

# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 22nd January, 2021

## MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Black (Chairperson);  
The High Sheriff (Councillor Long);  
Aldermen Dorrian, Haire, Kingston and Sandford;  
Councillors Beattie, Bunting, Carson, Garrett,  
Groogan, Heading, Lyons, McAllister,  
McDonough-Brown, McLaughlin, McReynolds,  
Murphy, Pankhurst and Walsh.

Also attended: Alderman Copeland.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;  
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;  
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;  
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational  
Strategy;  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer

### **Apologies**

No apologies were reported.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 10th and 18th December, omitting those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee, were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 7th January.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Alderman Kingston declared an interest in respect of item 4b – Update on Covid-19 Community Response, in that he worked on a part-time basis for the Forward South Partnership, which had received funding under the response initiative, and left the meeting whilst the item was being considered.

The Chairperson (Councillor Black) declared an interest in relation to item 5a – Update on Physical Programme, on the basis that she managed the Grosvenor Community Centre, which had secured match funding for pitch and playground

improvements. As the report was presented for noting only, she was not, therefore, required to leave the meeting.

Councillor McDonough-Brown declared an interest in respect of item 5b – Asset Management, on the basis that his mother was on the Board of the Local Government Staff Commission, which was seeking to lease Commission House from the Council, and left the meeting whilst the item was being considered.

Councillors Beattie and Lyons declared an interest in relation to item 5b – Asset Management, in that they were members of the Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners. However, as the matter related to a licence agreement and did not conflict with their role on the Board, they were not required to leave the meeting whilst the report was being considered.

### **Restricted Items**

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

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

### **Restricted Items**

#### **Medium Term Financial Plan and Efficiency Programme**

The Director of Finance and Resources reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 18th December, it had been provided with an update on the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. The Committee had, after due consideration of business-as-usual cost pressures, growth proposals and efficiencies, agreed, in principle, to a District Rate increase of 1.98% for 2021/22. That increase had been based upon the assumption that there would be no change to the 2020/21 Estimated Penny Product and that the Government would guarantee rates income based on 2020/21 levels and provide funding for Covid-19 related additional expenditure and income losses.

The Director reported that the final Estimated Penny Product, which had now been received from Land and Property Services, had seen an increase of 0.02% on the 2020/21 position, giving a revised Estimated Penny Product of £6,253,110. That meant that the required increase in the District Rate had been reduced to 1.92%. However, that did not take into consideration the potential impact of Covid-19 upon the Council's district rates income for 2021/22.

With that in mind, the University of Ulster's Economic Policy Centre had been commissioned to develop a rates impact economic model. He confirmed that that work, which had entailed a detailed analysis of key economic factors across all non-domestic property types against the level of rates debt and vacant rate losses, had now been completed. He provided an overview of the Centre's findings and confirmed that they had since been forwarded to the Department of Finance. The Northern Ireland Local Government Association and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives had written

to the Ministers for Finance and Communities requesting that the Northern Ireland Executive guarantee rates incomes at 2021/22 levels. As yet, there was no indication as to whether the request would or would not be met.

The Director explained that, in order to set the District Rate within the legal timeframe, which had now been extended till 1st March, the Committee was required to agree a course of action in the event that rates support from the Government was not forthcoming. He presented the Members with two options, the first of which was based on the worst case scenario presented within the Economic Policy Centre's model and would leave a budget deficit of £4.65m. The second option, which he recommended for approval, would base the Estimated Penny Product on the Land and Property Services calculation, that is, a rates increase of 1.92% and would require the establishment of a specified reserve of £4.65m to cover rates losses, in the event that Government support was not forthcoming. That reserve would be financed through a combination of 2020/21 year-end savings, in-year savings for 2021/22 and general reserves, if required.

He informed the Committee that, as part of the 2021/22 revenue estimates process, officers had assessed the levels of income which the Council was likely to receive in the context of the ongoing pandemic. The loss of income had been forecast to be in the region of £3.9m and Covid-19 costs of £1.3m were anticipated. Since there was no indication at this stage if further support would be provided by the Department for Communities, it would, he pointed out, be prudent to have contingency plans in place. Therefore, he recommended that the Committee grant approval to establish a specified reserved of up to £5.2m for that purpose, which again would be financed through a combination of 2020/21 year-end savings, in-year savings for 2021/22 and general reserves, if required.

The Director went on to remind the Committee that it was responsible for setting the annual cash limit for each of the Council's Standing Committees and recommended that it approve the limits for 2021/22, as set out within the report. He confirmed that those would, in February, be presented to each Committee for consideration and that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee would, at its meeting on 19th February, be requested to agree the cash limits and the District Rate.

He concluded by pointing out that the recommended increase in the District Rate would enable the Council to continue to deliver its business as usual activities and priorities, such as the City Deal and the Leisure Transformation Programme. Based on the economic outlook presented by the University of Ulster's Economic Policy Centre and the impact on rates income, the Council was likely to find itself in a similar position in 2022/23. Once the District Rate for 2021/22 was set, a review of the Council's overall financial strategy would need to be undertaken, to ensure that current resources were maximised and new sources of income were found.

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. approved a 1.92% increase in the District Rate for 2021/22, based on the Estimated Penny Product provided by Land and Property Services;

- ii. agreed to establish a specified reserve of £4.65m for funding of potential loss of rate income in 2021/22, in the event that the Northern Ireland Executive does not guarantee rates income;
- iii. agreed to establish a specified reserve of £5.2m for funding Covid-19 related costs and losses of income for 2021/22, in the event that Department for Communities funding is not forthcoming;
- iv. agreed to recommend the following cash limits for 2021/22:
  - a. a cash limit of £45,309,102 for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, including £3,270,000 for Belfast Investment Fund and £2,500,000 for City Deal.
  - b. a cash limit of £83,949,408 for the People and Communities Committee;
  - c. a cash limit of £18,237,846 for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee;
  - d. a cash limit of £1,362,893 for the Planning Committee; and
  - e. a Capital Financing Budget of £21,774,022 for 2021/22;
- v. noted the next steps in the district rate setting process;
- vi. agreed to consider at its meeting in March a report on the Council's future financial strategy; and
- vii. agreed that the aforementioned decisions should not be subject to call-in, as it would cause an unreasonable delay in striking the rate by the legislative deadline of 1st March 2021, which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interest.

### **Finance Update**

The Director of Finance drew the Members' attention to a report which provided an update on the revised financial position which had been presented to the Committee on 18th December. The report indicated that the Council had since moved from a forecast deficit to a surplus of £3,656,516, due to a forecast capital financing budget underspend.

He outlined the factors which had contributed to that underspend and reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 18th September, it had requested that consideration be given during the rate setting process to allocating £500k to Phase 5 of the alleygating scheme as a priority growth proposal. Should the Committee still be of a mind to support that proposal, there would, he pointed out, be an opportunity to fund the scheme from the current underspend.

He reminded the Committee that it had, earlier in the meeting, agreed to establish two specified reserves of £4.65m and £5.2m, in the event that the Government did not provide funding to cover potential losses in rates income and Covid-19 related income losses and additional expenditure. For that reason, he recommended that no further allocations of the current underspend be made at this time.

The Director then highlighted the high degree of uncertainty around the Quarter 4 financial position and confirmed that Council Departments were working currently on the Quarter 3 year-end forecast, which would include the impact of the most recent restrictions announced by the Northern Ireland Executive. He outlined the extent of the financial support which had been provided by the Executive to date and stressed that the Council's cash flow continued to be reviewed on a daily basis.

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

- i. that £500k of the reported capital financing budget underspend be allocated to a specified reserve in order to support the delivery of Phase 5 of the Council's alleygating scheme; and
- ii. that no further allocations of the surplus be made at this stage, as that may be required to support the financing of specified reserves to support potential rates and income losses in 2021/22.

#### **Update on Managing Organisational Capacity and Covid-19**

The Committee noted the contents of a report which highlighted the ongoing need to monitor the Council's critical and vital services, confirmed that appropriate measures had been put in place to ensure that the most critical services could be delivered, outlined the activities associated with the ongoing management of Covid-19 and, finally, the response to changing restrictions and the resulting impact across the Council.

#### **Rent Relief Fund – Criteria**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 10th December, it had agreed to set aside up to a maximum of £100,000, in the form of rent relief, to support any business across the Council estate which, in line with criteria drawn up by officers, could demonstrate that it required financial assistance as a direct result of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Director of Physical Programmes drew the Members' attention to the following criteria which would govern the funding process. Applicants seeking support:

- i. must have been a Council business tenant on or before 23rd March 2020, with no sub-tenants or licensees;
- ii. must have been required to close due to the COVID-19 lock down requirements or must be able to demonstrate a significant decline in their trading position due to the impact of COVID-19;

- iii. must be able to demonstrate that they have exhausted other means of emergency financial support that is currently available; and
- iv. must not have been in breach of their lease terms as at 23rd March 2020 e.g. must have paid all rent etc. due to the Council at that date.

She reported that further work was being undertaken around the process for dealing with applications received, in terms of assessment/due diligence, and that officers from the Physical Programmes Department and the Corporate Communications Unit were working to formulate a communications plan in advance of the Fund opening potentially in February. The Committee would, she confirmed, be provided with regular updates on the uptake of the Fund.

The Director reported further that, since the Committee meeting on 10th December, officers had been requested to examine the potential for extending the Fund to include other businesses, such as street traders. She explained that street traders operated differently, in that they did not have a lease with the Council but applied for a Street Trading Licence, which was approved by the Licensing Committee and managed through the Building Control Service. The Council also administered a range of other licences for, for example, amusement arcades, cinemas and entertainment venues. She highlighted the fact that a number of requests for financial support had been received from various licence holders and confirmed that the implications of those were being examined by Council officers and would be presented to the Committee in February.

In response to a number of issues which had been raised by Members, the Director pointed out that applicants would, in line with the criteria, be required to provide evidence that any financial difficulties, such as rent arrears, were related directly to the impact of Covid-19. She added that applications would be assessed on a case-by-case basis and that every effort would be made to simplify the application process.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### **Recruitment of Operational Director**

The Committee:

- i. approved the creation and recruitment of a post of Operational Director - City and Neighbourhood Services Department; and
- ii. agreed that the selection panel comprise the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Committee (or their nominees), an Elected Member from the SDLP, the Chief Executive (or her nominee) and a Director.

### **Update on City Events Programme and Cultural Funding**

(Mr. J. Greer, Director of Development attended in connection with this item.)

The Director of Development informed the Members that the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions had necessitated a review of the options which had, in December, been presented to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee around the delivery of events in the first half of 2021. Accordingly, he submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which set out revised proposals for delivering events in 2021,

together with details of a phased approach for the funding of the cultural sector in the 2021/22 financial year.

After discussion, the Committee:

- i. agreed to suspend the delivery of live events from January to August 2021 and noted that a quality and higher impact programme of events was being planned for September 2021 till March 2022, to mark the beginning of City recovery;
- ii. agreed, in relation to St. Patrick's Day, to adopt option 4 within the report, that is, to commission new creative ideas for the future delivery of the event, through an expression of interest and assessment process, and to produce a 2021 digital online showcase, in partnership with organisations, artists and producers;
- iii. agreed not to proceed with the Spring Continental Market, which was due to be held in the grounds of the City Hall between 27th and 31st May, 2021;
- iv. agreed that an alternative option be developed to deliver an appropriate event or exhibition in the first half of 2021 to mark the Centenary of Northern Ireland, to include the use of online platforms, and noted that other more public events were being planned for the second half of the year, Covid-19 restrictions permitting;
- v. agreed, in order to ensure the ongoing survival of the cultural sector and the viability of core organisations, that, for 2021/22, levels of funding for these organisations should be maintained, as set out within their multi-annual agreements and be included in Departmental budgets; and
- vi. noted the ongoing strategic work to support the re-opening and recovery of the City and the need to progress with plans for the delivery of a Cultural Strategy, including 2023.

### **Waste Strategy and Inner City Recycling**

(Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services, attended in connection with this item.)

The Director of City Services submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which set out the findings to date of the options appraisal which had been undertaken by the Association for Public Service Excellence on arrangements for future kerbside sort collections in inner City areas. Those arrangements would be implemented in the context of the Council's overall Waste Framework Strategy and the wider challenges which the organisation was likely to encounter around waste collection and waste management in the period leading up to 2035.

Accordingly, she recommended that the Committee:

- i. note that the Council had agreed, in principle, to move to a city-wide recycling collection scheme, involving wheeled stacker boxes, to improve recycling rates and the quality of material to support the circular economy, and to reduce residual black bins to 180l and collect food waste separately;
- ii. note that a very long lead-in period would be required to enable the above changes to be made alongside an appropriate phasing strategy;
- iii. agree to commission a full economic appraisal on the two key strategic options set out within the report, namely:
  - a. the insourcing of the collection and processing of recycling activities, to include a full cost appraisal of the construction of a suitable processing facility; and
  - b. the continued outsourcing of recycling waste collections and processing for the inner city;
- iv. agree an extension of up to 24 months on the current inner city recycling contract delivered by Bryson Recycling, to allow for the economic appraisal to be conducted and, thereafter, allow for a proper procurement exercise to be carried out on any future contract which results from the economic appraisal; and
- v. agree that, as a first phase, officers scope up proposals for the roll-out of the Wheelie-box scheme, plus food waste and 180l residual bin, for the inner city collections, with the intention of submitting a funding request to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to support this scheme. This was in line with the Waste Framework and would be the direction of travel, irrespective of the model used to deliver the service.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations, subject to point iii. being amended to the effect that the economic appraisal examine also the insourcing of waste collection and the outsourcing of the processing of that waste.

#### **Matters referred back from Council/Motions**

#### **Motion: Implementation of Care Partner Arrangements in Nursing and Care Homes - Response from Minister of Health**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 2nd November, had passed the following motion on the Implementation of Care Partner Arrangements in Nursing and Care Homes, which had been proposed by Councillor McAteer and seconded by Councillor Groves:

“This Council recognises the distress, confusion, physical and cognitive deterioration experienced by residents with dementia living in nursing homes, due to the lockdown in Spring 2020 and the subsequent curtailment of visits with relatives to one visit per week.

The Council also recognises the pain experienced by relatives of nursing home residents with dementia, many of whom, pre-Covid-19, cared daily for their loved ones in nursing homes, assisting them with washing, dressing, eating, drinking and exercise and provided them with love and cognitive stimulation.

Whilst the Council acknowledges the spread of the Covid-19 virus and adheres to the Executive guidelines on Council on public health, it also supports the “Regional Principles for Nursing and Residential Care homes in N Ireland” (published by the Department of Health on 23rd September, 2020), which establishes the designation of relatives or close friends as “Care Partners” and stipulates that care and nursing homes should facilitate Care Partner arrangements to enable relatives to assist with the communication, physical and emotional needs of their loved ones in care and nursing homes.

The Council calls upon the Minister of Health to provide the necessary human, financial and technical resources to nursing and care homes to ensure the immediate practical implementation of safe and secure Care Partner arrangements which will underpin the rights of dementia patients in nursing homes and deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for them and their families.”

The City Solicitor informed the Committee that a response had now been received from the Minister of Health.

The Minister had begun by pointing out that the most recent visiting guidance relating to care homes, including information on the care partner concept, could be accessed [here](#).

He explained that, in November, the Department of Health had published on its website additional guidance on the Care Partner concept, including a Frequently Asked Questions document [here](#) and an Information Leaflet for Care Home Residents and their Families [here](#).

In addition, the Chief Nursing Officer and the Chief Social Work Officer had issued the following joint letter to residential and nursing care home providers regarding the implementation of care partners in care homes in Northern Ireland [here](#).

The Minister had gone on to explain that care homes were actively encouraged to adhere to all aspects of the revised visiting guidelines, including the introduction of care partners. The expectation was that care homes would continue to work to facilitate a range of visiting options, in accordance with the detail of the visiting guidance aligned with the Alert Level relevant at the particular time and the care home’s individual circumstances. All decisions would be based on a risk assessment of the environment and would rely on the ability to ensure social distancing and the safety of residents, staff and the visitor.

He stated that he had, on 22nd October, announced an additional allocation of £27.3m to the care home sector, which had included financial support for a number of measures which required additional management time in order to respond to the impacts of Covid-19. Of that, £9m had been allocated directly to care homes to reflect the cost of i). the rolling programme of testing for both residents and staff; ii.) overseeing

safe visiting and setting up care arrangements; and iii). the increased management time needed to oversee homes.

Following that announcement, the Director of Mental Health, Disability and Older People had written to care homes and Chief Executives of the Health and Social Care Trust to outline how organisations could apply for additional funding and how it would be allocated to homes.

The Minister had concluded by stressing that his Department recognised that the role of the care partner was of critical importance to the health and safety of care home residents. Whilst it was acknowledged that the concept may be challenging for care homes to implement whilst mitigating against the transmission of Covid-19, where there were difficulties in progressing the role, Health and Social Care Trusts had been asked to support care homes to seek a solution as a matter of urgency.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### **Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues**

#### **Employment Academies Procurement Framework**

(Mr. J. Greer, Director of Development attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the following report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report**

**1.1 At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 18th December, it was agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting outlining the legal and other implications associated with restructuring the current Employment Academy framework. The framework opened for applications in November 2020 and closed on 15th January, 2021.**

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- i. note the update on the current procurement exercise to appoint delivery agents for the council’s Employment Academies; and**
- ii. agree to continue with awarding the contracts as planned, with a review of impacts to be carried out and reported back to the Committee within 6 months, so that any adjustments to future plans can be made.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Members will be familiar with the increasing importance of the Council's engagement in employability and skills activity. In the last financial year, engagement in council-supported employability activity included:**

- **around 2,400 participants on ESF match-funded programmes, with around 580 moving into employment (average 24% into-employment rate)**
- **530 participating in Employment Academies with 398 finding a job at the end of the programme (75% into-employment rate);**
- **over 1,500 young people supported through youth initiatives including 200 receiving additional revision support at GCSE, 90 young people undertaking work placements, and 100 accessing 1-2-1 mentor support through our Youth Support Programme; and**
- **almost 7500 participants engaged through career events and job fairs.**

**3.2 Whilst the current financial year has been particularly challenging operationally, officers have maintained a focus on working with employers that continue to have employment opportunities. This includes the health and social care sector and transport and logistics sector. There has also been significant development work undertaken with public sector employers – including Belfast City Council – to create ring-fenced employment opportunities for those from specific target groups (those identified through the Inclusive Growth Framework). The other major area of development work has been to establish new pathways into digital and tech roles – given that these sectors have remained relatively resilient in the current climate and are likely to see further growth in the future. The investment in City Deal and initiatives such as the Innovation District present significant opportunities for long-term employment growth. However, it is clear that many individuals either don't have the required technical skills or don't have the confidence to pursue employment opportunities in this sector. It is essential that we develop these supported pathways to ensure that these developments move forward in a way that supports our commitments to inclusive growth.**

**3.3 As outlined above, Employment Academies are just one mechanism through which the Council is investing to support employability and skills development. However, they have, arguably, been the most successful, not only in terms of employment outcomes but also in terms of**

providing a mechanism for engaging with the key government departments to demonstrate the added-value role that councils can provide in this space. Employment Academies are generally short interventions. Typically, they last around two weeks and comprise a series of activities including employability skills training, technical/vocational training relating to the specific role and work insight sessions/work tasters as well as in-work support for those who get a job at the end of the Academy session. ESF and other community-based training support provides a critical pipeline to the Academy support and officers have built up very good working relationships with these organisations to create a planned approach to the Academy programme, ensuring that they have sight of the timetable for emerging opportunities and are able to provide the necessary development and support to potential candidates.

- 3.4 As the Council's role in delivery of Employment Academies has evolved over time, we have had to evolve our procurement approach. Initially, we started out with quotations (value under £30k). These were useful when we were testing new approaches but they were limited in scope and could not be extended. The administrative burden of managing a large number of small interventions was also disproportionate to the impact that these were able to have on the ground. It also meant that we were unable to be agile in responding to emerging employer opportunities. We then set up a number of tenders by sectoral area. These had a larger value and have enabled us to grow the interventions, particularly over the last number of years. However, we have found that a number of these tenders have now been coming to the end of their lifespan, so we recognised the need to put in place a procurement approach that would give us flexibility to respond to employer needs, creating sustainable employment opportunities for individuals. This flexibility is all the more important given the massive changes that have taken place in the labour market over the last year and the need to react and flex to areas of demand in line with opportunity.
- 3.5 Finally, we recognised that there were a number of sectors that were likely to create new employment opportunities but which we had no delivery partners in place to service them. Of critical importance were the emerging opportunities in green construction and green technology as well as financial and professional services and digital and tech sectors.

#### Current Position

- 3.6 The current delivery of our Employment Academy interventions is as follows:

Employment Academy Contract	Max. Value	Contractor	Start Date	End Date
Hospitality	£210,000	Workforce	Jan-18	Dec-20 Expired
Construction	£65,000	Workforce	Jan-18	Dec-20 Expired
Logistics & Transport	£115,000	ACT	Mar-18	Mar-20 Expired
Care Sectors - Childcare and Playwork - Social Care - Health	£600,000	People 1st	Mar-19	Mar-21
Logistics and Transport	£30,000	People 1st	Sep-20	Mar-21
Leisure	£200,000	GLL	Aug-19	Aug-21
Digital	No contractor in place			
Financial Services	No contractor in place			
Green Economy	No contractor in place			

- 3.7 Without access to the delivery agents appointed through the procurement exercise, the ability of the Council to deliver Employment Academies across all sectors will be severely curtailed.**

**Overview of Procurement Framework**

- 3.8 Given the pending conclusion of a number of tenders last year, the Employability and Skills team engaged with our Corporate Procurement Service to explore opportunities for developing a procurement framework that would allow us to future-proof our employability support provision in keeping with the ambitions set out by the council. We wanted to find a solution that would deliver on a number of objectives, namely:**
- is tailored to address the specific needs and circumstances of each training market**

- leverages market capacity and capability to plan, manage and deliver interventions
- provides opportunities for local SMEs, SEs and NfPs (i.e. helps to build capacity in those markets, rather than reducing opportunities)
- will optimise outcomes for participants (in terms of both training and aftercare) and for employers in terms of demand and effective matching and
- will deliver value for money for the council(s) and for employers / buyers.

**3.9 Officers sought technical assistance from KPMG in developing the scope of the procurement approach. In recognition of the need to seek feedback from the market, we undertook extensive pre-market engagement. This included:**

- an initial engagement session in August 2020 with a comprehensive range of local Employability & Skills providers in Belfast where ideas for the structure, content and delivery model within the framework were presented and feedback sought from local suppliers (in excess of 30 organisations in attendance)
- officers then followed up with individual E&S providers who wished to discuss in more detail and/or did not attend the initial engagement session
- a pre-market engagement questionnaire was then sent to these local providers and their responses helped form the structure of the framework.

**3.10 Following the engagement, the following structure was established for the framework:**

- Four 'lots' created
  1. Care Sector Academies
  2. Customer Service Academies
  3. Practical/Vocational Sectors Academies
  4. Office-based Academies
- Establishment of one preferred supplier for each 'lot'
- No supplier can be awarded more than two of the four lots.

**3.11 Given the commitment to support inclusive growth in our approach to programme delivery, we took a number of decisions to support access by local companies, social enterprises and not for profit organisations. These included:**

- removing any reference to a ‘financial assessment’, including any requirement for a minimum turnover threshold by the delivery agent
- removing any specific stipulations around the need to have experience in a certain volume of delivery
- reinforcing our commitment to target those inclusive growth cohorts (as identified in the Inclusive Growth Framework) – including a requirement for the delivery agent to have knowledge of local employers and community conduits to access local employment opportunities and participants, in an environment where mobility is often a challenge
- while we have pulled together a number of sectors under each of the lots, we have only asked that applicants demonstrate experience of delivery in half of the sectors – recognising that some providers will need time after award to begin working in sectors that are new to them or bring in partners who have experience within those areas.

3.12 These tenders were issued in late November, with a closing date of 15th January, 2021. Responses are currently being assessed and, given that many of the existing contracts have expired, there is a risk that the ability of the council to respond to the economic recovery challenges in the field of employability support will be significantly inhibited if we are not able to have providers in place for February 2021. There is also a risk of significant reputational damage with bidders if we are not able to proceed with the process as initially proposed, given that we have been involved in pre-market engagement discussions for more than six months.

3.13 The tenders issued in November 2020 represent just one tier of a two tier approach. The second tier involves the establishment of a ‘Dynamic Purchasing System’. This will go live in April 2021. The Dynamic Purchasing System is a structure that remains open to new bidders throughout the entire lifetime of the procurement framework. The intention of having this system is to allow the council to respond to opportunities arising in a flexible way:

- where the Preferred Supplier does not have capacity to deliver
- where there is a specialist need identified, for example provision of an Employment Academy to meet the needs of a specific target group such as those with low level of vocationally-specific English

- for the delivery of wider Employability and Skills interventions around issues that emerge and where gaps exist within existing provision.

3.14 The DPS will provide opportunities, in particular, for those working in niche areas or providing specialist input. The system also enables us to issue these opportunities in a totally transparent manner, making the opportunity available to all potential bidders on a merit-based approach. Finally, given that the DPS remains open for new companies to join at any stage during the lifespan of this programme, it means that new start and early stage companies don't become 'locked out' of the opportunity to join at any point over the next four years.

#### Financial and Resource Implications

3.15 Officers have been working on the basis of an indicative allocation of up to £500k per financial year across the four lots. This has been factored into the Employability and Skills budgets, as part of the estimates process. We have named a number of other councils on the procurement exercise but they will be responsible for their own budget allocations and will only be able to access the contract where there is delivery capacity within the appointed contractor.

#### Equality implications/Rural Needs Analysis

3.16 The Employment Academies are predominantly focused on those furthest from the labour market. With support from QUB's GIS insights team, we are able to track the impact on local areas and enhance the effectiveness of programme delivery in targeting specific groups."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

#### Update on Covid -19 Community Response

(Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the following report:

#### **"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members further on the continuing planning, partner engagement, support mechanisms and services in place to support vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is requested to note the report and to also note that this approach is based on extensive partner engagement (including ongoing engagement with strategic community partners).**

**3.0 Main Report**

**Background**

**3.1 Members will be aware of the extensive work by community and voluntary sector partners, Council and other statutory partners as part of the initial COVID-19 emergency response and that this support has continued and developed in response to emerging need.**

**3.2 Members will also recall that an update was provided to People and Communities Committee in November 2020 and, from this, will aware the continuing support to vulnerable people has been designed throughout taking community/voluntary (local as well as thematic) partner feedback in to account and in the majority of circumstances, the community/voluntary sector are delivering services.**

**3.3 Members will also be aware that Officers previously engaged with partners, following the initial COVID emergency response, and captured a significant amount of learning. This learning has shaped how we have collectively developed the city wide approach to:**

- Better align services at a statutory and community/voluntary level and**
- Ensure we were collectively getting to those who most needed the support and recognising and utilising the community/voluntary sector networks.**

**3.4 Financial Investment**

**Additionally, Members will be aware Council (supported in part with central government funding) has invested significantly in community/voluntary sector service delivery since the pandemic began in March 2020. This continues to be the most effective method of reaching vulnerable people at present, particularly those people who may not meet the threshold for existing statutory services (and are therefore not known to statutory services at present) and those people who have never had need of support services before, but who need them now perhaps as a result of redundancy, reduced hours or the emotional and physical impacts of the ongoing restrictions.**

- 3.5** A summary of the financial investment in community/voluntary sector delivery has been circulated to Members.
- 3.6** Members should also be aware the expected additional financial investment from DfC has been confirmed as £764,000 which needs to be spent before the end of March 21.
- 3.7** As requested by Members at the SP and R meeting on 10th December, representation (including a formal letter) is being issued to the DfC Permanent Secretary (along with other central government funders) as given the ongoing impact of restrictions, many organisations have not been able to deliver planned activities. Additionally, the significant additional financial investment from DfC of £764,000 to be spent by community/voluntary partners before the end of March 2021 is putting them under more unnecessary pressure when they are already struggling.
- 3.8** Members should be aware at SP and R on 10th December, Members agreed in advance how that £764,000 should be allocated with the decision being:
- that any increase in demand beyond available budget to date for the micro/medium grant programme already underway be met firstly from the additional funding from DfC
  - Given the tight timescales involved in delivery, that is, by the end of March 2021, approximately 50% of the funding remaining should be distributed to the nine strategic community partners using the same allocation as used to date
  - The remaining approximately 50% be allocated to those thematic community/voluntary organisations who it was agreed on 10 December 2020 would receive financial support.
- 3.9** The winter tranche of micro-grants (max £1,500) received 146 applicants and letter of offer for those have been issued.
- 3.10** The new medium grand (max £5,000) received 136 applications well in excess of the planned budget from central government funding received to date. The assessment process for the medium grants if currently underway and Officers will update Committee again in due course when the final outcome is known.

### Ongoing Planning

- 3.11 Taking all of this in to account, officers continue to work hand in hand with community/voluntary and statutory partners to ensure services/support systems meet the needs of vulnerable people and that we speak collectively as a city in influencing central government. Indeed, it is the community/voluntary partners from Belfast who we bring to co-design sessions with central government who are making policy and service delivery decisions.
- 3.12 The Council continues to meet with these core partners on a regular basis (minimum weekly) to understand any pressures on the system, what is causing those pressures and what collectively needs to be done to ensure the appropriate supports/services are in place, particularly during the current period where demand for support was expected to be higher. Partners involved are:
- 3.13 Strategic Community Partners
- North Belfast – Intercomm, North Belfast Advice Partnership, Loughside Community Action Partnership (LCAP)
  - South Belfast – Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group (LORAG), Forward South, South City Resource Centre
  - East Belfast – East Belfast Community Development Agency
  - West Belfast – Upper Andersonstown Community Forum
  - Shankill – Greater Shankill Partnership
- 3.14 City Wide Partners
- Advice NI (Funded by DfC to run the Regional Helpline)
  - Volunteer Now (supporting the volunteer eco system across the city should it be needed)
  - Fareshare (Strategic food supply chain partners regionally and funded by DfC to enhance this, provides food supply to community/voluntary organisations working with vulnerable people, rather than individuals)
  - Red Cross (Welfare, Hardship and Food support regionally as well as logistics support in the form of

volunteers/vehicles if needed. On contract to BCC & Trust)

- Trussell Trust (Citywide Network supporting majority of existing foodbanks in Belfast, also with strategic food supply chain partners)
- Belfast Trust (supporting clinically vulnerable individuals, also with a contract with Red Cross in similar areas as Council)

3.15 We also continue to regularly engage with our thematic partners through existing city structures.

#### Current Status of Services/Support Systems

3.16 The current status of services/support systems based on continuous engagement and work with our community/voluntary partners is summarised below:

#### 3.17 Food

- Community/Voluntary Partners (strategic area and thematic) are currently delivering on the food element of their Christmas/New Year funding and are not reporting any issues with supply or capacity
- All foodbanks are well stocked for the next few months due to the generosity of the people of Belfast. Some foodbanks are reporting higher than usual levels of clients for January compared to previous years and some foodbanks aren't reporting higher than usual levels. This may be down to the provision of food support through strategic community/voluntary partners adding additional capacity to the system
- Fareshare (food redistribution organisation) continues to see new community/voluntary members coming on board to receive food from them. They also have significant supplies of food in place due to additional financial investment from DfC and due to pre-planning on their part with local suppliers their supply chain has not been disrupted by Brexit
- DfC is currently in the process of implementing a food pallet scheme directly to community/voluntary partners to supplement their food and personal care/household items supply on an area basis (with a small number of distribution hubs at a community level in place). Officers are supporting this to ensure it doesn't place any additional burden on community/voluntary partners but that they benefit from access to additional products. The DfC budget

for Belfast is £235k and it is to be broken down further using the same allocation model used by Belfast for North, South, East, West and Shankill

- The Belfast City Council Red Cross Contract remains in place to provide emergency food support across the city is support cannot be accessed elsewhere. However, requests to use this contract have been extremely low (less than 5 in the last 6 months). This is largely due to the extensive network of community/voluntary partners working tirelessly across the city supporting vulnerable people directly.

### 3.18 Fuel/Utilities

- All community/voluntary partners are reporting increased demand for support in relation to fuel/utilities and this has been recognised regionally with additional support as follows:
- DfC has put in place a one-off heating payment for those people are in receipt of pension credit, or are in receipt of certain disability benefits at the higher rate. The payment is £200 and has been put in place by the Minister in the last few weeks in recognition of increased pressure in this area
- The COVID-19 Discretionary Support Scheme is intended to provide emergency help or support with living expenses
- DfC launched the 'Warm, Well and Connected' Fund, with the 'Warm' element of this being managed by Bryson/Advice NI. This fund aims to provide help and support to those whose wellbeing has been impacted by cold conditions and those in the most extreme need. In some cases help with essential white goods may be available, but help under this fund is only for those who have been unable to access support elsewhere and whose financial situation has been directly impacted by COVID-19. The support from the scheme is not monetary in nature and vouchers are not provided, instead the necessary help is provided directly to the client.
- DfC also has in place its routine cold weather payment which is paid automatically to those who are in receipt of a qualifying benefit and live in a postcode area where the temperature is, or forecast to be, zero degrees or below for seven consecutive days.
- The annual DfC Winter Fuel Payment made to those over the age of 65 have been and continue to be issued in the normal way

- Many community/voluntary partners (strategic area/thematic) in receipt of funding from Belfast City Council are also using their funding to support clients in need with emergency fuel payments and/or vouchers
- The Belfast Warm and Well Scheme (established under Community Planning) continues to be in operation should individuals find themselves not able to source support elsewhere. This scheme is co-ordinated for Belfast by National Energy Action and is aimed at supporting vulnerable people experiencing fuel poverty and difficult keeping their homes warm.
- The Belfast City Council Red Cross Contract remains in place to provide emergency fuel/utility support across the city if support cannot be accessed elsewhere. However, there have been no requests for fuel/utility support to date. This is due to the extensive network of community/ voluntary partners across the city working tirelessly supporting vulnerable people directly.

### 3.19 Advice/Financial Hardship

- The Advice NI Regional COVID-19 helpline continues to operate to assist and signpost people who need support as a result of COVID-19
- The helpline has had an increase in calls in the last couple of weeks but 95% of those increased calls are specifically from individuals seeking support under the DfC 'Warm, Well and Connected' Scheme (Bryson). This is largely down to the extensive advertising of the scheme DfC undertook and Advice NI are supporting clients to use the full spectrum of available support as detailed above to alleviate their fuel/utility concerns
- Community/voluntary partners (strategic area/thematic) are offering assistance with general financial hardship for vulnerable people as part of the services they are running funded by Belfast City Council and are working closely with the local advice partners to support that with increased access to benefits and working to reduce the debt burden on those individuals.
- Local advice providers are reporting increased demand for their services as a result of the impact of COVID-19 on employment but are currently managing that demand
- As a result of the SP and R decision of 10th December 2020, local advice providers will be given an additional

financial allocation to enable them to increase their capacity to meet these pressures.

### 3.20 Welfare/Emotional Wellbeing

- Community/voluntary partners (strategic area/thematic) are reporting significant impacts on individual and family welfare/emotional wellbeing as a result of COVID-19 and the ongoing restrictions
- An expected increase in calls was expected as the letter re how clinically extremely vulnerable individuals should keep themselves safe was issued from 4 January 2021, however this has not materialised
- A significant proportion of community/voluntary partners in receipt of funding from Belfast City Council (including micro/medium grants) are using some funding in this area.
- In person activity is limited given the restrictions but groups are trying their best to deliver services either online or by phone and are also supporting individuals/families with activity packs
- Groups are also using funding to provide support to vulnerable individuals/families with additional digital devices and associated Wi-Fi/data to reduce isolation and increase ability to access services online
- Good Morning Schemes and Befriending Services are reporting increased demand but due to the additional support of volunteers they are still open for new referrals
- The Belfast Trust community based health services continue to operate without significant disruption supporting vulnerable people and are also not reporting any significantly increased concerns coming through from those who may be clinically extremely vulnerable in terms of the welfare/emotional wellbeing

### 3.21 Conclusion

As detailed above, the overall eco system in the areas of food, fuel/utilities, advice/financial hardship and welfare/emotional wellbeing is experiencing significant increases in demand, including from individuals and families not previously known to services.

Staff/volunteers are very tired but their commitment and passion in supporting vulnerable people is what is keeping services going. Additionally, the learning gathered from the emergency COVID-19 response in spring 2020, the

subsequent detailed planning between community/voluntary and statutory partners, the significant additional financial investment from BCC and central government, the regional investments in services and the ongoing partnership working has created an environment of genuine and meaningful mutual support.

Challenges/issues are identified early, directly from community/voluntary partners working on the ground and possible solutions are brought forward taking in to account their expert knowledge, experience and capacity to deliver. No one who needs support is left without an option for support.

**Financial implications**

**3.22 As detailed in the appendix below.**

**Equality or Good Relations Implications**

**3.23 None identified at this stage but will be kept under continuous review.”**

**Appendix**

**Strategic Area and Thematic Community/  
Voluntary Partners Funding Summary**

**Strategic Area Community Partners**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Amount Allocated</b>	<b>Note</b>
N. Belfast Alternatives	£10,000	Emergency Response Only March/April
Crusaders	£52,468	April to July 20 Only
Intercomm	£163,351	March/April to Present
North Belfast Advice Partnership	£153,351	April to Present
Loughside Community Action Partnership	£100,883	July to Present
Forward South	£117,021	March/April to Present
Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group	£117,021	March/April to Present
South City Resource Centre	£117,021	March/April to Present
EBCDA	£475,153	Lead Partner for grass roots organisations in East Belfast – March/April to Present
Upper Andersonstown Community Forum	£527,062	Lead Partner for 5 Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships across West Belfast – March/April to Present
Greater Shankill Partnership	£142,589	March/April to Present
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,975,920</b>	

### Thematic Partners

Organisation	Amount Allocated	Note
Bytes	£32,173	Summer Thematic Funding
Embrace/Nicras	£25,000	Summer Thematic Funding
Forward South	£8,000	Summer Thematic Funding
Solas	£5,000	Summer Thematic Funding
Store House	£18,000	Summer Thematic Funding
Boring Wells - Food Larder	£14,910	Summer Thematic Funding
West Belfast Foodbank	£17,131	Summer Thematic Funding
St Vincent De Paul	£75,000	Christmas/New Year Food/ Financial Hardship
Salvation Army	£75,000	Christmas/New Year Food/ Financial Hardship
Red Cross	£50,000	Summer & Winter Thematic Funding
HereNI	£10,550	Summer & Winter Thematic Funding
Transgender NI	£9,500	Summer & Winter Thematic Funding
Belfast & Lisburn Woman's Aid	£48,000	Summer & Winter Thematic Funding
Heart Project (Citywide Community Counselling)	£62,500	Summer & Winter Thematic Funding
Community Food Providers (£2k x 45 groups)	£90,000	Winter Thematic Funding
Children Young People Locality Group (N/S/E/W/Colin)	£120,000	Winter Thematic Funding
Age Friendly Partnership	£20,000	Winter Thematic Funding
Mens Advisory Partnership	£5,000	Winter Thematic Funding
Belfast Migrant Forum	£15,000	Winter Thematic Funding
CaraFriend	£7,500	Winter Thematic Funding
We Are Pangs	£16,000	Winter Thematic Funding
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£724,264</b>	

**Note: An update on spend against these allocations will be brought forward to Committee in February 21 for consideration (as agreed at Committee in December 20). Additionally, these allocations do not include the following (both agreed at Committee in December 20):**

- **£100K to the nine strategic community partners, using the allocation method of 50% population and 50% need, with multiple deprivation as a proxy to plan volunteer recognition programmes before the end of the financial year for their areas; and**
- **£764K just confirmed by DfC using the allocation model agreed at point 3.8**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Physical Programme and Asset Management**

**Update on Physical Programme**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 The Council’s Physical Programme covers over 180 capital projects under a range of internal and external funding streams together with the projects which the Council delivers on behalf of external agencies. The Council’s Capital Programme forms part of the Physical Programme and is a rolling programme of investment which either improves the existing Council facilities or provides new Council facilities. This report provides an update on requested movements on the Capital Programme.**

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to:**

- i. *Proposed Movements - Capital Programme* – agree that *Alleygating Phase 5* project is added as a Stage 1 – Emerging Project on to the Capital Programme and**
- ii. *DfC Joint Projects* – note the update is relation to match funding secured from DfC for existing projects in this financial year across a range of programmes**

**3.0 Main Report**

**3.1 Proposed Movements - Capital Programme**

The Committee has previously agreed that all capital projects must go through a 3 Stage process where decisions on which projects progress are taken by SP and R. This provides assurance as to the level of financial control and will allow Members to properly consider the opportunity costs of approving one capital project over another capital project. Members are asked to agree to the following movement on the Capital Programme:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Stage</b>
<b>Alleygating Phase 5</b>	Next phase of the alleygates programme	Add as an Emerging Stage 1 project

At the SP and R meeting on 18th September 2020, Members asked that a further phase of alleygating be considered. Members have been advised in the Finance Update

Committee Report which is also on the agenda for discussion today that the monies secured from DfC (see below) has contributed to a forecast capital financing budget underspend and resultant surplus and that it is proposed through this that a proportion of this (£500k) is ring-fenced for a further phase of alleygating. It is anticipated that this will be agreed by Committee and Members are therefore asked to agree that this is added as a *Stage 1- Emerging* project onto the Capital Programme in order to allow the project to be developed. Members are asked to note that further detail will be brought back to Committee in due course in line with the agreed three stage approvals process.

### 3.2 Update on DfC/BCC Match funded projects 2020-21

Following proactive engagement with the Department for Communities to identify opportunities for joint working in 2020-21, a total of £1,124,000 has been secured to support existing projects within the overall Physical Programme, a proportion of which is match funding for projects under the Capital Programme. Contracts for Funding are in place and work continues in order to achieve delivery this financial year. The funding is for 14 projects in total including –

- Upgrades to Vere Foster, Falls Park and Ohio Street playgrounds.
- Replacement of the 3G pitch surface and upgrade of the playground at Grosvenor Community Centre.
- Improvements to St James Community Forum's urban farm and community garden, including new buildings for the animals and new community and educational facilities.
- A new safe play area and community garden on waste ground adjacent to the Lagan Village Youth and Community Centre.
- A new changing pavilion for Berlin Swifts Football Club.
- New modular changing facilities at the Willowbank Multi-Sports Centre.
- Additional contributions to The Urban Villages Initiative-funded project to upgrade a section of Ballymacarrett Walkway.
- Partial replacement of the damaged roof at The Hanwood Centre

- Extra funding towards the construction of Grace Family Centre, which is nearing completion.
- Additional contributions to Marrowbone Community Hub Teach Eilís, with support from The Urban Villages Initiative.
- An upgrade to the pathways and additional planting at the park at Old Golf Course Road.
- Improved lighting at the recently relocated Navigation Buoys in Titanic Quarter.

### 3.5 Financial and Resource Implications

Financial – £500k to be ringfenced for Phase 5 of the Alleygating Programme

Resources – Officer time as required.

### 3.6 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

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

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

## Asset Management

The Committee:

- i. **Whitla Street Car Park – Disposal of part to Translink**
  - approved the disposal of a 0.36 acre portion of Whitla Street Car Park to Translink to facilitate the redevelopment of Yorkgate Train Station.
- ii. **Corporation Square and Corporation Street Car Parks – Licences to Belfast Harbour Commissioners for the Installation of Barriers**
  - approved the entering into licence agreements with BHC to allow the installation of barriers to prevent access to both car parks from 19.00 till 06.00 each night.
- iii. **Lease to The Local Government Staff Commission, Commission House, 18-22 Gordon Street**
  - agreed to the short term letting of Commission House from 1st April 2021 to its current occupier The Local Government Staff Commission at a rent of £55,500 per annum.

**iv. Licence renewal regarding the use of lands at Bloomfield Walkway for multi-use games area and playground facility**

- approved the renewal of the licence agreement between the Council and DFI for use of lands at Bloomfield Walkway for multi-use games area and playground facility.

**v. Licence to Belfast Metropolitan College - Girdwood**

- approved the renewal of a licence agreement to Belfast Metropolitan College for classrooms and ancillary office accommodation at Girdwood Community Hub

**Update on Area Working Groups**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meetings of each of the four Area Working Groups which had been convened during the month of January to receive a presentation on Living With Water's Integrated Plan for Drainage and Wastewater Management consultation document.

**Finance, Resources and Procurement**

**Update on Contracts**

The Committee:

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

**Table 1 – Competitive Tenders**

<b>Title of Tender</b>	<b>Proposed Contract Duration</b>	<b>Estimated Total Contract Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Short description of goods/ services</b>
Provision of animal feed	Up to 3 years	£45,000	S Toland R Black	Supply of dry animal feed for Belfast Zoo
Provision of travel services	Up to 4 years	£475,000	R Cregan	Travel services contract for all types of travel and accommodation within NI, UK, EU and internationally
Replacement of the corporate finance system	Up to 10 years	£2 million (£650,000 Capital upfront cost ; £150,000 revenue PA)	R Cregan	Replacement of the current SAP financial system and support services which are nearing end of life.

Commercial sponsorship for the Belfast Public Bike Share Scheme	Up to 3 years	£300,000 income	A Reid	Commercial sponsorship opportunity to secure income to help support the maintenance, operation and planned expansion of the current Bike Scheme.
Support contract for HPE servers, storage & network equipment	Up to 1 year	£45,891	R Cregan	To ensure current servers, storage and networking equipment are maintained and kept under warranty.

**Table 2 - Retrospective Single Tender Actions**

<b>Title of Contract</b>	<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>
Animation/ activity to replace the traditional Christmas Market (Retrospective STA)	Cinimod NVS Ltd	£28,700	A Reid
Use of eyebolts/lamp posts for erection of festive lighting (Retrospective STA)	BCCM	£25,000	A Reid
Emergency work to investigate and repair leak at Duncrue (Retrospective STA)	Morrow's Contracts Ltd	£6,450	S Grimes
Replacement of pool cover at Falls Leisure Centre Retrospective STA)	Forge Leisure Ltd	£6,063	S Grimes
Delivery of 'Take Five at School' to three local primary schools within the Shankill/Falls locality (funded)	Each Amazing Breath	£15,240	S Toland / R Black

### Equality and Good Relations

#### Minutes of Meeting of Shared City Partnership

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership held on 11th January, including the recommendations:

#### PEACE IV

##### BPR3 – Transformational Leadership Project

- i. to agree, in principle, to pool the £4,000 resource allocation for community projects, in the event where Clusters have merged, and to delegate authority to the Good Relations Manager and the PEACE IV Programme Manager to consider the Resource Allocation requests on a case by case basis; and
- ii. to invite NICVA to present at the Shared City Partnership meeting in March an update on the Leadership Transformation Programme (PEACE IV).

#### Good Relations

- i. that the Council develops an action plan to frame delivery around the proposed actions set out within the minute relating to “Notice of Motion – Racism Free Zone”;
- ii. that officers follow up with the Executive Office on the issues raised in relation to the Minority Ethnic Development Fund; and
- iii. that an update report on sectarianism in the City be submitted to a future meeting to enable further discussion and consideration.

#### Operational Issues

#### Minutes of Meeting of Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum

With the permission of the Chairperson, Alderman Copeland drew the Committee's attention to the minute of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum relating to Covid-19 Implications. The minute had highlighted the significant impact which the pandemic was having upon the Council's organisational capacity, due to the increasing number of staff who were having to self-isolate, and had stressed that sustaining and maintaining critical services remained the primary focus at present and for the immediate future.

Alderman Copeland referred to the increasing number of motions which had been placed before the Council in recent years and reminded the Members that, on occasions, an additional meeting had been required to process them. Many of those

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motions had, she pointed out, fallen under the remit of the Northern Ireland Executive. Accordingly, she urged any Member who might be planning to submit a motion to the Council at this time to be mindful of the significant pressures which the organisation was facing currently in terms of service delivery and recovery.

After discussion, the Committee noted Alderman Copeland's comments and approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum of 14th January.

**Minutes of Meeting of  
Active Belfast Limited Board**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Active Belfast Limited Board of 11th January.

**Minutes of Meeting of  
Climate Crisis Working Group**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Climate Crisis Working Group of 18th January.

Chairperson