced goods	10%	5%	6%	●	↑
% of turnover spent locally	35%	30%	32%	●	↑
Number of local jobs supported directly/indirectly	15	13	14	●	↓
Number of local organisations who use space in the centre	25	17	17	●	↔
Number of places on board for community members	3	3	3	●	↔
Number of Community Events being run or facilitated	150	134	140	●	↓

Facilities Management

	Target	Previous	Current	RAG	Trend
Performance Failure Points Accrued	20	18	17	●	↓
Total Number of Performance Failures	10	12	9	●	↓
% of Performance Failures Rectified	100%	87%	91%	●	↑

Participation

	Target	Previous	Current	RAG	Trend
Total Number of Health & Fitness Visits	111,000	108,000	109,000	●	↑
Total Number of Swims	105,000	106,000	108,000	●	↑
Total Number of Dry Sports Activity Visits	50,000	48,000	47,000	●	↑
Total Number of Outdoor Sports Activity Visits	10,000	8,000	11,000	●	↑
% Visits by Members	80%	74%	75%	●	↑
% Visits by Concessions/Leisurecard	35%	38%	39%	●	↑
% Visits by Males		55%	54%		↑
% Visits by Females		45%	46%		↑
% Visits by U16s		28%	30%		↑
% Visits by Over 60s		12%	10%		↑
% of Visits by Disabled People		4%	3%		↑
% of Visits by Ethnic Minorities		8%	8%		↔

Satisfaction

	Target	Previous	Current	RAG	Trend
Complaints as % of Visits	1.00%	1.30%	1.40%	●	↓
Complaints Actioned within Timescales	100%	98%	97%	●	↑
Customer Satisfaction Levels	85%	80%	82%	●	↑
Customer Review Ratings	5	4	4	●	↔

Staffing

	Target	Previous	Current	RAG	Trend
Staff Turnover as % of Workforce	3.0%	5.0%	5.0%	●	↔
Sickness Rates (days per month)	0.33	0.38	0.39	●	↓
% Workforce Female		39.0%	42.0%		↑
% Workforce Ethnic Minority		8.0%	9.0%		↑
% Employees Under 25		27.0%	25.0%		↑
% Employees Over 50		3%	3%		↔

This page is intentionally left blank



Belfast City Council

RESTRICTED

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Leisure Transformation Programme Issues Paper 4: Financial, legal and equality assurances
Date:	25 April 2014

1.0	Relevant background information
1.1	Since January, preliminary work has been undertaken at risk to establish the Trust, more accurately defines as a non-profit distributing organisation (NPDO). The NPDO structures are being developed with legal, asset and business/financial advisors. Work is also underway to develop the partnership agreement and business plan.

2.	Key issues
2.1	Principles of approach to business planning and setting funding agreement Work has started on the agreements and contracts that will be required between the Council and the Trust, and then between the Trust and the strategic operating partner. Again, the Council is receiving advice from Trowers and Hamlins in this regard, and we have begun to outline the matters which will have to be covered in the contract. The contracts in this matter shall be extremely important, as these shall be the primary means of influence and control by the Council of the Trust and its activities, through a contractual relationship. The Trust will also secure its own independent advice on the Contract to be entered into between it and the Council. This will provide a layer of protection to each party, as the Contract will be independently reviewed.
2.2	Asset and utilities management A number of workstreams have been established, including representatives from Legal services, to deal with the practical issues faced. Due diligence has begun on the legal title to the various assets that shall be leased to the Trust, to ensure that there are no title difficulties in relation to these assets. Detailed surveys will also be carried out of all the assets to be transferred, to ensure that the Council and the Trust have an agreed position on the state of any assets that transfer, at the date of transfer. Similarly, we are reviewing all current contractual arrangements that the Council has that

	relate to Leisure, to ensure that we have a legally acceptable approach to dealing with these Contracts post Leisure Transformation.
2.3	<p>VAT considerations</p> <p>The Council will ensure that it reaps maximum financial benefits from the transformation of leisure, and it has recognised that the issues of VAT shall be key to this. The Council is therefore ensuring that it takes all necessary professional advice it can to ensure that these areas are accurately dealt within the agreements and contracts with the Trust, particularly in relation to property maintenance.</p>
2.4	<p>Best Value considerations</p> <p>Under the Local Government (Best Value) Act (Northern Ireland) 2002, the Council is under an obligation to make arrangements for continuous improvements in the way in which its functions are exercised. The Act imposes an obligation on the Council when considering how to exercise this function, to consult persons appearing to the Council to be representative of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Persons liable to pay rates in respect of hereditaments in the district of the Council; b. Persons who use or likely to use the services provided by the Council; c. Persons appearing to the Council to have an interest in the district of the Council. <p>There is an obligation to consult in relation to Leisure Transformation, and these consulting obligations will be met through the equality consultation process as well as specific engagement with end users using media such as the Council’s website and social media.</p>
2.5	<p>Equality considerations</p> <p>In considering the new operating model and future capital investments in leisure the Council must have due regard to its statutory obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act. The Council will also wish to ensure any new management arrangements provide sufficient protections for those categories within the legislation as well as seeking to increase participation from under-represented groups. Finally, it is imperative that any policies or decisions consider any equality implications for staff. In order to support consideration of these issues the Council has engaged Policy Arc Limited to develop an Equality Framework for the programme and to support the process of due diligence in relation to equality.</p> <p>The Leisure Transformation Programme presents a major opportunity to increase participation in sport and leisure activities by under-represented groups. For this opportunity to be maximised it is essential that the facilities and activities provided are appropriate for these groups, are provided in the right locations and are appropriately marketed. The Council will need to consider how to set parameters for these elements in the specification for the management contract.</p>

Moreover, in line with the Council's commitment to promoting good relations it be would be intended that the Leisure Transformation programme that by transforming leisure we would have a measurable positive impact on the lives of people.

Policy Arc has subsequently recommended the following processes:

- **Equality screening** – in line with Council policy the programme has been screened and an EQIA recommended.
- **High level Equality Impact Assessment** – a high level equality impact assessment has been undertaken by Policy Arc until such time as there is a final decision on the future operating model (see Appendix 'A Note on Promoting Equality').
- **Agreement of Equality Ambitions** – based on the findings of this EQIA members are asked to agree a statement of equality ambitions. This will outline Members' the equality ambitions that will in turn be applied in the due diligence process and built into any contractual agreements. This, alongside other agreed outcomes, will form the basis of performance reports for leisure evidencing whether targets have been achieved.
- **Consultation** – subject to political agreement it is suggested that a 12 week consultation period is commenced. During this time our equality statement will be made available through our website for consideration by the public. Consultation with specific interest groups is also recommended; specifically staff (via Trade Unions), the council's Youth Forum, older people and representative bodies of the Section 75 categories via the Council's Consultative Panel.
- **Review & Implementation** - submissions from the consultation period will collated and Members will be asked to finally agree any actions following the completion of this and due diligence.

The attached paper outlines some of the benefits of participation in sport and leisure activities and the groups that could potentially benefit to the greatest degree. It presents evidence on low participation by people from a number of Section 75 groups:

- women;
- older people (in all age bands from 50 years upwards);
- disabled people;
- black and minority ethnic (BME) groups;
- lesbian, gay and bisexual people;
- people with dependent children, particularly lone parents.

Feedback from the consultation will identify actions that can be included in the business plan and partnership agreements to meet the needs of these Section 75 groups.

3.0 Decisions covered in the overview report

- To approve the equality framework for integration into the business planning and agreements development process,
- To agree outlined consultation approach to include consideration of the Council’s Best Value obligations

4.0 Abbreviations

EQIA – Equality Impact Assessment

LTP – Leisure Transformation Programme

NPDO – non-profit distributing organisation

TUPE – Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006

TUs – Trade Unions

5.0 Appendices

- Leisure Transformation Programme: Promoting Equality of Opportunity & Good Relations (Policy Arc Limited)

Belfast City Council

**Leisure Transformation Programme:
Promoting Equality of Opportunity & Good Relations**

Policy Arc Limited

7th April 2014

1. Introduction

The Council is in the process of developing a new approach to the management and delivery of sport and leisure services that will provide opportunities not only to improve the quality of service delivery but to address some of the key inequalities that currently exist in relation to the benefits that can result from participation in sport and leisure. This paper sets out some of those benefits and highlights the groups of people within the Section 75 equality categories who are currently under-represented in terms of participation.

In order to ensure that these inequalities are addressed within the new management arrangements, the Council will need to set parameters for the operation of sport and leisure facilities in relation to programming of activities, concessionary charges, marketing etc. Section 4 below explores these options in more detail.

2. Benefits of participation in sport and leisure

There is a wide range of research studies on the benefits of participation in sport and leisure activities. These suggest that there are five key areas of benefit:

- Physical health – physical activity reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and obesity and may reduce the risk of certain types of cancer, hypertension and osteoporosis;
- Mental health – moderate exercise is a viable way to treat depression and dementia and can reduce the risk of dementia;
- Education and employment – exercise has been shown to increase capacity for learning and improve energy levels and concentration and therefore influences educational attainment and employment prospects;
- Reduction in anti-social behaviour and crime – physical activity can be beneficial in tackling anti-social behaviour and crime by providing a diversionary activity, creating a hook for teaching emotional and career skills, achieving behaviour modification and building self-esteem;
- Social cohesion – sport and leisure contribute positively to many of the factors that build social cohesion including all of the above.

There is some data and research to indicate that certain Section 75 groups are at greater risk in terms of these key areas.

Key findings

Religion	<p>Physical health. The 2011 Census showed differences in general health according to religion. Those who were or had been brought up as Catholics were typically more likely than those who belonged to or had been brought up in Protestant denominations to assess their general health as either ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’. The relative differences were more noticeable in the older age groups.</p>
Gender	<p>Physical health. Men have a higher incidence of all types of cardiovascular disease than women and are at a higher risk of obesity, except in the under 25 age group. Women have a slightly higher risk of diabetes and a much higher risk of osteoporosis than men.</p> <p>Employment. Employment rates are higher for men than women but the current economic recession has resulted in the greatest negative impact on young men.</p>
Age	<p>Physical health. The risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, hypertension and osteoporosis all increase with age. Levels of obesity increase with age up to about 54 years, then decline.</p> <p>Mental health. There are an estimated 19,000 people in Northern Ireland with a form of dementia, only 2% of whom are aged under 65. There is also evidence that in the UK as a whole the highest incidence of mild mental illness is among the 50-54 age group.</p> <p>Employment. In 2013 over half (55%) of unemployed people were aged 16-29.</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour. Conduct disorders are the most common mental and behavioural problems in children and young people and the prevalence increases throughout childhood.</p>
Racial group	<p>Physical health. Mortality rates from cardiovascular disease are much higher for people of South Asian origin and there is evidence that type 2 diabetes is six times more common in this group. There has also been some research suggesting that people in some minority ethnic groups are more likely to be overweight or obese.</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour. The prevalence of conduct disorders in the UK varies across ethnic groups; for example, their prevalence is lower than average in children and young people of south Asian family origin and higher than average in children and young people of African-Caribbean family origin.</p>
Disability	<p>Physical health. People with mental health problems tend to have significantly higher rates of long-term physical health problems. There is also some evidence to suggest obesity may be more prevalent among disabled people.</p> <p>Mental health. People with learning disabilities may experience a higher risk of dementia because of premature ageing. People with Down’s syndrome have an increased genetic risk of developing dementia.</p> <p>Employment. The latest figures show that just over a third (37.6%) of disabled persons are in employment compared to 74.7% of non-disabled persons. Only about one fifth of people with mental ill-health or learning disability are in employment, despite the fact that research in the USA suggests that up to 58% of adults in this category are able to work.</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour. Conduct disorders commonly coexist with other mental health problems particularly Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.</p>
People with dependants	<p>Employment. People with dependents face additional barriers to employment including access to affordable child care and continuation of benefits once in employment. The proportion of lone parents in employment is particularly low</p>

	and there is evidence of higher job exit levels among this group.
--	---

3. Inequalities in participation

The above analysis shows that people in certain Section 75 groups are subject to inequalities within Northern Ireland society and that increased participation in sport and leisure activities may help to address some of the inequalities. However, the groups most at risk are, in many cases, the ones that are under-represented in terms of participation.

There are two main sources of detailed information on participation in sport and leisure activities. The 2010 Sport and Physical Activity Survey (SAPAS) commissioned by Sport NI provided information on levels of participation in activities at home, work, getting about, and organised sport and recreation and published findings by age, gender and disability. The Continuous Household Survey (CHS) 2011-12 presented respondents with a list of 39 sports activities and asked which, if any, they participated in during the previous 12 months; findings were published by religion, gender, age, marital status, disability and dependants. It should be noted that the two surveys used different definitions of sport with the CHS including lower intensity exercise such as walking.

Key findings

Religion	The CHS showed that there was no difference between levels of participation in sport between people from a Catholic background and those from a Protestant background.
Gender	Both reports showed that men are more likely than women to participate in sport. The figure for Belfast ¹ from the SAPAS report is particularly pronounced with only 25% of women participating compared with 45% of men.
Age	The CHS showed that participation levels peak for the 25-34 age group at 78% and then decrease with age; only 37% of people aged 65+ participate. The SAPAS report showed a similar gap with only 21% of those aged 50+ participating compared with 55% of those aged 16-29. The SAPAS report for Belfast showed very low figures for the 50+ age group at only 17%.
Marital status	The CHS showed that single people are more likely to participate in sport (71%) compared with those who are married or cohabiting (64%). The report noted that differences in marital status proportions were likely to be due to other factors such as age and dependants.
Disability	The CHS showed that people with a limiting long standing illness are less likely to participate in sport (44%) than those without (70%). The SAPAS report for Belfast put the figure for people with disabilities at only 12% compared with 19% for Northern Ireland as a whole.
People with dependants	The CHS showed that people with dependants are more likely to participate in sport (69%) than those without (59%).

The SAPAS report shows that participation in sport in Belfast is below the NI average in many categories with women, disabled people and those aged over 30 being significantly under-represented.

There is also some additional evidence about the participation of people in particular Section 75 groups from more general research reports which includes:

¹ These figures are for the new council area (as defined in 2010).

Racial group	Research commissioned by the UK Sports Council in 2009 ² suggests that inequality and discrimination persist in the provision of and access to sport and physical recreation opportunities by black and ethnic minority communities. These communities are poorly represented at decision making levels and face a range of barriers to sports participation.
Gender	Research by the Women's Sport and Fitness Foundation ³ indicates that there are significant emotional barriers to sporting participation for women, notably low levels of body confidence. In addition there are practical barriers for women in disadvantaged communities which include cost and the time of day at which sports are played.
Sexual orientation	Research commissioned by the UK Sports Councils in 2009 ⁴ concluded that there is no reliable evidence to allow analysis of the extent to which Lesbian Gay and Bisexual (LGB) people undertake different levels of sports participation but that there was anecdotal evidence that non-inclusive attitudes, homophobia and self-censorship exist.
Dependants	The Sport England Active People Survey 2009/10 showed that women aged 25-34 with children at home are half as likely as women the same age without children to take part in sport on a regular basis, the main barrier being lack of child care.

4. Addressing inequalities

The Council already has initiatives in place to address some of the current inequalities, for example through the sports development programme and the Healthwise scheme. However, the Leisure Transformation Programme presents a major opportunity to increase participation in sport and leisure activities by under-represented groups. For this opportunity to be maximised it is essential that the facilities and activities provided are appropriate for these groups, are provided in the right locations and are appropriately marketed.

If the Council confirms its decision to appoint a non-profit distributing organisation (NPDO) to manage sport and leisure facilities, it will be necessary to develop a specification for the management contract. To ensure that current inequalities continue to be addressed, the Council will need to consider the parameters within which the NPDO will have freedom to determine the programming of activities, charges, opening hours etc. In order to maximise the promotion of equality of opportunity the Council could, for example, seek to ensure that:

- the programming and location of classes and activities will take account of the need to encourage participation by under-represented groups;
- charging policies will include concessionary rates for certain groups;
- opening hours and the times of classes and activities will recognise the needs of various groups to participate at different times of day;
- marketing policies will recognise the need to attract people from under-represented groups;
- all information about sport and leisure activities will be made accessible in alternative formats to meet the needs of those with visual and/or hearing impairments, children and

² A systematic review of the literature on Black and Ethnic Minority Communities in Sport and Physical Education, 2009

³ Physical Activity and Mothers, 2005

⁴ A Literature Review of Sexual Orientation in Sport, 2008

young people, people with learning or communication difficulties and people for whom English is not their first language.

It may be sufficient to build into the specification something similar to the above bullet points and require the NPDO to monitor usage and report back at regular intervals. Alternatively the Council may wish to set specific targets for the participation of under-represented groups. In this case, it may be necessary to establish accurate baseline figures in terms of current usage of specific activities by people from under-represented groups, taking into account the population of those areas which will become part of the city boundaries in 2015.

5. Summary

This paper outlines some of the benefits of participation in sport and leisure activities and the groups that could potentially benefit to the greatest degree. It presents evidence on low participation by people from a number of Section 75 groups:

- women;
- older people (in all age bands from 50 years upwards);
- disabled people;
- black and minority ethnic (BME) groups;
- lesbian, gay and bisexual people;
- people with dependent children, particularly lone parents.

The Leisure Transformation Programme presents a major opportunity to increase participation in sport and leisure activities by under-represented groups. For this opportunity to be maximised it is essential that the facilities and activities provided are appropriate for these groups, are provided in the right locations and are appropriately marketed. The Council will need to consider how to set parameters for these elements in the specification for the management contract.



Report to: Strategic Policy & Resources Committee

Subject: Future City Conference – Planning for Growth

Date: Friday 25th April 2014

Reporting Officer: Chief Executive

Contact Officers: John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	<p>In recognising that the core of the city centre is important to driving growth and investment in neighbourhoods, Committee will be aware that Urban Strategies (Joe Berridge), with Deloitte and ARUP as part of the consultant team, have commenced the development of a Belfast Core City Regeneration and Investment Framework which is due to be complete in September/October 2014. Urban Strategies have met with the Budget & Transformation Panel and as part of the programme of engagement a public city centre event is planned for June 2014 to make stakeholders aware of the approach, allow comparison with other cities and to test the direction of travel of the plan.</p>
1.2	<p>This is a key opportunity to reinforce the role of Belfast as the key regional driver and the importance of the city centre in planning for future economic growth and competitiveness. Members will be aware that the Council held the 'Belfast: Future City' Conference in May 2013 with around 170 attendees from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. This was designed to build on the State of the City Development Debates and begin the process of ongoing engagement around priorities for city development in the context of the return of regeneration and place-shaping powers to the Council. This was well received and a conference report was made widely available in the summer edition of agendaNI. This proposed public city centre event in June clearly aligns and progresses the discussion that took place at the Future City Conference last year.</p>
1.3	<p>Members have previously noted that while the focus of this work is initially on the core city and surrounding communities it is important that it is placed firmly within the context of the wider regeneration and planning context of Local Government Reform i.e. the development of the local development plan, the community plan, and area regeneration frameworks. This report therefore sets out the proposed approach to the event in June, which is provisionally scheduled to take place on 20th June 2014.</p>

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>Budget & Transformation Panel</p> <p>Urban Strategies have met with the Budget & Transformation Panel where Members highlighted a number of issues to be taken account of during their work. This included the need to ensure connectivity between the city centre and local communities in terms of accessibility and mobility and in terms of ensuring that job creation and investment benefit local residents. The importance of incorporating social clauses into investments was also cited as important to promoting and securing local employment. The issue of housing in the city centre was noted as well as the importance of creating an attractive city for tourists and residents alike. Suggestions were also made about the benefit of a city art gallery and a casino in terms of attracting tourists and spend in the city.</p>
2.2	<p>In recognising the importance of ensuring connectivity of the city centre and local communities, a separate report on the agenda deals with the procurement of expertise to support the creation of a city vision as part of the community planning work programme agreed by Members. We will ensure that the work carried out on the city centre is connected to this city wide programme so that the impact of recommendations of this work impact across the city.</p>
2.3	<p>Urban Strategies have planned a public city centre event to make stakeholders aware of the core city regeneration and investment framework and to test the direction of travel. There is merit in maximising this event to reinforce the city as the regional economic driver, This event, which will build on the positive feedback received following last year's Future City Conference will foster collaboration and engender support amongst key stakeholders for the emerging strategy.</p>
2.4	<p>The preferred date for the Belfast conference is 20th June is as Urban Strategies are involved in a major International Festival of Business Conference which will take place in Liverpool (key dates are 18 -19 June 2014). Given the leadership role Members will play in taking forward the new Council's place-shaping responsibilities, it is proposed that Members attend this conference to hear the experience of world-class practitioners and provide an opportunity to meet with Members and officials from Liverpool and Manchester Councils. Leeds has also been suggested. This would allow Members to practically explore the challenges facing towns and cities as they continue to develop, how they can link their citizens to opportunities and play an ever stronger role in driving regional and national growth using regeneration and planning powers. There is also an opportunity for Belfast to align the Future City Conference with this through scheduling and engaging key speakers to attract a wide range of stakeholders in Belfast.</p>
2.5	<p>Proposed Objectives for the 20 June Conference:</p> <p>The core city regeneration and investment plan must be set within the context of the broader city planning agenda which will include the community plan, the local development plan and the Council's new approach to city-wide and neighbourhood regeneration. The conference objectives are proposed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To launch the initial findings of the core city regeneration and investment framework and test the direction of travel - To agree 3-5 key projects/opportunities for growth for Belfast, particularly with the return of regeneration and place-shaping powers to council - To provide a focus for practitioners to share experience and ideas for Belfast's city centre development and growth - To provide a platform to inform stakeholders about the planned process to develop a city vision and community plan

	<p>There may also be an opportunity to make an announcement about a significant city infrastructure project.</p> <p>2.6 Proposed Conference Structure The following conference sessions are proposed:</p> <p>Introduction to the regional city context – introduction from the First Minister and Deputy First Minister reinforcing the role of Belfast as a regional driver, noting the recovery in the economy and the importance of city centres in generating growth through employment, attracting business and as a key focal point.</p> <p>Belfast’s Future Growth –Professor Michael Parkinson OBE was a key speaker at the Future City Conference in 2013 and has reviewed Belfast’s competitiveness and capacity to deliver at regular intervals since 2004. Drawing together a number of key pieces of work such as Opportunities for Investment in Belfast, the impact of anchor institutions as well as the preparations for the Investment Conference scheduled to take place in Liverpool, Professor Parkinson will highlight the critical steps for Belfast and challenge us agree shared city development priorities, consider alternative resourcing plans and commit resources to deliver and shape Belfast’s future success.</p> <p>City Competitiveness and Growth – Bruce Katz regularly advises federal, state, regional and municipal leaders on creating urban prosperity. Bruce Katz is known to Belfast through his involvement in the State of the City Debates and the work on the Weak Market Cities. He is also a keynote speaker at the Liverpool conference. His recent work has focused on metropolitan cities and how networks of city leaders can work together to grow more jobs and make their communities more prosperous, by investing in infrastructure and equipping workers with the skills they need.</p> <p>Shaping the Core City: the Regeneration and Investment Plan – Joe Berridge, Urban Strategies will outline the work to date and direction of travel for the Regeneration and Investment Framework. This will be driven by the economic vision for Belfast and will include an indication of the opportunity projects and possibilities as well as alternative financial arrangements to support investment in regeneration.</p>
<p>2.7</p>	<p>Practitioner focussed workshops The final sessions will be informed by the work of Urban Strategies focussing on 4-5 key areas of opportunity for the core city; this is also likely to build on the city investments made through the Council’s Investment Programme 2012-15. Workshop discussions would be led by a key speaker demonstrating good practice examples from elsewhere and a local practitioner to provide the Belfast context. Initial examples of workshop topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - University City – maximising the regenerative impact of the University of Ulster relocation to the city centre, and reinforcing the mutual value created through building critical relationships between universities / educational establishments and their cities. - Waterfront Developments – recognising the value and regenerative potential of the river in Belfast, this could refer to key projects/plans such as the Lagan Canals project. - Tech City/Hub – focusing on the development of the creative hub, innovation centre and Superconnected Belfast. This would also enable us to build on the success of the recent Tech Mission to Silicon Valley which included 20 local

	<p>private sector companies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism (Food/Music/Culture) – creating a strong marketing offer to attract conference visitors, the food/music scene is particularly important to sustain and promote the city centre. This would support the work currently underway with the development of the new Integrated Tourism Strategy and could build on the recent relationship and comparisons that have been made with Bilbao. Members may also wish to consider a future follow-up visit to Bilbao. - Transport/Connectivity – another theme within the Masterplan, this supports the development of Belfast Rapid Transit and reinforces the connectivity and mobility between neighbourhoods and the city centre.
2.8	<p>Leading the city Political input will be critical throughout the event. It is proposed that the Lord Mayor would introduce the event, providing the context for the city and the link with the Liverpool conference. It is suggested that specific input be provided by Chair of SP&R, to outline the challenges ahead and Chair of Development Committee, in providing an update on the Belfast masterplan and way forward. Key roles will be played by elected Members throughout the event.</p>
2.9	<p>Connecting to the broader planning agenda In line with the proposals outlined to Members at Statutory Transition Committee and at the all-Member community planning workshop on 5 March, it is recognised that while there is a need to provide focus and clarity on the 'core city' developments it is important that this is viewed within the context of the broader community planning framework. While the discussions at the event will connect to the community planning work programme the event will also sign-post this process to a wider audience.</p>

3	Resource Implications
3.1	The total cost of this event is estimated at £30,000 and has been budgeted for within 2014/15 Departmental estimates.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	Equality and good relations considerations will be taken into account in all aspects of this work.

5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agree that a 'Future City Conference: Planning for Growth' event as outlined above should take place in June and the costs associated with the conference, its organisation and retention of expert contributors - Agree that the First Minister, Deputy First Minister, Minister for Regional Development and Minister for Social Development should be invited to participate in the conference - Agree to nominate party representatives to attend the International Festival of Business Liverpool event on 18-19 June 2014 which will coincide with meetings with Councils in Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds

6	Decision Tracking
Timeframe: June 2014 Reporting Officer: John McGrillen	



Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Belfast Bursary Fund – proposed amendments to eligibility criteria
Date:	25 April 2014
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext. 3470
Contact Officers:	Lisa Toland, Economic Development Manager, ext. 3427

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	At the 15 April meeting of the Development Committee, members received an update on the Belfast Bursary and agreed to the allocation of £50,000 funding to Prince's Trust to roll out year 3 of the bursary. The bursary scheme is an element of the Belfast Investment Programme.
1.2	Members were also updated on progress with the bursary being delivered on behalf of the council by Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC). They were advised that, at a previous meeting of the Development Committee, a number of recommendations were being made regarding the eligibility criteria for the scheme and the potential for these to impact on numbers applying. Members asked that a report be brought back to a future meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to consider the implications of changing the scheme criteria and to make recommendations on any changes required for the coming academic year.

2	Key Issues
2.1	In order to be eligible for the bursary at present, the criteria are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First year, full-time student at BMC, resident in Belfast City Council area - Aged 16-24 - Household income threshold not to exceed £23,820 - Students to be studying on one of priority courses focusing on new growth areas, course are at levels 2-5.
2.2	The aim of the bursary is to offer an incentive to young people to consider undertaking study in one of the areas in which we project future employment growth to be greatest, as opposed to those areas where new jobs are less likely to be created. Hence the courses eligible for bursary support cover IT, multimedia, renewable energies, science and tourism and hospitality. The value of the bursary is £500.

2.3	In the current academic year, Belfast Met reported that 64 students availed of the bursary. Spend on the awards amounted to £32,000. A total of 120 students applied for the scheme, of whom 64 were successful and 56 failed to meet one or more of the eligibility criteria set. Participants were ineligible predominately because they lived outside the Belfast City Council area (principally in Castlereagh) or because the household income levels exceeded the £23,820 threshold.
2.4	One of the most significant challenges has been our ability to predict the number of students who will apply for and be eligible to take up the Belfast Met bursary, given that this programme is targeted at first year students on approved courses. While there is a pool of over 800 students undertaking the priority courses agreed by members, only around 8% of those students met all of the scheme's eligibility criteria last year.
2.5	Of the successful students, over a third of awards have been provided to young people who live in the top 10% of most deprived wards while over half of the awards have been taken up by young people who live in the top 25% most deprived wards.
2.6	Based on last year's figures, and assuming that the uptake levels and student profile will be broadly similar to last year, it is likely that around 70 students will avail of the bursary in the coming academic year, should the scheme go ahead in the same format as previous years.
2.7	Assuming an available budget of up to £50,000 in the coming year – in line with the budget for Prince's Trust bursary – the following options may be considered by members.
2.8	<u>Extend the scheme to second year students</u> This would potentially double the amount of students availing of the bursary. As such, it could mean that the £50,000 allocation would be exceeded. Also, given that the bursary was intended to act as an incentive to get students to take up a certain course, the fact that they were going into year 2 would mean that they no longer needed that incentive and were simply completing their course.
2.9	<u>Consider removing the upper age limit</u> At present, only students aged under 24 are eligible for the scheme. This criterion was established to take account of the high levels of unemployment and economic inactivity among that group. Belfast Met advise that removing the upper age limit would enable access by a small number of additional students, particularly people studying on Access courses at level 3 which can lead to a study on a degree course. Based on last year's figures, this could lead to an uplift of 10-15 additional recipients.
2.10	<u>Consider revising the household earning limits</u> As part of the consultations undertaken through party briefings last year, members were keen to see the earning cap pitched at a level that meant that a student living in a household where two people were earning minimum wage would still be eligible for the bursary. On that basis, the earnings threshold was set at £23,820. If this cap was lifted, considerably more students could benefit from the scheme. However it may mean that the initiative is less targeted than the current position, namely half of recipients resident in the top 25% most deprived wards. When the bursary was established, the minimum wage was £6.19; this has since been revised (October 2013) to £6.31 and will increase

	<p>again in October 2014. Assuming uplift to around £6.50 per hour in October this year, this would mean that the earnings threshold could be increased to £25,000 for household income, and still be based on the assumption of two people working within the household at minimum wage.</p>
2.11	<p><u>Consider revising the priority courses</u></p> <p>The courses of study were chosen based on the fact that they focused on areas of projected future employment growth. The Development Committee, at its meeting in December 2013, agreed the inclusion of a number of additional courses, still within the agreed priority areas (see Appendix 1). Applications were received from across all of the courses last year. It is therefore recommended that the same courses are eligible for bursary support in the coming year.</p>
2.12	<p>In addition to any changes in criteria, it is also proposed that additional work is undertaken in the coming months to promote the bursary, using council networks and outreach facilities. This includes promoting the scheme to the following key conduits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welfare rights advisors in advice sector to ensure those who need help the most have an opportunity to apply - Targeted engagement through existing community networks and outlets, including the council's community centres and community development staff - Organisations on the Council's Section 75 consultee list. This is particularly important in widening participation among younger people's groups and disability specialist groups - Targeted use of both the Council's and on Belfast Met's website (including on the online prospectus and at open days and via media) - Schools' career advisers in order to ensure that young people are aware of the financial incentive when making their choice of course.
2.13	<p>Members have previously raised the potential of making the bursary available to Belfast City Council residents who were studying at other institutions, principally Northern Regional College. While it would be possible to identify how many students with a Belfast City Council postcode studied at the college last year, it would take some work to set up the relevant administration systems with the college as well as identify priority courses available in the college. It is unlikely that this could all be in place to allow for promotion of the bursary for the coming academic year. However members should be aware that these students would potentially be eligible for the council bursary provided through Prince's Trust (open to all Belfast residents aged 16-25 who are not currently undertaking training but who would want to do so, if the relevant financial support was available to cover fees or course materials). Officers will work with members in the coming months to promote this scheme to interested young people and to encourage take-up, particularly in disadvantaged communities.</p>
2.14	<p>Taking account of all these considerations, it is proposed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The bursary continues to be available to first year students only - The age cap is removed, in order to support adult returners and those undertaking access courses - The household earnings cap is set at £25,000 - The priority courses previously agreed by the Development Committee are maintained.

3	Resource Implications
	Based on the recommendations, it is anticipated that the budget required will not exceed £50,000 (i.e. covering up to 100 bursaries at a value of £500).
4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
	No specific equality or good relations considerations.
5	Recommendations
	It is recommended that the following changes to the scheme eligibility are agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The bursary continues to be available to first year students only- The age cap is removed, in order to support adult returners and those undertaking access courses- The household earnings cap is set at £25,000- The priority courses are maintained.
6	Decision Tracking
	An update on uptake will be provided to a future meeting of the Committee. Timeline: November 2014 Reporting Officer: Lisa Toland
7	Key to Abbreviations
	BMC – Belfast Metropolitan College
8	Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: list of courses eligible for bursary support

Appendix 1: list of courses eligible for bursary support

Course Name
BTEC Diploma Engineering (Electrical)
Edexcel BTEC Diploma in Travel and Tourism
BTEC Diploma in Applied Science
Edexcel BTEC Diploma in Creative Media Production (Games, Web and iMedia)
Level 2 Media Studies
First Diploma ICT Practitioner
BTEC Extended Diploma Procom (Systems Support)
BTEC Extended Diploma in Hospitality
Access Certificate in Foundation Studies Maths and Computing
Access Certificate in Foundation Studies Biological/Biomedical Science
Access Diploma in Computing with Business and Multimedia
BTEC Extended Diploma Construction and Built Environment
BTEC Extended Diploma in Applied Science
BTEC Extended Diploma Creative Media Production (Interactive Media)
BTEC Extended Diploma Creative Media Production (Games Development)
Edexcel BTEC Extended Diploma in Creative Media Production (TV and Media)
BTEC Extended Diploma in Creative Media Production (Media)
Ext Dip Creative Media Production
BTEC Extended Diploma in IT
Edexcel BTEC Extended Diploma in Electrical/Electronic Engineering
Foundation Degree in Product Design and Development
Foundation Science Degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management
Foundation Degree Travel and Tourism Management
Foundation Science Degree in Event Management for the Tourism Industry
Foundation Degree in Building Services and Renewable Energies
Foundation Degree in i Media
Foundation Degree Software Engineering
Edexcel BTEC HND Diploma in Computing and Systems Development
BTEC HND Diploma in Graphic Design
BTEC HND Diploma in Creative Media Production (Computer Games Design)
BTEC HND Applied Science (Biology)
BTEC HND Applied Science (Chemistry)
BTEC HND Diploma in Electronic Engineering
Foundation Degree in Sustainable Construction
Foundation Degree in Architectural Technology with Sustainable Design

This page is intentionally left blank