Document Pack

Committee and Members' Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS

5th October, 2010

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, 9th October, 2009 at 12.30 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

PETER McNANEY

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. **Routine Matters**

    (a) Apologies

    (b) Minutes

    (c) Peace III Priority 2.1 Creating Shared Public Spaces (Pages 1 - 6)

         (To consider further the minute of the meeting of 18th September which, at the request of Councillor McCann, was taken back to the Committee for further consideration by the Council at its meeting on 1st October.)

2. **Transition Committee Business**

    (a) Review of Public Administration - Visit by the Environment Minister (Pages 7 - 26)

    (b) Review of Public Administration - Transfer of Functions Update (Pages 27 - 46)

    (c) Review of Public Administration - Vacancy Control Procedure (Pages 47 - 82)

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

Agenda Item 1c

Extract from minutes of -

STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

18th SEPTEMBER, 2009

—

"Peace III Priority 2.1
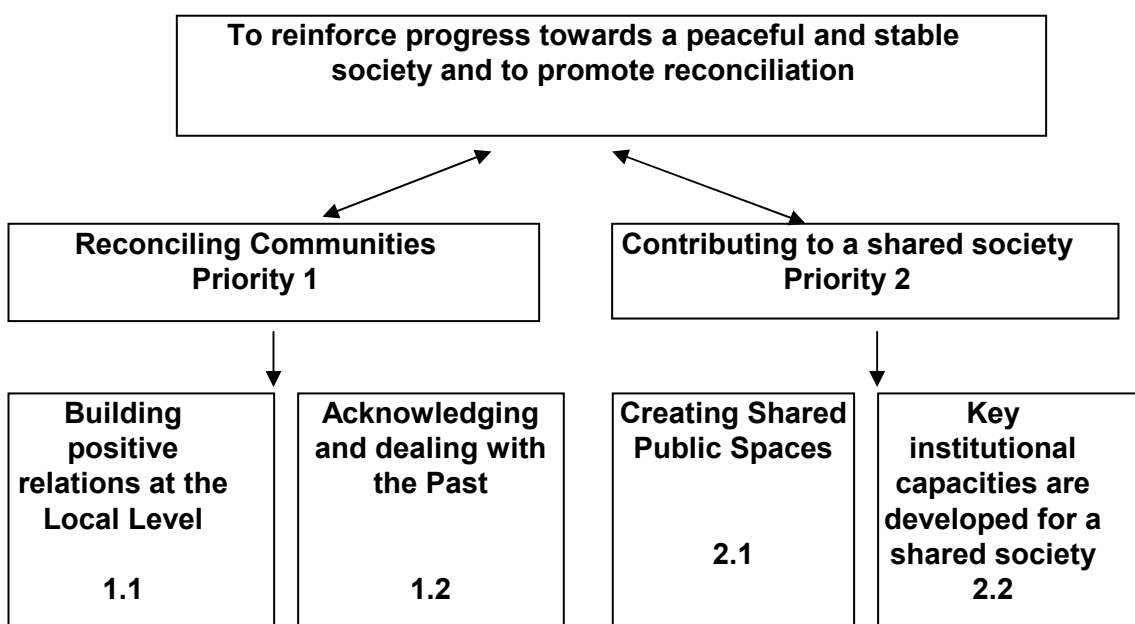**Creating Shared Public Spaces**

The Committee considered the undernoted report in relation to the funding of projects under Priority 2.1 of the Peace III Programme:

'**Relevant Background Information**

Members will be aware that Belfast City Council has been participating in the Peace III programme through the Good Relations and EU unit officers. The Good Relations unit has managed the process to date to develop and secured funding under priority 1.1 of the Peace III programme to provide a multi annual programme of Peace initiatives 2008-2011.

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update regarding priority 2.1 of the Peace III programme and seek agreement with regard to current opportunities.

The framework of the Peace III programme 2007-2013 is represented as follows;

To reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation

Reconciling Communities Priority 1	Contributing to a shared society Priority 2

Building positive relations at the Local Level 1.1	Acknowledging and dealing with the Past 1.2	Creating Shared Public Spaces 2.1	Key institutional capacities are developed for a shared society 2.2

Members may be aware that in August 2007, the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) opened a call under the Creating Shared Public Spaces Call of the Peace III programme. From the period August to October 2007 the European unit coordinated a process of identifying and submitting eight council proposals under this call. Following feedback from SEUPB the council later refined this submission and in December 2007 agreed to the re-submission of the North Foreshore Bridge proposal as well as the Skatepark project.

Members will be aware that since this time, the Skatepark project consequently succeeded in securing £375,000 and is underway and the North Foreshore Bridge project was rejected.

Current Situation

In line with the Good Relations Plan and the objective of "Building Shared City Spaces" in the current Peace Plan, the 2.1 capital bids present real opportunities to realise this ambition. The Good Relations partnership recognises that high quality shared public spaces will be an economic benefit to the city, in terms of reputation, city attractiveness, reducing the costs of duplication and increased sharing across a range of facilities.

It is important the economic and social value of sharing is more explicitly promoted and "designed in" when planning, delivering and managing shared spaces in the city. The SEUPB will rigorously test the "shared" aspect of any bid. Based on initial discussions and relevant research, the Good Relations Partnership recently recommended to Council that a working definition for shared space is:

- *Welcoming* – where people fee secure to take part in unfamiliar interactions, and increase an overall sense of shared experience and community.

- *Accessible* – well-connected in terms of transport and pedestrian links within a network of similar spaces across the city and managed to promote maximum participation by all communities.

- *Good quality* – attractive, high quality unique services and well-designed buildings and spaces.

- *Safe* – for all persons and groups, trusted by both locals and visitors.

Importantly, it must be understood that "shared space" is not neutral; it is a place where a diversity of identity, culture and heritage can be expressed and enjoyed in an environment of safety, tolerance and acceptance.

The Peace III network measure 2.1 has re-opened for a second call and will close on 13 November 2009. In order to identify Council Priorities for submitting proposals, the European unit has looked at the councils current "Place Shaping Projects" priorities and assessed these against the measure 2.1 criteria.

Priority 2.1 Creating Shared Public Spaces

Under 2.1 second call, the SEUPB is seeking strategic physical project submissions to meet the following criteria;

- To act as a catalyst for transforming the local community
- Be iconic with a capacity to provide a lasting legacy to the Peace III programme
- Incorporate high design and environmental quality
- Demonstrate long term sustainability
- Range in size from 1.5M to 10M euros

Under this measure the SEUPB wants to support 6-8 very large strategic and iconic projects across the eligible Peace III programme area funded at between 2-10 million euros each. The idea of this measure is to produce iconic structures that can be easily recognised as a Peace III project long after the programme ends. For a project to be successful, it must achieve 70 or above in relation to the following listed criteria.

- Shared space potential
- Catalyst for transforming
- Capacity to be iconic
- Sustainable development
- Capacity to implement
- Financial competence (fund yourself up front and claim in arrears)

The weak areas for most projects submitted to date have been the capacity to be iconic and the catalyst for transforming.

SEUPB particularly wants to see physical projects that address some of the following;

- Segregated areas
- Sectarian graffiti, flags and emblems
- Peace walls and demarcation lines
- Sectarianism
- Under used and unwelcoming areas
- Creation of shared public spaces

Any bid to SEUPB would need to significantly contribute to the desired outcomes that they outline in the Peace III Programme, for example: the removal of interface barriers; a reduction in violence and tension; and increased levels of trust and tolerance.

In initial draft of a "shared space" plan has been prepared for discussion with the Crusaders and Newington Football Clubs, outlining possible actions and a performance management framework. Similar "shared space" plans would need to be prepared for each of the Council bids to underpin the capital expenditure, demonstrating the sustainability and integrity of the "sharing".

As a starter, it is suggested that a series of actions, with associated targets, are considered under each of the following headings, as part of each of the action plans:

Welcoming	*Safe*
a. Branding and symbols	f. Physical design
b. Promotion and publicity	g. Policing/Stewarding
c. Management and governance	h. Codes of conduct and enforcement
d. Volunteering	i. Managing critical incidents
e. Community engagement	
Good quality	**Accessible**
j. physical design	o. Location
k. programming events	p. well-served by public transport
l. sharing high-quality resources	q. well-served by pedestrian and cycle links
m. Recruitment, development and progression of locally recruited volunteers and staff	r. Affordability
n. promoting unique cultural heritage	s. Involving under-represented groups e.g. disabled groups
	t. Youth programming
	u. monitoring participation of all groups and targeted campaigns/programmes

Other actions may emerge and will be tailored to the particular objectives of each bid.

Additionally, many of these actions will also deliver outcomes for the Council in terms of other corporate strategic objectives, such as place-shaping, health and well-being, community safety and economic regeneration.

It is hoped that this multi-layered approach to delivering shared space, will amply demonstrate both the iconic nature of the bids to SEUPB but also the multiple transformative benefits for neighbouring communities and the city itself.

Having considered the Place Shaping projects, a number have been identified as possible contenders for this Peace III 2.1 funding. A shortlist of projects was developed by an officer working group led by the Director of Development. These may be summarised as follows;

- North Foreshore (N)
- Seaview Allotments (N)
- Floral Hall (N)
- Maysfield (WTC) (CC)
- CS. Lewis Project (E)
- Gasworks Northern Fringe (S)
- Gasworks Bridge (S)
- Cultural Quarter (SS/N)
- (Cathedral & Gaol)
- Public Service- Service Girdwood (N)
- Convention Centre (CC)
- Sports Village (N)
- Mary Peters Track (S)
- Green Corridor (NW)
- Gaeltacht Quarter (W)
- HMS Caroline (CC)

Having considered the list and examined it in the context of the Peace III criteria the projects outlined below led by Belfast City Council are deemed relevant for submission;

Projects that were considered potentially viable under Peace III 2.1 call are the following;

(i) Cultural Corridor (CC/N) - linking the Cathedral Quarter to Carlisle Circus, Crumlin Road Jail to Shankill and Conway Mills (environmental, cultural, tourist and physical developments as well as creating shared space and increased community mobility)

(ii) Public service centre at Girdwood (N) - this project will only be viable if key partners are willing and commit within the required November timescale

(iii) Peaceful Trail (N&W) - Peace Trail linking North and West Belfast green areas including the Seaview allotments

(iv) HMS Caroline (CC) - to add to the Belfast maritime heritage

(v) Gasworks Bridge (E/CC) - linking the Gasworks to the Ormeau Park

Members are required to consider the five project options and make recommendations on which proposals should be further developed bearing in the mind the closing date of 13 November for full applications to the SEUPB. Members should note that projects must be fully costed, accompanied with a business case and ready for delivery with no planning or implementation barriers or implications.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members consider and select project proposals for submission under the anticipated Peace III 2.1 call for submission by 13 November 2009.'

In response to a number of questions, the Director of Improvement stated that any projects which were approved under the Peace III Programme would receive 100% funding. He stated that the five projects outlined were those which had been deemed to be most likely to be viable under the programme and meet the Peace III criteria.

The Committee agreed that projects (i) the Cultural Corridor and (ii) the Public Service Centre at Girdwood be further developed and submitted for funding under Priority 2.1 of Peace III. The Committee agreed also that further investigation be undertaken in relation to project (iv) the HMS Caroline and a report thereon be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on the likelihood of it being successful in receiving funding under the Peace III Scheme."

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources (Transition) Committee
Subject:	RPA: Visit by the Environment Minister, Edwin Poots
Date:	Friday 9th October, 2009
Reporting Officer:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Kevin Heaney (ext. 6202)

1.0	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	Members will be aware that on 1st July 2009, Mr Edwin Poots, MLA become the new Minister for the Environment and was given responsibility for taking forward the Review of Public Administration (RPA) Local Government reform programme.
2.0	**Key Issues**
2.1	In taking up his new post as the Environment Minister, Edwin Poots, has stated that he is fully aware that the local government reform programme is now moving into the critical implementation phase and has acknowledged the central role of Transition Committees in driving the process forward. He has given a commitment to engage with all 11 Transition Committees and has written to the Chief Executive, dated 29th September 2009, offering to meet with the Council's Transition Committee, at its meeting on 6th November 2009 at 12.30pm, to discuss the RPA programme (a copy of correspondence received is attached at Appendix 1).
2.1	The Environment Minister would intend to provide an update on the overall RPA programme and provide an opportunity for members of the Transition Committee and to provide a forum for questions to be raised by members.
2.2	Given the importance of this Ministerial meeting, it is recommended that the Committee meeting on 6th November 2009 be a single agenda item meeting around the RPA, with a pre-meeting of the Committee scheduled for 11.30am to discuss relevant RPA related issues.

4.0 Resource Implications
There are no Human Resource or financial implications contained within this report

5.0 Recommendations
Members are asked to: a) Consider and agree the request from the Environment Minister, Edwin Poots to meet with the Council's Transition Committee on 6th November 2009; b) Agree that the Committee meeting would be a single agenda item meeting c) Agree that a pre-meeting of the Committee would be held at 11.30am on 6th November 2009.
Documents Attached
Appendix 1 Invitation received from the Environment Minister, Edwin Poots requesting a meeting with the Belfast Transition Committee

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Department of the **Environment** www.doeni.gov.uk		Local Government Policy Division	
		44-58 May Street	
		Belfast	
		BT1 4NN	
		Tel:	02890 256065
Belfast City Council Transition Committee, C/O Peter McNaney		Fax:	02890 256080
Chief Executive,		Email:	angela.fitzpatrick@doeni.gov.uk
Belfast City Council,		Your Ref:	
City Hall,			
BELFAST		Our Ref:	
BT1 5GS			
		Date:	29 September 2009

Dear Mr McNaney,

The Minister of the Environment, Cllr Edwin Poots MLA has asked me to make the necessary arrangements for him to visit each of the eleven Transition Committees as early as possible over the coming months. As the local government reform programme progresses and the emphasis shifts from policy development to implementation, the Minister acknowledging the central role of Transition Committees, is keen to engage directly with all eleven Transition Committees.

Having considered the dates of your forthcoming meetings and the Minister's extremely busy diary, I would propose that the Minister visits the meeting of your Transition Committee which I believe scheduled for Friday 6 November at 12:30pm in the Council Chamber, Adelaide Exchange. I would be grateful if your Transition Committee would confirm this is acceptable as soon as possible.

To ensure the Minister's visit runs as smoothly as possible, it will be necessary for us, in conjunction with yourselves, to prepare a detailed programme/briefing etc for the visit. I would therefore be grateful if you would provide me with the following information **no later than Friday 23rd October 2009:**

  (i)   **Details required to finalise the programme for the visit i.e. who will meet & greet the Minister (draft programme attached at Annex A);**

  (ii)   **General background information on your Transition Committee, including any specific issues/questions you think may be raised by your committee members during the Q&A session;**

  (iii)   **Details of progress made by your Transition Committee, particularly in relation to achievement against the Key Tasks and Milestones guidance which issued (attached at Annex B);**

(iv)   **Names and brief pen pictures of the people the Minister will meet;**

(v)   **A Map/directions to the venue in Belfast; and**

(vi)   **Details of any publicity you would like to arrange e.g. press release (needs cleared with us in advance), local press/photographs etc**

I look forward to hearing from you however; in the meantime please feel free to contact me if you have any questions concerning the above.

Yours sincerely,

ANGELA FITZPATRICK
Local Government Policy Division

CC: **Kevin Heaney**
           Ian Maye
           John Price
           Simon Sloan

MINISTER'S VISIT TO BELFAST CITY COUNCILS' TRANSITION COMMITTEE

Friday 6TH November 2009
12:30 – 1:30 PM

PROGRAMME

12:30 pm   **Opportunity for photographs**

12:40 pm   **Cllr ******, Transition Committee Chair's Welcome**

12:45 pm   **DOE Minister's Address - including update on overall**
                      programme

12:55 pm   **Transition Committee Q & A Session with Minister**

1:10 pm   **Closing Address from Chair Transition Committee**
                      followed by refreshments

1:30 pm   **Depart**

DOE

Department of
the Environment
www.doeni.gov.uk

Local Government Division

Clerk & Chief Executive of each District Council
Local Government Change Management Officers
Mr J Buchanan, Chief Local Government Auditor
Ms H Moorhead, Chief Executive, Northern Ireland
Local Government Association.
Mr L Hannaway, Honorary Secretary, Society of
Local Authority Chief Executives,
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5 May 2009

Circular No: LG 07/09

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM - TRANSITION COMMITTEES & TRANSITION MANAGEMENT TEAMS

ADVISORY NOTE ON KEY TASKS & MILESTONES

Contents	**Paragraphs**

Introduction

1.1.   This advisory note is issued to assist Transition Committees and Transition Management Teams in planning the transition work until the operative date of the new Councils in May 2011. In planning the schedule of work, the Department believes that there are key tasks to be completed by critical dates. These will form the important milestones to be met and will be used by the Department as a mechanism to monitor progress. The terms of reference in DOE circular LG16/08 issued on 28 October 2008 establish the governance context for the work and the Strategic Leadership Board has already approved the Programme Management Framework on which this advisory note is based.

1.2.   A substantial body of work needs to be addressed by the Transition Committees if the milestones and deadlines are to be met. While much of the transition work and in particular any key decisions to be taken will fall to the Statutory Transition Committees when they are established later this year there are significant tasks that must be taken forward by the Voluntary Transition Committees. The table at Annex 1 provides an indicative list of the tasks that should fall under the remit of the Statutory Transition Committees, and those which might be carried forward during the Voluntary Transition Committee phase. These tasks include the preparation of an interim /short term implementation plan for the new council district, development of convergence plans, audits of existing systems, and assessment of needs in areas such as Capacity Building and IT.

1.3.   Statutory Transition Committees and the Transition Management Teams themselves will determine the start dates and means of delivery for the various actions. They may also wish to insert their own interim milestones as significant steps in the work plan. What is vital, however, is that the milestone completion dates are met. Any slippage in the milestones will compress the time available for Statutory Transition Committee decisions and result in end loading of the programme.

1.4.   The key tasks and milestones are set out in the following sections, and tabulated in Annex 2. 🎧

2. Legislative Framework

2.1.   The Department has established a legislative timetable for the local government reform process. The legislative milestones are the indispensable drivers to the formation of the new Councils. They are also important determinants in the Transition Committee / Transition Management Team milestones and work plans. 🎧

3. Shared Implementation Plan – Short Term

3.1. It is envisaged that the new Council will, as soon as possible after May 2011, develop a clear and challenging long term strategic vision for the area, based on effective and ongoing engagement with the local citizens, organisations, communities, etc comprising the new area and, as a result, ensure that it is owned by its stakeholders. However, as stated in Department's Circular LG 04/09 it will be important for a Statutory Transition Committee to agree a shared, short term implementation plan for the new council area to help inform key decisions on service delivery, programme priorities etc that will set the parameters for the determination of the operating budget and rate for the first year on the new Council.

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Short Term Implementation plan	Agreed short term vision, associated aims and objectives	Sept 09

4. Financial Management

4.1. Statutory Transition Committees in drawing up the financial management and accounting arrangements will ensure that they comply with the legislative provisions in the Local Government Bills. Effective financial and accounting regimes operated by Councils and other public bodies should be considered in the design process.

4.2. It is important that the developed financial governance arrangements fulfil the highest standards of internal and external scrutiny and accountability. They also must address issues, such as - standards of financial conduct, financial performance, risk management and internal control. Local Government Audit and the Audit Commission are important sources for guidance.

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Preparation of Financial arrangements	Detailed Financial Management and Accounting regime	Jun 10

5. Convergence - Plans, Programmes and Projects

5.1. Convergence will be a challenging task. It will involve the integration of programmes, plans and projects of the merging Councils and also those linked to the functions transferring from Government Departments and Public Bodies to each of the 11 new Councils. An important context for this work is Local Government Circular LG 04/09.

5.2. Transition Management Teams will need to secure active involvement of all the transferring bodies to achieve completeness and integrity of the process. Development of a realistic operating budget for the first year of the new Council is dependent on the successful outcome of convergence. Any agreed shared service arrangements would obviously need to be accommodated in the convergence arrangements.

5.3. The Regional Transition Coordination Group may be required to provide particular guidance on this aspect of the implementation. It is regarded as impractical to require Transition Committees to produce detailed and fully converged Corporate/Strategic Plans, Capital Plans etc. However, it is essential for resource planning reasons to produce, as a minimum, a strategic framework plan of key priorities in terms of

operational policies and related projects for the first year of the new Council. In particular, this strategic framework plan will provide the means of financial translation to the budget process and give direction to the development of Service Delivery & Performance Improvement arrangements.

5.4. As convergence is regarded as a comprehensive section of work it is suggested that activity should commence as soon as possible. 🎧

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Convergence of Strategies, Plans, Programmes and Projects – integrating new functions	A Strategic Framework Plan of key priorities – operational policies and projects, incorporating Service Delivery & Performance Improvement: The Plan will cover the first year of the new Council	June 10 (Interim progress reports)

6. Communication Strategy

6.1. It is important for Transition Committees / Transition Management Teams, in both the voluntary and statutory phases to have an effective communication strategy to inform all the stakeholders of their decisions, and also as an enabling process for efficient consultation. The Department's Communications framework and guiding principles, is a useful guide in completing this task and a copy can be accessed on the website. 🎧

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Communication	Strategy and action plan	Aug 09

7. Capacity Building

7.1. Capacity building is regarded as very important to strengthen the skills of elected members and staff for the new Council environment. A local capacity building programme should be developed as necessary, based on the recommendations on capacity building agreed by the Strategic Leadership Board, as developed through Policy Development Panel C. 🎧

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Capacity Building Programme	Capacity building programme for members and officers in liaison with Local Government providers	Ongoing to April 11 (Interim progress reports)

8. Winding –Up

8.1. Statutory Transition Committees / Transition Management Teams, existing Councils and other Public Bodies transferring functions, should ensure that local Winding-Up arrangements are put in place. The Department will be issuing a separate guidance note on Winding-Up. 🎧

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Establish Winding Up arrangements	Winding Up plan and process agreed and implementation commenced	Aug 09 to May 11
	Residual activity to final completion	Nov 11

9. Service Delivery & Performance Improvement

9.1. A priority consideration is the continuity of the delivery of high quality services during the transition process. All Public Bodies should manage the transfer arrangements, especially staff transfers, to ensure quality services are maintained. Shared service arrangements should be considered, where appropriate.

9.2. Transition Committees (both voluntary and statutory) / Transition Management Teams may consider convergence of the existing Service Delivery Plans as the starting point for the development of a new strategy. It will be necessary to integrate transferred services and new functions into the new Council's operations.

9.3. It should be noted that the Government has placed a duty on local councils to deliver services to clear standards – of cost and quality – by the most economic, efficient and effective means available. Similar targets have been set for Public Bodies. Accordingly, the opportunity to secure service delivery efficiencies and economies through service rationalisation measures should be examined. Performance Improvement should also be a key feature of the Service Delivery Strategy for the new Council.

9.4. Further advice on this aspect will issue in due course, when Policy Development Panel B has completed its deliberations.

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Service Delivery	Continuity of quality services during the transition	Ongoing to May 11
	Production of a new Service Delivery Plan and associated Performance Plan - integrating transferred services and new functions	Nov 10

10. Customer Service

10.1. The Department believes that development of excellent customer services should be a hallmark of the new Council. Statutory Transition Committees / Transition Management Teams should seek to formulate a local Customer Services Strategy that is innovative and improves citizen access to services and information.

10.2. Further advice on this aspect will issue in due course, when Policy Development Panel B has completed its deliberations.

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Customer Service	A customer service strategy for the new Council	Nov 10

11. ICT

11.1.   A draft IS Strategy for local government has been developed under the auspices of Policy Development Panel B.   Statutory Transition Committees should develop a cohesive IT strategy for the new Council drawing from the overarching strategy for the sector. 🎧

Task	*Outcome*	*Completion Date*
ICT	Cohesive IT Strategy and implementation plan	Oct 10

12. Community Planning

12.1. The Strategic Leadership Board and Policy Development Panel A have agreed proposals for the legislative framework for Community Planning. Work is now being taken forward to develop the guidance that would underpin and support the operation of community planning in the new Councils.

12.2. Consideration is also being given to whether there is the opportunity for the trialling of community planning by the Statutory Transition Committees. This would enable them to prepare for effective and efficient lead management of the function by the new Councils as soon as possible after May 2011. Such a process would also inform the finalisation of the supporting guidance.

12.3. Further advice on this aspect will issue in due course, when Policy Development Panel A has completed its deliberations. 🎧

13. Chief Executive, HR and Finance Posts – recruitment

13.1. Chief Executive (CEX) and senior appointments, such as HR and Finance, are regarded as front-end decisions because of the essential management leadership they will provide to Statutory Transition Committees in the lead up to the operative date in May 2011. These appointments are clearly decisions for the Statutory Transition Committees to take when they are established.

13.2. Policy Development Panel C is currently developing policy proposals to underpin these appointments. Further advice and guidance will issue in due course.

13.3. Recruitment of the Senior Management Team should follow these appointments, when the staff structure has been determined.   Administrative support will be required for these posts. 🎧

Task	*Outcome*	*Completion Date*
Chief Executive recruitment	Appointment	March 10
HR and Finance Officers recruitment	Appointments	May 10

Administrative Support	Appointments	May 10

14. Human Resources (HR)

14.1. The effective management of RPA staffing issues is central to the successful completion of the local government reform process. Statutory Transition Committees / Transition Management Teams, and Councils and other transferor bodies (e.g. DSD, Planning Service), are required to adhere to the updated PSC Guiding Principles, which have been approved by the Northern Ireland Executive.

14.2. Policy Development Panel C is presently providing policy advice to the Strategic Leadership Board and Regional Transition Coordinating Group on - Transfer Schemes, Vacancy Controls, Secondments, Pensions, Severance, etc. in line with the PSC Guiding Principles. Associated discussions and agreements with the Trade Unions will be facilitated through a HR Coordination Group that includes LGSC.

14.3. As the LGSC has a statutory responsibility in terms of Local Government HR matters, the Commission will provide essential implementation advice and oversight to Statutory Transition Committees / Transition Management Teams.

14.4. A key first step in the Statutory Transition Committees / Transition management Teams HR process is the design of a new staffing structure that is fit for purpose for the new Council. Further guidance, together with the process for dealing with remuneration levels for the new posts will issue in due course. Particular arrangements may be agreed by Departments for their staff transferring from the Civil Service, and these will be taken into account.

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Assess Staffing needs	Staff Structure established Staff Transfer Plan	June 10
Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Staff transfer arrangements as per approved LGSC scheme, Civil Service transfer scheme and PSC Guiding Principles	Severance Scheme Staff Mapping System of Filling of Posts in new structure- Selection Pools, Matching of Posts… Staff Location All Staff transfer arrangements completed – appointments, post allocations, location, etc	June 10 June 10 June 10 June 10 June 10 May 11
Complete Staff handover		

15. Estates Strategy and Accommodation

15.1. Statutory Transition Committees will develop an estates strategy to secure the efficient and effective use of the transferring property assets. This strategy should take account of the convergence process, the strategic framework plan and priorities, service delivery arrangements, staffing issues and budgetary plans. It should also take account of the

organisational design work undertaken by PriceWaterhouseCoopers.

15.2. It may be necessary for Statutory Transition Committees to address any urgent accommodation issues. However, all major decisions on offices should be left to the new Council having responsibility for policy determinations on centralisation, decentralisation, localism - service centres, etc, and taking particular account of service delivery and staff location issues. 🎧

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Estates and Accommodation	Estates Strategy including - Detailed inventory of property and costs	Dec 10
	Completion of transfer plan for implementation	Feb 11

16. Budget Planning and Financial Management System

16.1. As part of the convergence process, it will necessary for Statutory Transition Committees / Transition Management Teams to establish a corporate financial management system taking account of agreed financial regulations and the accountability regime developed under governance arrangements. Statutory Transition Committees will have the responsibility to prepare the budget for the first year of the new Council and thus set the rate for the first year of the new Council.

16.2. The new Council may however wish to adjust the transferred budget after taking office, for example – redefine budget allocations and priorities. Statutory Transition Committees may consider developing a budget plan for the second year for consideration by the new Council. This should in effect be the financial translation of the organisation's strategic framework plan developed through the convergence process. 🎧

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Finance Systems	Corporate financial management systems	Sept 10
Preparation of Budget	Agreed Budget	Jan 11
	Short Term Budget plan – 1-2 years	Feb 11
	Establish Rate	Feb 11

17. Assets and Liabilities

17.1. Existing Councils and relevant Public Bodies should put in place management arrangements to transfer to the new Council the required assets and liabilities, and the associated legal and administrative issues. The compilation of a detailed inventory, etc will require significant activity on the part of staff. 🎧

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Assets and Liabilities	Detailed inventory of assets and list of liabilities, and associated legal and administrative issues	May 10
	Completion of transfer plan for implementation	Feb 11

18. General Administration

18.1. The administrative systems operating throughout the transferring Public Bodies in relation to for example, records management, contracts, servicing committees etc should be merged and/or harmonised as far as practicable during the transition. Opportunities for improvement and efficiencies should be explored and implemented where possible. ☊

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Administration	Implementation Plan with identified improvements and efficiencies	Nov 10

19. Bank and Insurance Appointments

19.1. Statutory Transition Committees will have to appoint Bank and Insurance providers for the new Council. The process should comply with best practice procurement procedures. ☊

Task	Outcome	Completion Date
Bank	Appointment made	July 10
Insurance / Brokers	Appointments made	July 10

20. Conclusion

20.1. The advice contained in this note will develop as the change management process proceeds during the transition. For example, functional transfers and shared service arrangements may change the delivery setting. It is anticipated that major modernisation will proceed with the new Councils post May 2011. Further advice will be available as the Strategic Leadership Board, Policy Development Panels and Regional Transition Coordinating Group continue to create policy and offer implementation guidance. ☊

CONTACTS

If you have any queries concerning the content of this Circular, you should contact either john.price@doeni.gov.uk 02890 256786) or Angela.fitzpatrick@doeni.gov.uk 02890 256065).

Roles for Transition Committees

The following table contains an indicative list of tasks that should be carried out by Transition Committees both in their voluntary and statutory phase. There are also a number of tasks identified which will be the responsibility of the new Council and in some cases the existing Councils.

	Voluntary Transition Committees
Agree change Management Arrangements	Voluntary Transition Committees (VTCs) should begin preparation for the implementation of the reform programme. To assist members and officers in this work VTCs should now agree change management arrangements including, where relevant, the appointment of key change management staff.
Develop a Communications Strategy	It is important for Transition Committees in both the voluntary and statutory phases to have an effective communications strategy to inform all stakeholders of their decisions, and also as an enabling process for efficient consultation. VTCs should now develop a local communication strategy for all key stakeholders including staff.
Establish existing priorities of amalgamating councils and transferring functions to inform convergence of key plans	Statutory Transition Committees (STCs) will be tasked with agreeing a short term implementation plan for the new council area to help inform key decisions on service delivery and programme priorities. The short term implementation plan will set the parameters for the determination of the operating budget and rate for the first year of the new Council. VTCs should now begin work on establishing existing priorities of amalgamating councils and transferring functions (where possible) to inform the convergence of key plans (e.g. corporate and business plans of existing councils) by the STCs.
Collate information on existing service delivery arrangements	VTCs should now begin the collation of information on existing service delivery arrangements*. The information collated will assist STCs to develop a short term service delivery model for the first year of the new council. The following list indicates work that should take place: an audit of existing activities an assessment of current financial systems and development of recommendations for convergence an audit of current estates and assets and compile a composite register. A data collection pro forma is being drawn up through PDP C and will issue to VTCs shortly. an assessment of current IT and information systems Note: VTCs should not take any decisions that will bind STCs although recommendations can be formulated for consideration by STCs. *This should include service delivery arrangements for the transferring functions, pending further advice from PDP C.
Assess capacity building needs	STCs will be required to develop a local capacity building programme. VTCs should now begin work on an

	assessment of the capacity building needs of elected representatives and all staff including those transferring from central government. Further advice on a supporting structure for capacity building will issue when Policy Development Panel C has completed its work on this matter.
Audit of number of staff employed, roles, grades and conditions of employment	Existing Councils should now begin the work that is required to develop a council** staff transfer scheme(s) and compliance with TUPE. This work should include a complete audit of the number of staff employed, roles, grades and conditions of employment. This information will be important to STCs who will design the staff structure of the new Council. ** Transferor Departments will prepare their own transfer schemes.

	Statutory Transition Committees
Agree standing orders	STCs will be required to agree standing orders and put in place the procedures and systems necessary to support their change management role.
Appointment of Chief Executive and senior staff designate	STCs will be responsible for the appointment of a Chief Executive and senior staff (Directors) designate. The appointment of the Chief Executive designate will be one of the first tasks of the STCs when they are formed.
Develop and agree short term implementation plan Prepare an integrated set of new operational priorities for new council for the year 2011/12 Examine potential for service delivery efficiencies	STCs shall develop and agree a short term implementation plan for the new council area to help inform key decisions on service delivery and programme priorities. The short term implementation plan will set the parameters for the determination of the operating budget and rate for the first year of the new Council. STCs shall set the rate for the year 2011-2012. In developing the short term implementation plan it will be necessary to converge key plans; comprehensively review existing priorities of amalgamating councils as well as the existing priorities of transferor bodies. STCs should prepare an integrated set of new operational priorities for new council for the year 2011/12. STCs should in developing the short term implementation plan examine the potential for service delivery efficiencies and economies through service rationalisation measures. Further advice will issue from PDP B on opportunities for efficiencies and economies on a regional basis.
Make arrangements for winding up existing councils	STCs will be required to make arrangements for winding up the existing Councils.
Agree and implement capacity building strategy	STCs will be required to agree and implement a capacity building strategy for elected members and staff, including those transferring from central government, in preparation for the formation of the new councils.
Develop service continuity plan	Throughout the period up to 2011 councils will continue to deliver services. STCs should ensure that standards of

	service are, as far as possible, kept at an acceptable level. This will require STCs to develop a service continuity plan.
Ensure systems and procedures are in place to support the transition process Secure resources to ensure that the systems and procedures necessary to support the work of the new council are in place Develop an Information Systems Strategy Develop a customer service strategy	STCs should ensure that the necessary systems and procedures are in place to support the transition process. Building on the work of the VTCs, and having regard for advice from the SLB and the PDPs, STCs should ensure that the necessary systems and procedures are in place to support the transition process. The STCs should also ensure that resources are secured to ensure that the systems and procedures necessary to support the work of the new council are in place. STCs should develop an Information Systems Strategy which will identify the systems required e.g. a financial system, network and specific programmes necessary to support work across the council, personnel systems, etc. STCs should also develop a customer service strategy for the new Council for its first year of operation. Further advice will issue from PDP B on developing the necessary strategies.
Develop recommendations on governance arrangements for the new council where appropriate	STCs should where possible develop recommendations on the governance arrangements for the new council. This should include a committee structure and the development of a list of possible positions which will be appointed to by one of a number of prescribed methods of proportionality. The new Council will at its first meeting consider the governance arrangements recommended by the STC.
Complete work associated with transfer schemes e.g. audit of the number of staff employed, roles grades etc Develop a staff transfer scheme for any staff transferring from the STC to the new Council e.g. Chief Executive Designate and Designate Directors.	Existing Councils should now begin the work that is required to develop council staff transfer schemes and compliance with TUPE. This work should include a complete audit of the number of staff employed, roles, grades and conditions of employment. STCs should build on the work of the VTCs and design a staff structure for the first year of the new Council. STCs should develop a staff transfer scheme for any staff transferring from the STC to the new Council e.g. Chief Executive Designate and Designate Directors.
Develop an estates strategy	STCs should develop an estates strategy building on the scoping work completed by the VTCs. This strategy should identify the estates transferring from existing Councils and relevant Government Departments and should address the accommodation needs of the new Council in its first year of operation.
Make arrangements for smooth transfer of assets and liabilities	STCs should put in place the necessary arrangements to ensure the smooth transfer of assets and liabilities from existing Councils and relevant Government Departments to the new council in May 2011.

	New Council
Corporate Vision	Develop a Corporate vision

Governance arrangements	Agree local governance arrangements
Standing Orders	Agree Standing Orders
Review strategic documents prepared by the STC	Review the budget, service delivery plan, corporate priorities and improvement plan prepared by the STCs

Key Tasks and Milestones

Date	Task detail
Ongoing to April 11 (Interim progress reports)	Capacity Building Programme - Capacity building programme for members and officers in liaison with Local Government providers
Ongoing to May 11	Service Delivery - Continuity of quality services during the transition
Aug 09	Communication - Strategy and action plan
Aug 09 to May 11	Establish Winding Up arrangements - Winding Up plan & process agreed & implementation commenced
Sept 09	Short Term Implementation plan - Agreed short term vision, associated aims and objectives
March 10	Chief Executive recruitment - Appointment
May 10	Assets and Liabilities - Detailed inventory of assets and list of liabilities, and associated legal and administrative issues
May 10	HR and Finance Officers recruitment - Appointments
May 10	Administrative Support - Appointments
June 10	Assess Staffing needs - Staff Structure established
June 10	Staff transfer arrangements as per approved LGSC scheme, Civil Service transfer scheme and PSC Guiding Principles: Staff Transfer Plan Severance Scheme Staff Mapping System of Filling of Posts in new structure- Selection Pools, Matching of Posts Staff Location

Date	Task
June 10 (Interim progress reports)	Convergence of Strategies, Plans, Programmes and Projects – integrating new functions. A Strategic Framework Plan of key priorities – policies and projects, incorporating performance management: The Plan will cover the first year of the new Council
Jun 10	Preparation of Financial arrangements - Detailed Financial Management and Accounting regime
July 10	Bank - Appointment made
July 10	Insurance / Brokers - Appointments made
Sept 10	Finance Systems - Corporate financial management systems
Oct 10	ICT - Cohesive IT Strategy and implementation plan
Nov 10	Administration - Implementation Plan with identified improvements and efficiencies
Nov 10	Service Delivery - Production of a new Service Delivery Plan and associated Performance Plan – integrating transferred services and new functions
Nov 10	Customer Service - A customer service strategy for the new Council
Dec 10	Estates and Accommodation - Estates Strategy including – Detailed inventory of property and costs
Jan 11	Preparation of Budget - Agreed Budget
Feb 11	Preparation of Budget - Short Term Budget plan – 1-2 years
Feb 11	Preparation of Budget - Establish Rate
Feb 11	Estates and Accommodation - Completion of transfer plan for implementation
Feb 11	Assets and Liabilities - Completion of transfer plan for implementation
May 11	Complete Staff handover - All Staff transfer arrangements completed – appointments, post allocations, location, etc
Nov 11	Establish Winding Up arrangements - Residual activity to final completion

Agenda Item 2b

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources (Transition) Committee
Subject:	RPA: Transfer of Functions Update
Date:	Friday 9th October, 2009
Reporting Officer:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Kevin Heaney (ext. 6202)

1.0	**Relevant Background Information**
1.1	Members will be aware that an RPA Transfer of Functions (ToF) Working Group was established to examine the package of functions proposed to transfer from central to local government and provide greater clarity in terms of the scope of the transferring functions; the resources (or otherwise) attached to the functions; and to identify those issues which needed to be addressed or required further clarification prior to transfer. The ToF Working Group was chaired by the Chief Executive of Belfast City Council, with senior officials from both central and local government.
1.4	As part of the discussions of the ToF Working Group consideration was given to potential proposals in regard to marginal changes to the transferring functions where this was justified on a service delivery basis and taking into account the principles of strong local government; the role of local government in supporting place shaping; the need for single point accountability at the local level; ensuring improved customer centric services; and value for money considerations.
1.5	The work of the ToF Working Group culminated in a series of recommendations on proposed marginal changes being put forward for consideration by the Environment Minister and Ministers represented on the Local Government Reform Executive Sub-Committee.
2.0	**Key Issues**
2.1	The Executive Sub-Committee met on 15th September to discuss the recommendations put forward by the ToF Working Group and had agreed to the final suite of functions to transfer from central to local government as part of the RPA reform process.
2.2	Attached at Appendix 1 is correspondence issued by the Environment Minister, Edwin Poots to the President of NILGA, Councillor John Mathews, setting out a brief summary of what had been agreed at the Executive Sub-Committee on 15th September in regards to the transfer of functions and the associated issues around transfer of staff, securing funding and taking forward community planning.
2.3	**Transfer of Functions**
	In terms of the transfer of functions to local government, the Environment Minister has confirmed that:
	▪ Minister Connor Murphy has accepted local government's proposal that the following public realm functions should transfer:-pedestrian permits, alley gating, permitting local events on roads, off street car parking and on street car parking enforcement.
	▪ Minister Connor Murphy has confirmed also that he is content for his Department to retain the following functions which local government advocated should not transfer:- maintenance of amenity areas, salting of footways, grass cutting/weed spraying, gully emptying and street lighting)
	▪ Minister Margaret Ritchie has accepted the local government proposal that "Living Over the Shop" grant scheme should transfer; and
	▪ Minister Margaret Ritchie has not accepted the sector's recommendations that Travellers' Transit Sites function should remain with the NIHE and will transfer to local government.
	Further detail on the final decisions in regard to the transfer of functions is set out at Appendix 1.
2.4	It has been agreed that the ToF Working Group would to be reconstituted and chaired by the Chief Executive. It will be tasked with examining and providing clarity on the detail of the revised suite of functions transferring to local government. As this detail emerges, further reports will be submitted for the

	consideration of the Committee.
2.5	Notwithstanding. It will be important that the Council now start to enhance its level of engagement with transferring departments to explore the potential options around the transfer of functions to Belfast City Council and the associated consequences which need to be considered by the Council's Transition Committee (i.e. SP&R).
	<u>Community Planning</u>
2.6	In his correspondence, the Environment Minister reaffirmed that the Executive Sub-Committee members do appreciate the importance of community planning and have expressed their full support to the required engagement between central and local government as the implementation of the programme is taken forward. The Minister stated also that he intends to write to all other Ministerial colleagues seeking their commitment to this engagement process.
2.7	This should be clearly welcomed as one of the key successes to the Community Planning process will be its ability to secure greater coherence and integration in delivery and providing responsive and value for money public services.
	<u>Transfer of Staff</u>
2.8	Reference is also made in the correspondence to possible models for the transfer of staff from central to local government. Transfer of staffing issues will be subject to consideration by the Local Government Reform Joint Forum which comprises of representatives from central and local government and trade unions. The Chair of the Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and Head of Human Resources are both members of the Joint Forum. Again, as proposals emerge from the work of the Joint Forum they will be brought to Committee for consideration.
	<u>Financial Challenges</u>
2.9	Clearly there remains serious uncertainties around the future funding of the transferring functions which is further compounded by the fact that a range of functions remain subject to a bidding process as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review and the wider recession and fiscal challenges which will inevitably result in overall cuts in public sector expenditure and greater efficiencies targets being set.
2.10	The Chief Executive recently delivered a presentation at a joint NILGA and SOLACE RPA briefing session on 2nd October which examined some of the financial and implementation issues which local government face in moving forward with the RPA (copy of presentation attached at Appendix 2). The Chief Executive will discuss this further at the Committee meeting.

4.0 Resource Implications
There are no Human Resource or financial implications contained within this report

5.0 Recommendations
Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

Documents Attached	
Appendix 1	Correspondence issued by the Environment Minister, Edwin Poots in regard to the RPA
Appendix 2	Presentation

From the office of the
Minister of the Environment
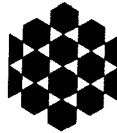
Department of the

Environment

www.doeni.gov.uk

Councillor John Mathews
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DoE Private Office
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10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB

Telephone: 028 9054 1166

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Your reference:
Our reference: COR/275/09

29   September 2009

Dear John

You will be aware that the Local Government Reform Executive Sub Committee, which I chair, met on Tuesday 15 September 2009. I will update you on our discussions at the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) meeting on 16 October. In the interim, I thought it would be helpful to write to you and provide a brief résumé of the key points the Sub Committee agreed.

We discussed the recommendations, outlined in Arnold Hatch's letter and enclosures dated 30 April 2009, about the marginal changes to the package of functions announced for transfer, from central to local government, in the Assembly on 31 March 2008. You will recall that the key areas involved were the public realm aspects of local roads functions (Department for Regional Development), "Living Over the Shop" grant scheme (Department for Social Development), and Travellers' Transit Sites (also Department for Social Development). I can confirm that:-

- Minister Murphy has accepted local government's proposal that the following public realm functions should transfer (pedestrian permits, alley gating, permitting local events on roads, off street car parking and on street parking enforcement). This is subject to his Department retaining policy ownership of the on street parking enforcement function;

- Minister Murphy has also confirmed that he is content for his Department to retain the following functions which local government advocated should not transfer (maintenance of amenity areas, salting of footways, grass cutting/weed spraying, gully emptying and street lighting);

- Minister Ritchie has accepted the local government proposal that the "Living Over the Shop" grant scheme should transfer; and

- Minister Ritchie has not accepted the sector's recommendation that Travellers' Transit Sites function should remain with the NIHE.

I know that Minister Ritchie has carefully considered the views of local government on the Travellers' Transit Sites issue but is not convinced by the argument that the transfer of responsibility for this function would adversely impact on the traveller community. Indeed, the new councils will have a responsibility equal to that of the NIHE to protect the rights of minority groups. The Executive Sub Committee supports Minister Ritchie's position.

The Sub Committee also received an update on current thinking on community planning and the programme of activities involved in supporting its introduction in 2011. I emphasised the strong views, expressed by SLB members, about the need for Departments to commit to engaging with local government as the programme progresses. I can confirm that Executive Sub Committee members do appreciate the importance of community planning and expressed their full support to the required engagement between central and local government as implementation of the programme is taken forward. I will also write to all other Ministerial colleagues seeking their commitment to this engagement process.
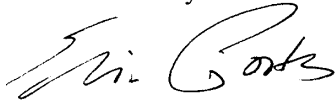
I updated the Sub Committee on the work that is being taken forward, through the assessment of options for local government service delivery project, to support a bid to the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP) for funding of our implementation programme. I explained that it was likely to be mid October of this year before PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) had completed the economic appraisal of delivery options and SLB had the opportunity to consider the key findings. The Sub Committee members are all well aware of the budgets constraints that the Executive is working within and the many competing priorities for resources. It is clear that DFP will require a very clear assessment of the costs and benefits of implementation along with details of how these pressures might be funded. We agreed, therefore, that it would be helpful to let Ministers have sight of the PwC report as soon as possible.

The Sub Committee also discussed the issue of transfer arrangements for civil servants whose functions will transfer to local government in 2011. We reviewed the arguments for and against the two main options i.e. permanent transfer and temporary transfer arrangements based on those applied in the case of the Department of Health Social Service and Public Safety (DHSSPS) staff whose functions transferred to the new Health and Social Care bodies on 1 April 2009. We noted that the intention is for similar arrangements as those applied in the Health sector to be adopted by the new Education and Skills Authority – due to be established in January 2010.

Our view is that temporary transfer arrangements would have a number of advantages, particularly in terms of flexibility in managing the workforce and thus is consistent with the Executive's commitment to make every effort to avoid redundancy costs and it also facilitates business continuity. It was decided that the temporary transfer model that applied to DHSSPS staff will, therefore, be the starting position for the central government representatives in discussions and negotiations at the Local Government Reform Joint Forum.

I do hope you find this update helpful. I am copying this letter to SLB members for information.

Yours sincerely

EDWIN POOTS MLA
Minister of the Environment

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ORIGINAL FUNCTIONS PROPOSED TO TRANSFER as at 31 MARCH 08

- **Planning**: local development plan functions, development control and enforcement.

- **Public Realm aspects of Local Roads**
  - streetscaping;
  - town and city centre environmental improvements;
  - grass cutting and weed spraying;
  - gully emptying;
  - street lighting;
  - off-street parking;
  - pedestrian permits;
  - maintenance of amenity areas;
  - alley-gating (traffic regulation orders facilitating alley-gating to avoid antisocial behaviour);
  - permitting local events to be held on roads; and
  - salting of footways.

- **Urban Regeneration and Community Development**:
  - functions associated with physical development (such as environmental improvement schemes, comprehensive development and urban development grant)
  - area based regeneration (such as neighbourhood renewal)
  - some community development programmes for the voluntary and community sectors.

- **Housing**:
  - registration of houses in multiple occupation
  - housing unfitness responsibilities, including repair and demolition notices
  - energy conservation at local level
  - responsibility for travellers' transit sites.

- **Local Economic Development** (transfer from Invest NI):
  - Start a Business Programme and Enterprise Shows
  - Youth Entrepreneurship (such as Prince's Trust and Shell Livewire)
  - Social Entrepreneurship
  - Investing for Women
  - Neighbourhood Renewal funding relating to enterprises initiatives.

- **Local Tourism**:
  - small scale tourism accommodation development
  - local tourism marketing
  - local tourism product development
  - Visitor Servicing
  - Providing business support including business start up advice along with training and delivery of customer care schemes; and
  - providing advice to developers on tourism policies and related issues.

- Delivery of the EU Rural Development Programme;
- Authority to Spot List to enable Councils to add a building to the statutory list on a temporary basis, subject to ratification by the DOE;
- Authority to draw up local lists of buildings that are of architectural and/or historic interest;
- Armagh County Museum;
- local water recreational facilities;
- local sports;
- functions of the NI Museum Council;
- local arts;
- local festivals; and
- Donaghadee Harbour

MARGINAL CHANGES TO TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS

The following changes were agreed by the Executive Sub-Committee in **September 2009**

DRD

Minister Murphy has now approved the transfer of the following public realm functions –

- Pedestrian permits
- Alley Gating
- Permitting events on local roads
- Off street parking and;
- On street car parking enforcement.

Minister Murphy has indicated that the decision to transfer on street parking enforcement is subject to his Department retaining policy ownership for this function.

DSD

- Living over the Shop (LOTS) is a Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) initiative which is intended to encourage people to live in properties over shops in certain areas of town centre regeneration within certain towns and cities. Minister Ritchie has approved the transfer of the Living over the Shop Scheme from Central to Local Government.

- Responsibility for provision of travellers Transit sites should transfer to the new councils. There is a degree of commonality between Transit Sites and the Councils' existing responsibilities for caravan and amenity areas and it would be more closely related to the Councils' Environmental Health responsibilities.

- The Housing Executive will retain responsibility for permanent housing, group housing and serviced sites.

The Transfer of Functions Working Group will now reconstitute in order to provide clarity on the detail of the revised suite of functions transferring from Central to Local Government.

Transfer of Functions – Summary

Planning
- Local development plan functions
- Development control and enforcement

Public Realm Aspects of Local Roads
- Streetscaping
- Off street parking / on street parking enforcement (Central Government retain policy ownership for this function)
- Pedestrian permits
- Alley gating (traffic regulation orders facilitating alley gating to avoid antisocial behaviour)
- Permitting local events to be held on roads

Urban regeneration and Community Development
- Functions associated with physical development (such as environmental improvement schemes, comprehensive development and urban development grant)
- Area based regeneration (such as neighbourhood renewal)
- Some community development programmes for the voluntary and community sectors

Housing
- Registration of houses in multiple occupation
- Housing unfitness responsibilities, including repair and demolition notices
- Energy conservation at a local level
- Responsibility for travellers transit sites
- Living over the Shop Scheme

Local Economic Development (transfer from Invest NI)
- Start a Business Programme and Enterprise Shows
- Youth Entrepreneurship (such as Princes Trust and Shell Livewire)
- Social Entrepreneurship
- Investing for Women
- Neighbourhood Renewal funding relating to enterprises initiatives

Local Tourism
- Small scale tourism accommodation development
- Local tourism marketing
- Local tourism product development
- Visitor servicing
- Providing business support including business start up advice along with training and delivery of customer care schemes
- Providing advice to developers on tourism policies and related issues
- Delivery of the EU Rural Development Programme
- Authority to Spot List to enable Councils to add a building to the statutory list on a temporary basis, subject to ratification by the DOE

- Authority to draw up local lists of buildings that are of architectural and/or historic interest

- Armagh County Museum

- Local water recreational facilities

- Local sports

- Functions of the NI Museum Council

- Local arts

- Local festivals

- Donaghadee Harbour

Other
- Arrangements will also be developed whereby local government will have formal input to the decisions in relation to a number of responsibilities that are remaining with central government.

- Community Planning and Power of Wellbeing

Review of Public Administration

Back to Basics

Financial and Implementation Issues

Friday 2 October 2009

Peter McNaney
Chief Executive, Belfast City Council

Overview

1. Context
2. The Basics
3. The Rate
4. Development of the area
5. Services
6. What we need to do

Back to Basics

Why are we doing this?
- Strong local government
- Primacy of political process
- Accountability to public
- Engagement with citizens
- Delivery of VFM services that meet need
- Improvement of our area

Through
- Community Planning and Place shaping

Back to Basics

The Financial Environment
- Recession
- Effect on Tax Take and levels of debt
- Parliamentary Election May 2011 – change of government?
- Effect on Northern Ireland
- Local financial pressures:
  – CSR: 2011-13
  – Water rates
  – Equal pay claims
  – Freeze of regional rate
  – Departmental demands

Back to basics – Aide Memoire

- What we need to **remember** about **change**
- Nothing happens without **Leadership** – political and managerial leadership is key to success
- Nothing happens without **resources**
- Nothing happens without **structure** and clarity of who does what in the **process**

Good change management needs Benefit Realisation

- Nothing succeeds without showing the **public** that it makes things **better**
- People need to **see**, **touch** and **feel improvement**
- This will not happen by **accident** – it needs to be **planned** now

The Basics - Resources

The rate

- Date of next election May 2011
- Date rate bills go out
- Date freeze on regional rate ends
- Date water rates are introduced
- Lets look at the first cut on the rates

Irish News: Saturday 26 September 2009

The Basics

The Rate

- People will not view Local Government Reform as a success if rate bills go through the roof
- Needs to be planned for
- Rates support scheme
- Efficiency targets

The Basics

Development of our area

- Attract private sector investment
- Capital investment by Council
- Capital investment by government
  - DSD
  - DARD
  - DRD
  - DETI
- Budget crises = less money for capital investment
- Result = less development of our areas

The Basics

Development of our area

- Need to plan now to make a difference
- Single budget line in CSR for local government RPA covering DSD, DARD, DRD, DETI
- Need to have capital to invest so people can see, touch and feel the difference
- Need to encourage a Total Place Agenda in government and look at funding solutions

The Basics

Development of our area

- Funding solutions
- ADZ
- Community infrastructure levy
- Regional Infrastructure Fund
- JESSICA
- Local asset backed vehicles
- Need to develop agenda and pursue with Government

The Basics

Services

- Challenge of bringing services together
- Additional costs of merging workforces, fleet and systems
- Rationalisation/closure of facilities

Result – poorer services than before RPA

The Basics

Services

- Plan for solutions
- Efficiency targets
- Funding support for investment in new technology
- Fleet
- Facilities
- Symbolic improvements eg public service centres

What we need to do

- Make a good argument
- Central government will not pay for all of this
- Recognise local government needs to demonstrate payback through

More for Less

- 3 tools of efficiency
  - Revenue generation
  - Cost reduction/saving
  - Service effectiveness
- Work up the **HOW** mechanisms

Benefit Realisation : How Mechanisms

- Rate support programme
- Single budget line for RPA in CSR
- Total Place Agenda for each Council – Government Response
- Funding Solutions Paper and Lobby
- What Local Government will do – Efficiency Programme
- Symbolism – Public Service Centres
                ADZ's
- Create the message
- Plan for its realisation

Benefit Realisation : Results

- Balanced VFM rate
- More integrated citizen services
- More integrated capital development of areas
- Better government

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	RPA Vacancy Control Procedure
Date:	9 October 2009
Reporting Officer:	Jill Minne, Head of Human Resources, ext 3220
Contact Officer:	Jill Minne, Head of Human Resources, ext 3220

Relevant Background Information

This report: outlines the main provisions of the Vacancy Control Procedures which have been agreed by the Local Government Reform Joint Forum (LGRJF) and issued under the authority of the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) under Section 40(4) (f) of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972.

The attached procedure has been issued by the LGSC as a statutory recommendation for adoption by councils from 1 October 2009.

All 26 councils (including Environmental Health and Building Control Group Committees), arc21 and SWaMP 2008 will implement the Vacancy Control System uniformly across local government, on a phased basis, with effect from 1 October 2009

Key Issues

1. The scheme seeks to safeguard the employment of existing council staff and mitigate against possible redundancies within local government sector and the RPA 'at risk groups'.

2. Essentially, the scheme means that where a Council has a vacancy it must seek to fill this from an appropriate 'at risk' group in the first instance.

3. Councils must consider trawling vacancies to the appropriate 'at risk' pools in the following order

   a. 'At risk' staff in the individual council
   b. 'At risk' staff in the amalgamated council cluster
   c. 'At risk' staff across the 26 councils
   d. 'At risk' staff across all the sectors in the RPA Affected Group.

4. The scheme is being phased in and from 01 October 2009 will apply to the posts of:

- Chief Executive
- Directors
- Heads of Service
- PAs to the above
- Member Services

5. This means that if councils have a vacancy in any of the above areas they must seek to fill it from either their own council; the cluster; the 26 councils; or the RPA affected Group. This will therefore affect the filling of the Director of Property and Projects, the Director of Parks and Leisure, the Director of Health and Environmental Services; any vacancies that are heads of service or PA posts and any posts within the Member Services Section.

6. Members should note that the practical implications of implementing this scheme within Belfast City Council are the subject of ongoing consideration and discussion with the Local Government Staff Commission (as Belfast will not have the same degree of risk as a direct result of RPA as the other councils). A report will be brought to committee in the very near future on the filling of these posts and the consequences for BCC following receipt of advice from the Local Government Staff Commission.

7. It should also be noted that if BCC has to trawl affected posts in the first instance to an 'at risk' pool this will still be the subject of a merit based robust selection process in accordance with the LGSC Code on Recruitment and Selection. Should no candidate be deemed suitable to fill the vacancy as a result of the trawl to an 'at risk' pool the post can then be advertised externally.

Resource Implications

If the Council is required to trawl within an 'at risk' category in the first instance and no appointment is made the Council can then go to external advert. This however will mean two selection processes and therefore added cost. Consideration may therefore have to be given to ways in which the cost of assessment centres, adverts etc may be reduced.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the Vacancy Control Procedures and the potential impact on BCC.

Decision Tracking

A further report will be made to Committee on the impact for forthcoming recruitment exercises once further advice has been received from the LGSC.

Key to Abbreviations

LGSC - Local Government Staff Commission
LGRJF - Local Government reform Joint Forum

Documents Attached

Vacancy Control Procedure and covering letter from LGJRF

LGRJF

facilitating local government reorganisation

CIRCULAR LGRJF/01 - SEPTEMBER 2009

Vacancy Control System

Detailed Procedure

Contents

1.   **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

1.1 **Rationale**

The primary rationale for the introduction of the vacancy control system is in order to safeguard the employment of existing council staff as a result of the decisions arising from the Review of Public Administration (RPA).

Furthermore, the Northern Ireland Executive re-issued Second Guiding Principle and Associated Recommendations as recommended by the Public Service Commission on Managing Vacancies Effectively in Existing Organisations (RPA Circular 1/2008) (copy attached at **Appendix1**) states that:

"in order to minimise the risk of redundancies as a result of decisions arising from the Review of Public Administration, and recognising the need to keep open all possible means to redeploy staff, existing employers should, at the appropriate time, implement vacancy management schemes and avoid creating new posts".

The view of the Public Service Commission that the implementation of vacancy control mechanisms is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim, ie. a mechanism for avoiding redundancies resulting from RPA decisions, is also accepted by Government.

It should be noted that this Vacancy Control System – Detailed Procedures applies to current and existing organisations and will not apply to posts in the new council structures. A Local Government Reform Joint Forum Agreement on filling posts in the new council structures will be issued in the coming months to provide detailed guidance to councils and Transition Committees. Section 4 – Stepped Process on pages 7-9, details the stepped process for the operation of the Vacancy Control System.

1.2 **Consultation Exercise**

In order to facilitate the interpretation of this Guiding Principle for local government, the Local Government Staff Commission:

➢ considered the equality dimensions of introducing a Vacancy Control System including the potential for indirect discrimination in restricting applicant pools along with the rights safeguarding the employment of existing staff
➢ issued a policy paper for consultation purposes in August 2006 seeking views on the context, practical and legal considerations in respect of the introduction of a Vacancy Control System (the paper sets out the legal considerations in detail and is available from Commission House or may be accessed via the Staff Commission's website at www.lgsc.org.uk)
➢ considered the responses to the consultation at meetings in November 2006 and January 2007

- ➢ agreed a Detailed Procedure Paper for the implementation of a Vacancy Control System in local government in May 2007
- ➢ reviewed the Detailed Procedure Paper in January 2009 following the Ministerial announcement in March 2008 on the reorganisation of local government
- ➢ issued a draft Detailed Procedure Paper for consultation purposes in January 2009
- ➢ considered the consultation responses at Commission meetings between March and June 2009
- ➢ met with the Public Service Commission in July 2009 to discuss the implementation of the vacancy control system

issued draft for decision by the Local Government Reform Joint Forum

This Procedure has been agreed by the Local Government Reform Joint Forum and the Local Government Staff Commission and is issued by the Staff Commission under Section 40(4)(f) of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972. In this respect the Procedure is issued by the Staff Commission as a statutory recommendation for adoption from 1st October 2009. This document provides the Detailed Procedure for the operation of a Vacancy Control System within local government and takes into consideration the comments made by councils and other consultees throughout the consultation process. The Procedure also includes:

- a **schematic chart** on the Stepped Process to be followed in implementing the vacancy control system (**Appendix 2**)
- a **pro forma document** to assist in the decision making process (**Appendix 3**)

2. APPLICATION

All 26 councils, (including Environmental Health and Building Control Group Committees), arc21 and SWaMP 2008 will implement the Vacancy Control System uniformly across local government, commencing on the scheduled implementation date of 1st October 2009.

With effect from 1st October 2009, the vacancy control system will apply to vacancies within the existing 26 councils for the posts of:

- o Chief Executive
- o Directors
- o Heads of Service
- o PAs to Chief Executives, Directors and Heads of Service
- o Member Services

Other posts will be phased in to the vacancy control system as more information becomes available on "staff designated to be at a clearly identified risk of compulsory redundancy ["at risk" staff] (This wording is taken from the NI Executive Second Guiding Principle and Associated Recommendations as

recommended by the Public Service Commission on Managing Vacancies Effectively in Existing Organisations, RPA Circular 1/2008).

It does not apply to vacancies which will occur as a result of the creation of new posts in new councils' staffing structures, as determined by the Transition Committees. Please refer to the specific Guidance on Filling Posts in the New Organisations.

It should also be noted that the vacancy control system should not be unilaterally applied to all posts; exceptions might include:

➢ posts in which the staff are not "at risk", and which, following full consideration of the options available including detailed examination of retraining, would not be suitable for redeployment

➢ posts for which the necessary skills and experience do not exist within the system

These posts should be publicly advertised in the normal way, as outlined in the Local Government Staff Commission's Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection.

<p style="text-align:center;">DETAILED PROCEDURE</p>

3. OVERARCHING ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Trade Union Involvement and Employee Consultation

The RPA Guidance Note on Managing Vacancies Effectively in Existing Organisations" (RPA Circular 02/2009) states that:

"……Employers should ensure that the defining and publicising of those services which will be subject to vacancy management schemes is carried out in conjunction with the relevant Trade Unions".

Councils are required to formally consult with trade unions in relation to their vacancy management schemes and involve them in local consultation and negotiation arrangements, as outlined in the protocol on local negotiations for RPA issues, issued by the Local Government Reform Joint Forum.

3.2 Transferring Functions

Information on the implications of the additional functions transferring to councils, particularly the numbers and levels of staff that might transfer with the additional functions, should be factored into the deliberations and decisions made in relation to vacancy controls in individual councils as soon as it becomes available.

3.3 Communication

The Northern Ireland Executive First Guiding Principle and Associated Recommendation as recommended by the Public Service Commission on An Effective Communication Strategy (RPA Circular 1/2006), deals with:

"*the absolute requirement for an effective communication strategy*".

This Guiding Principle further states:

"*In relation to formal communications, the Public Service Commission recommends that electronic means of communication, including e-mails and websites, should be supplemented by the prudent use of regular newsletters, and direct contact through seminars, workshops, conferences and staff meetings*".

In addition, the Northern Ireland Executive re-issued Second Guiding Principle on Managing Vacancies Effectively in Existing Organisations (RPA Circular 1/2008) states:

"The Commission considers that both existing and new employers should pro-actively take steps to alleviate staff anxiety, implement effective communication and minimise the possibility of compulsory redundancies".

It is recommended that councils in conjunction with trade unions should immediately implement an effective communication strategy for staff and, in particular, regular newsletters advising staff of developments over the course of the reorganisation process. This is a crucial means of ensuring the development of individual consultation. It is essential that such a publication detailing progress is circulated regularly.

A document outlining the key tasks and action points for all those involved in communicating with employees during the implementation period is attached in **Appendix 4**. This document is an extract from a Commission publication "Scoping Paper on a Best Practice Model for Communication in Local Government" which is available on the Commission's website at www.lgsc.org.uk and includes key tasks and action points for Chief Executives and senior managers, elected members, HR professionals and other managers.

3.4 Contact Officers

The Northern Ireland Executive First Guiding Principle on An Effective Communication Strategy (RPA Circular 1/2006):
"….*recommends that each organisation provides its staff with an identified contact point (or contact points) to which RPA specific queries might be directed, or from which staff might seek RPA specific information*".

Contact officers should be designated in each council to deal with concerns from staff in order that these issues can be fed into agenda items for the consultative groups and disseminated via the internal communication system. This will also allow for early identification of problems and potential inconsistency of treatment, which might lead to particular difficulties in the transfer to new councils.

3.5 Monitoring and Review

The Northern Ireland Executive re-issued Second Guiding Principle and Associated Recommendations as recommended by the Public Service Commission on Managing Vacancies Effectively in Existing Organisations (RPA Circular 1/2008) states:

"The PSC recommends that the Executive requires existing employers:…..

- *Through sponsoring Departments and the sectoral Staff Commissions, to introduce and apply monitoring and review arrangements in relation to policies on managing vacancies. In keeping with the Public Service Commission's recommendations in relation to effective communications, reports on how arrangements for managing vacancies effectively are working in practice should also be provided to staff and local trade unions and/or staff representatives on a regular basis*".

Councils are advised to keep all of the measures introduced under review and, where required, to alter within the scope of this agreement the measures to deal with relevant developments. The Staff Commission will also keep the overall policy aspect of this Procedure under review.

The Independent Secretariat of Local Government Reform Joint Forum (Joint Forum) will prepare progress reports which will be made available to both Sides of the Joint Forum.

Summary

Prior to the operation of the Stepped Process as detailed in this document, all councils should:

➢ Formally notify trade unions of the intention to introduce the Vacancy Control System and agree local consultation and negotiation arrangements

➢ Initiate an effective reorganisation communication strategy and designate suitable contact officers to deal with staff concerns

➢ Ensure that monitoring and review arrangements are in place to provide data on the operation of the Vacancy Control System

4.   STEPPED PROCESS

This section outlines in detail a system for the operation of vacancy controls in local government within the context of the general advice outlined in the Northern Ireland Executive re-issued Second Guiding Principle and Associated Recommendations as recommended by the Public Service Commission (RPA Circular 1/2008).

It takes into account the particular situation in local government and the legal and equality obligations on local government employers.

In order to implement the Vacancy Control System in local government a **Stepped Process** is recommended as detailed below.

It should be noted that, as the reorganisation implementation progresses, the circumstances in each organisation may change and the data and information requirements will also evolve and change. Councils should keep all of the measures introduced under review and, where required, alter the measures to deal with relevant developments. The Staff Commission will also keep the overall policy aspect of this Guidance under review and liaise with the Local Government Reform Joint Forum as to any proposed amendments to the Procedure.

STEP 1   **AVOID CREATING NEW POSTS**

The Northern Ireland Executive re-issued Second Guiding Principle and Associated Recommendations as recommended by the Public Service Commission on Managing Vacancies Effectively in Existing Organisations states that:

"The *schemes should provide that no new posts be created except where an existing employing authority can demonstrate an inescapable requirement for the post. Examples of new posts which might fall into this category include those required to ensure service delivery, where new responsibilities or requirements are imposed by legislation or Executive action or in cases where there is exceptional stress or pressure of work on existing staff*".

Councils should therefore avoid creating new posts except where there is an inescapable need or requirement for the post e.g. posts required to ensure service delivery, where new responsibilities or requirements are imposed by legislation or Executive action.

Where a council determines that there is an inescapable need to create a new post consideration must be given to filling the post by the mechanisms outlined in Step 3 below before resorting to public advertisement.

STEP 2   **AVOID FILLING VACANCIES**

Where possible, councils should avoid filling vacancies in "at risk" posts where the need for the work to continue cannot be justified.

It should be noted that this step is not designed to downsize or suppress posts which are necessary for the effective implementation of the councils' functions, such posts will be filled by application of the process as set out in Step 3 below.

STEP 3   **FILLING VACANCIES USING RESTRICTED POOLS**

Where staff have been formally identified as being "at risk" a council must first consider retraining and re-skilling the existing staff who are "at risk" in order to mitigate against any potential redundancies before widening the pool beyond the "at risk" staff. In terms of timing, it may not be possible to utilise this sub-step until nearer the transfer deadline when the situation regarding redundancies is clearer.

An open and transparent system for re-training and re-allocating "at risk" staff to suitable alternative posts should be utilised. The process outlined in the Commission's document, "*Guidance on the Staffing Implications of Organisation Development and Change*" (September 2002), providing detail on the ring-fencing of vacancies in a redundancy situation, may be of use in such situations.

Where staff are "at risk" a council in filling posts should use restricted pools as outlined below.

➢ Permanently - where the post may continue to exist beyond the transfer date

Or where there is a question over whether the post will continue to exist beyond the transfer date by means of:

➢ temporary acting up (including rotational)
➢ delaying retirements (by agreement)
➢ secondments
➢ having examined all internal options consider the use of temporary or fixed term contracts

The method of filling a post will depend on the circumstances of each individual case and will require councils to take account of employment law, equality considerations and legal advice.

In this respect, councils should give careful consideration to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) The PSC and the Commission have sought legal advice which is available on the PSC's website www.pscni.org.uk or by contacting the Commission on (028) 9031 3200. This should assist Councils with their decision making. However Councils should take their own legal advice if necessary.

If individuals are appointed to temporary and/or fixed term posts where the post is likely to continue to exist in the new council and are then dismissed because of the transfer, the dismissal will be regarded as automatically unfair unless it was for an economic, technical or organisational reason entailing changes in the workforce.

For justification purposes, councils should seek to fill a vacancy from "at risk" staff in the following order of consideration:
(cross reference to paragraph **2. Application** on page 2)

- "at risk" staff in the individual council

- "at risk" staff in the amalgamated council cluster

- "at risk" staff across all the 26 councils

- "at risk" staff across all the sectors in the RPA Affected Group

Having compared the restricted pools, councils should decide on the most appropriate pool to use to fill the vacant post, and record the reasons for this decision.

| STEP 4 | **PUBLICLY ADVERTISE VACANCIES** |

Councils should use public advertising only where a vacancy must be filled and there is no suitable appointee to fill the post within any restricted pools identified above.

Councils should consider whether to fill the post on a permanent, temporary or fixed term basis depending on the nature of the job and the likelihood of it continuing to exist in the new council following RPA implementation.

| STEP 5 | **RECORD ISSUES CONSIDERED AND DECISION MADE** |

Councils should record the issues considered at each stage in the above process and the decisions made at each stage.

Councils are also required to provide regular reports to staff and trade unions to enable the trade unions to monitor the implementation of vacancy management arrangements in practice.

RPA GUIDANCE NOTE ON MANAGING VACANCIES EFFECTIVELY IN EXISTING ORGANISATIONS

Introduction

1.   This Guidance Note confirms that the Executive has accepted the Public Service Commission's re-issued 2nd Guiding Principle, Managing Vacancies Effectively (see appendix) and is issued to assist and provide clarification to Departments and public service employers in the RPA Affected Group (see RPA Circular 1/2009) in the practical implementation of the Guiding Principle.

Interpretation

2.   This guidance note applies to vacancies in existing organisations within the RPA affected group. It does not apply to vacancies as a result of new posts created in new organisations which are covered by RPA Circular 3/2009. In implementing the PSC's 2nd Guiding Principle, employers are reminded that its purpose is to minimise the risk of redundancies. Therefore, in determining whether a particular course of action is appropriate, employers should consider whether it is consistent with this objective.

3.   At the appropriate time, employers are required to develop and implement vacancy management schemes and avoid creating new posts unless there is an inescapable requirement for the post. The development and implementation of vacancy management schemes should be carried out through sponsoring Departments and the sectoral Staff Commissions and include consultation with appropriate trade unions and staff representatives. Employers should ensure that the defining and publicising of those services which will be subject to vacancy management schemes is carried out in conjunction with the relevant Trade Unions.

4.   Vacancy management schemes should have the following characteristics:

- the majority of vacancies in existing posts that will arise is likely to be as a result of natural wastage. In most of these cases, particularly in front-line positions, it is expected that such vacancies will be filled as in the normal course of business;

- no new posts in RPA affected areas should be created unless there is considered to be an inescapable requirement for the post. The Guiding Principle is not intended to be prescriptive as regards what might constitute an inescapable requirement. Examples are set out in the attached Guiding Principle. The reasons for creating a new post must be fully documented; and

- in line with the Guiding Principle Trade Unions and other staff representatives should be advised of the creation of new posts.

5.   Through consultation with Trade Unions and staff representatives, employers are required to identify those staff at a clearly identified risk of compulsory redundancy ("at risk" staff) and to advise staff whether they are, or are not, in the "at risk" group. There may be an exceptional circumstance whereby, after identifying those "at risk", a member of staff considers themselves to be "at risk". It is important that employers take steps to clarify this for the individual concerned. Employers must ensure that arrangements in place for identifying "at risk" staff are robust and timely to allow for the "at risk" group to be updated as necessary.

6.   The method of filling a vacancy or a new or substantially new post in an existing organisation will depend on the circumstances of each individual case and will require employers to take account of employment law, equality considerations and legal advice. The following illustrates the methods which are available to an employer and the order in which they must be considered:

i)   internal mechanism within the <u>organisation</u> which will, in the first instance, deal with "at risk" staff;

ii)   targeting "at risk" staff in the <u>sector</u>[1];

iii)   targeting "at risk" staff across <u>all sectors</u> in the RPA Affected Group[2]; and

iv)   <u>open</u> competition.

Where staff accept temporary promotion or secondment, there would be a guarantee to the employee in respect of normal continuity of employment rights in their substantive posts.

7.   When considering the methods available for filling a vacancy or a new post employers must:

- take account of employment law, equality and good relations considerations and, where necessary, take legal advice; these are also important factors when determining the composition of the selection pool and when using restricted pools;

- bear in mind that the aim of mechanisms i)-iii) above are to promote employment protection within the public sector and thus should normally only be open to broadly comparable grades or higher; and

- document fully the justification for their decision on the means of filling a vacancy/post.

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[1] Should the employer deem it appropriate and justifiable in any given situation, "sector" in this instance may be refined to a sub-set of the main sector grouping; the decision must be taken in consultation, with a view to reaching agreement, with the appropriate Trade Union and staff representatives and the justification to do so must be fully documented.
[2] Please see Annex 1 for additional guidance in this regard.

8.   Employers must ensure that staff directly affected by this Guiding Principle have access to appropriate training measures to support them throughout the RPA implementation process.

9.   Through sponsoring Departments and the sectoral Staff Commissions, employers are required to monitor and review arrangements in relation to policies on managing vacancies. If a mechanism is not already in place, a mechanism should be established to provide regular reports to staff and to enable Trade Unions and/or staff representatives to monitor the implementation of vacancy management arrangements in practice.

10.   *Whilst being aware of the need for acceptable use of public funds, in order to meet or exceed statutory obligations, employers must ensure that all reasonable steps, both pre and post transfer, are taken to manage or accommodate surplus staff.*

Action required

11.   Employers are required to:

- implement vacancy management schemes at the appropriate time and as outlined above;

- put in place a mechanism which will allow for the identification of "at risk" staff;

- put in place a procedure to allow for vacancies and/or new posts to be filled in compliance with the requirements of this Guiding Principle; and

- document and retain the justification for any decision on the means of filling a vacancy/post.

RPA CENTRAL UNIT
[MAY 2009]

Guidance: Targeting "at risk" employees across all sectors in the RPA Affected Group

Introduction

1. The aim of the following guidance is to encourage open communications between employers in the RPA affected group in order to minimise the risk of redundancy through collaboration in filling vacancies/new posts across the sectors/employers. This will thereby ensure that <u>consideration</u> is given to providing "at risk" employees with an opportunity to apply for positions/vacancies as might arise as per the recommendations in the PSC's 2nd and 4th Guiding Principles.

2. This guidance applies to both existing and new organisations in the RPA affected group.

Steps

3. The following guidance details the steps that should be taken when an employer identifies "at risk" employees and, subsequently, when an employer has a vacancy/new post:

    Employer in the RPA affected group with "at risk" employees:

    *   Employer, in consultation with TUS, identifies employees at a clearly identified risk of compulsory redundancy ("at risk" employees) in their organisation; and
    *   in addition to fulfilling their statutory obligations in a redundancy situation the employer should, as soon as is reasonably practical, notify all other employers in the RPA Affected Group of the "at risk" employees in their organisation and request consideration to the

circulation of vacancies/new posts to their organisation in line with the provisions in the PSC's 2nd and 4th Guiding Principles.

Employer in the RPA affected group with a vacancy/new post:

- Employer in the RPA Affected Group has a vacancy/new post;
- the employer should, having taken account of employment law, equality considerations and, where necessary, legal advice, consider the different methods available for filling the vacancy/new post as detailed in the PSC's 2nd/4th Guiding Principle;
- where the employer decides that the method to be used is targeting employees "at risk" across all sectors then they should circulate the vacancy to RPA affected employers who have identified "at risk" employees in their organisation for onward submission to those "at risk".

Background

4.   Employers must ensure that they have in place robust and timely arrangements for identifying "at risk" employees in order to allow for the "at risk" group to be constantly refreshed and revised taking account of progress/updates. Employers should be aware that the implementation of this guidance <u>does not</u> replace their statutory obligations in a redundancy situation and that any arrangement with another employer in relation to finding suitable alternative employment is <u>in addition</u> to their statutory obligations.

5.   The aim of this mechanism is to promote employment protection in the RPA Affected Group and thus should normally only be open to employees in broadly comparable grades or in higher grades. The receiving organisation should consider the terms and conditions under which they can offer a position.

6. Employers are reminded that it is important to document fully the justification for the decision on the means of filling a vacancy/post and are alerted, in particular, to the potential discrimination of advertising to a restricted pool.

7. Vacancies should be circulated amongst "at risk" employees as a recruitment aid; it will be for the organisation with the vacancy to decide, having taken account of employment law, equality considerations and, where necessary, legal advice, the mechanisms for assessment, selection and appointment to these posts.

Final

8. It is important that employers take the appropriate steps to implement the above guidance in order to facilitate placement and support amongst "at risk" employees, thereby helping to alleviate employee anxiety, implement effective communication and contribute to making every possible effort to avoid redundancies. In addition, it is also important that "at risk" employees take all reasonable steps to avail of the opportunities which occur for them as a result of this guidance.

9. Where an employer concludes, after having taken account of employment law, equality considerations and where necessary legal advice, that the method to fill the vacancy/new post should be open competition, steps should be taken to ensure that those "at risk" are made aware of the vacancy/new post.

public service commission

SECOND GUIDING PRINCIPLE AND ASSOCIATED RECOMMENDATIONS

MANAGING VACANCIES EFFECTIVELY IN EXISTING ORGANISATIONS

Note: This reissued Guiding Principle supersedes the previous Managing Vacancies Guiding Principle, dated the 19th July 2006, which was accepted by the direct rule administration on 31st August 2006.
Background

1. The Commission's role is to safeguard the interests of staff and to ensure their smooth transfer to new organisations established as a consequence of Executive decisions on the Review of Public Administration, taking into account statutory obligations, including those arising from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. In formulating this Guiding Principle and Associated Recommendations, the Commission has also had due regard to the previous administration's commitment, as set out in the statement of 22 November 2005, that "Every possible effort will be made to avoid redundancies." The Commission welcomes the Executive's commitment to this underlying objective.

2. The Public Service Commission has consulted the Executive, the sectoral Staff Commissions and representatives of NIC/ICTU about the most appropriate way to manage vacancies as part of a wider set of arrangements which will be required to achieve the Executive's commitment to make every possible effort to avoid redundancies in bodies affected by the RPA.

3. This revised Managing Vacancies Guiding Principle, supersedes the previous Managing Vacancies Guiding Principle, dated the 19th of July 2006, which was accepted by the direct rule administration on 31st August 2006. This revision reflects experience from the implementation of RPA to date. It also refines the use of the RPA Affected Group in filling posts and focuses efforts on those staff designated to be at a clearly identified risk of compulsory redundancy ["at risk" staff].

Guiding Principle

4. The Public Service Commission recommends that, in order to minimise the risk of redundancies as a result of decisions arising from the Review of Public Administration, and recognising the need to keep open all possible means to redeploy staff, existing employers should, at the appropriate time, implement vacancy management schemes and avoid creating new posts.

Associated Recommendations

5. The Public Service Commission recommends, that in consultation with Trade Unions and employers, the Executive should publish an updated list of public sector organisations deemed to be affected by the direct rule administration's announcements and recent decisions taken by the Executive (the RPA Affected Group).

6. The Public Service Commission recommends that the Executive requires existing employers:

   • Through sponsoring Departments and the sectoral Staff Commissions, to develop and implement vacancy management schemes in consultation with appropriate Trade Unions and staff representatives. The Commission recognises the operational difficulties which might be faced by employers in immediately implementing vacancy management schemes given that the implementation of RPA may proceed over a much longer timeframe than initially envisaged. The Commission therefore recommends that employers consult with Trade Unions and other staff representatives on the timing of the introduction of the scheme so as to safeguard the interests of existing staff to the fullest possible extent, whilst balancing this with the business needs of the organisation.

   • In conjunction with relevant Trade Unions at local and other levels, to define, and publicise, those services which will be subject to vacancy management schemes.

   • To consult with Trade Unions and other staff representatives on the application of the Scheme in respect of any particular posts. The Schemes should provide that no new posts be created except where an existing employer can demonstrate an inescapable requirement for the post. Examples of new posts which might fall into this category include those required to ensure service delivery, where new responsibilities or requirements are imposed by legislation or Executive action, or in cases where there is exceptional stress or pressure of work on existing staff.

   • To identify staff who are at a clearly identified risk of compulsory redundancy and to advise staff whether they are, or are not, in the "at risk" group. Should an individual then consider themselves to be "at risk" they should be entitled to a response from their employer clarifying the position. Employers should consult on the designation of "at risk" staff with Trade Unions and staff representatives.

   • Should seek to fill a vacancy or new post in the following order of <u>consideration</u>:

1) By the use of an internal mechanism with the objective of dealing in the first instance with staff who have been identified as being "at risk". Examples of internal mechanisms are transfers, re-deployment, the offer of suitable alternative employment, temporary promotions, internal competition, delayed retirement etc. Where staff accept temporary promotion, acting up or secondment etc there will be an underlying guarantee to the employee in respect of continuity of employment rights in their previous substantive post for the purposes of RPA implementation.

2) By targeting "at risk" staff in that sector as a whole.

3) By targeting "at risk" staff across all the sectors in the RPA Affected Group.

4) By way of open competition.
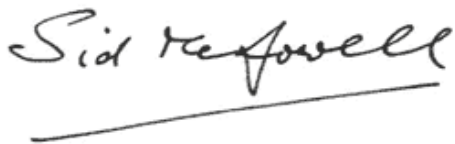
A "clearing house" mechanism may be used to enable employers to collaborate in filling vacancies or new posts across the sectors thereby ensuring "at risk" staff have an opportunity to apply for positions/vacancies as might arise.

• To take account of employment law and equality considerations when considering the methods available for filling a vacancy or a new post and when determining the composition of the selection pool.

• To fully document decisions on creating new posts or filling vacancies.

• To ensure that appropriate training measures are in place throughout the RPA implementation process to support staff directly affected by this Guiding Principle and Associated Recommendations.

• Through sponsoring Departments and the sectoral Staff Commissions, to introduce and apply monitoring and review arrangements in relation to policies on managing vacancies. In keeping with the Public Service Commission's recommendations in relation to effective communications, reports on how arrangements for managing vacancies effectively are working in practice should also be provided to staff and local trade unions and/or staff representatives on a regular basis.

• To take all reasonable steps, both pre and post transfer, to manage or accommodate surplus staff thereby meeting or exceeding their statutory obligations.

Commentary

7. The Public Service Commission recognises that decisions taken in relation to managing vacancies should represent a proportionate means of achieving the Executive's aim to make every possible effort to avoid redundancies in a way which is compliant with statutory obligations, including Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Commission also recognises that it would be inappropriate to apply constraints to the extent that they have a detrimental effect on service delivery and has therefore recommended the order of consideration for filling vacancies.

8. The Commission considers that both existing and new employers should pro-actively take steps to alleviate staff anxiety, implement effective communication and minimise the possibility of compulsory redundancies.

SID McDOWELL
CHAIRMAN
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
25 January 2008

Vacancy Control Schematic Chart

STEP 1 **Avoid creating** **new posts**	→	Unless inescapable need or requirement for the post, e.g. to ensure service delivery, where new responsibilities are imposed by legislation or pressure of work on existing staff
STEP 2 **Avoid filling** **vacant posts**	→	Suppression or freeze on permanent appointments* *this is not designed to downsize or freeze posts which are necessary for the effective implementation of the councils' functions
STEP 3 **Filling vacancies** **using restricted** **pools**	→	Where staff are "at risk": permanent, rotational acting-up, secondments, temporary, fixed term within: • "at risk" in the individual council • "at risk" staff in the amalgamated council cluster • "at risk" staff across all the 26 councils • "at risk" staff across all the sectors in the RPA Affected Groups
STEP 4 **Publicly advertise** **vacancies**	→	Publicly advertise vacancies on a • permanent • temporary • fixed term basis
STEP 5 **Record issues** **considered** **and decision made**	→	Regular reports to staff and trade unions

VACANCY CONTROL SYSTEM PROFORMA
FORM TO BE COMPLETED WITH REGARD TO EACH VACANCY
OR REQUEST FOR A NEW POST

1.	**JOB TITLE & DEPARTMENT:**

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2.   IS THIS A NEW POST?

IF NO: ☐
Proceed to Question 3

IF YES: ☐

Is there an inescapable need to create this post?

IF NO: ☐
Proceed to Question 9

IF YES: ☐

Give detailed explanation as to the reason this post must be created:

and proceed to Question 3.

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3.   IS THIS POST WITHIN AN 'AT RISK OF REDUNDANCY' GROUPING OR COULD IT BE A SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY?

NO: ☐

Fill post in normal way in line with the Staff Commission's Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection i.e. public advertisement

IF YES: ☐

Proceed to Question 4

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4. WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF THIS POST?
(permanent, fixed term, temporary)

Are there any special considerations to be taken in to account with regard to the current status of this post?

(eg. the rights of employees in fixed term posts under the fixed term contract regulations)

[ ]

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5. IS IT ESSENTIAL THAT THIS VACANCY IS FILLED?

Consultation/Negotiation Forum to consider:

- Written submissions from line managers

- If duties of post are critical to the ongoing work of the council until RPA

- Could duties be distributed among existing staff?

- Could post be filled on a temporary, acting up or secondment basis by existing staff?

After due consideration, is it deemed necessary for the vacancy to be filled?

IF YES: [ ]

Proceed to question 6

IF NO: [ ]
Proceed to question 9

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6.   IS POST HELD BY AN OFFICER WHO IS DUE TO RETIRE AND COULD RETIREMENT BE DELAYED WITH AGREEMENT OF OFFICER?

IF NO: ☐

Proceed to Question 7

IF YES: ☐

Proceed to Question 9

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7.   IS THIS POST TEMPORARY/FIXED TERM?

IF NO: ☐

Go to Question 8

IF YES: ☐

If temporary
Can post be extended on a temporary basis?

What are the implications of this?

If fixed term
Can fixed term post be extended?

What are the implications of this?

Is it possible for post to be extended?

IF YES: ☐

Proceed to Question 9

IF NO: ☐
Proceed to Question 8

8.   CAN WE FILL THE VACANCY USING RESTRICTED POOLS?

Could training be provided to enable internal candidates to apply?

IF NO: ☐

Externally advertise and go to Question 9

IF YES: ☐

Consider equality implications and decide course of action.

Do we offer as a temporary, fixed or secondment opportunity? Consider the implications of TUPE.

Consider restricted pools and decide whether to trawl either:

- "at risk" in the individual council

- "at risk" staff in the amalgamated council cluster

- "at risk" staff across all the 26 councils

- the "at risk" staff across all the sectors in the RPA Affected Groups

9. **DECISION MADE WITH REGARD TO THIS VACANCY WITH DETAILED EXPLANATION OF DECISION REACHED.**

   For each vacancy or new post created, an individual decision will be made based on the circumstances and the data available at the time.

10. **HAS FORMAL CONSULTATION TAKEN PLACE WITH TRADE UNIONS ON THIS PROCESS?**

    COMMENTS

11. **APPROVAL AND ACTIONS.**

    Proforma completed by: _____ **date:** _____

    Actions approved by: _____ **date:** _____
    Chief Executive or Director

Communication Tasks and Action Points

NB This document is extracted from a Commission publication "Scoping Paper on a Best Practice Model for Communication in Local Government" which is available on the Commission's website at www.lgsc.org.uk.

Tasks for Key Influencers

The Employers' Organisation for Local Government has produced a checklist of tasks based on that developed by the Local Government Employers Organisation for all those who will be involved in communicating with employees during the implementation period. This deals with senior management, HR personnel and elected members. This list is not definitive and can be adapted to each organisation.

1. **Key Tasks for the Chief Executive/Senior Management**

   - Ensure that there is an internal communication strategy for informing and consulting with all employees.

   - Nominate a senior person to be responsible for your communication strategy and provide adequate resources and support for the role.

   - Ensure that all managers have the information they need.

   Action Points for the Chief Executive/Senior Management:

   ➢ Ensure that information from all people involved (project groups, working parties etc) is pooled and that systems exist for those involved to be kept up to date with relevant progress.

   ➢ Establish a programme of meetings for all staff, with a suitable frequency.

   ➢ 'Walk the job' in order to keep in touch with the level of staff motivation, concerns and related work problems.

   ➢ Ensure that line managers have the information they need to be able to inform their own teams.

   ➢ Give full and prompt responses to staff enquiries.

   ➢ Monitor communication channels and monitor their effectiveness.

2. Key Tasks for all Managers

- Talk to employees about key management decisions.

- Listen to staff concerns.

- Liaise with personnel/HR staff about staffing issues - managers are likely to be the first person that employees will approach for an answer.

- Be clear and consistent about information given to staff. If managers are ill-informed they will lose the credibility of their staff.

- Maintain the motivation of staff - the continuing delivery of effective services is dependent on managers' ability to keep their staff motivated.

- Take responsibility for keeping informed and updated, and regularly disseminate this information to employees.

Action Points for all Managers:

- Listen to staff queries.

- Find answers for employees and ensure that they have the necessary information to answer enquiries they may receive from the public.

- Maintain the morale and the quality of service delivery by making the required standards and expectations clear to staff.

- Establish a programme of one-to-one meetings with team members.

3. Key Tasks for HR Professionals

- Take the lead in setting up staff/union consultation arrangements.

- Brief line managers on personnel policy.

- Keep informed about developments.

- Ensure that staff are kept informed about changes happening in the organisation.

Action Points for HR Professionals:

➢ Regularly update staff lists, telephone lists, circulation lists, and information about people moves, secondments, departures and new appointments.

➢ Ensure that systems are created (and procedures publicised) for staff secondments to other jobs within the authority.

➢ Ensure that the potential implications of the EU Information and Consultation Directive are taken into account.

➢ Include training on communication skills in management training and development programmes.

4. **Key Tasks for Elected Members**

▪ Ensure that there is an internal communication strategy and that it is followed through in spite of any possible changes in management as a result of the Review process.

▪ Be aware of the work involved in gathering information. Do not ask for more information than is required.

▪ If Chief Officers are removed by restructuring, make sure that decisions continue to be communicated to staff and that their morale is maintained as far as possible.

Action Points for Elected Members:

➢ Be clear at the end of every formal meeting what decisions need to be communicated and to whom.

➢ Ensure that employees receive information and views from members at the same time as or sooner than members of the public. This may mean attending staff meetings, briefing trades unions and writing articles for the staff magazine or newsletter.

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LGRJF

facilitating local government reorganisation

COVER LETTER TO: CIRCULAR LGRJF/01 - SEPTEMBER 2009

To: Chief Executives of District Councils, arc21 & SWaMP 2008

Cc: DoE Local Government Division, Public Service Commission
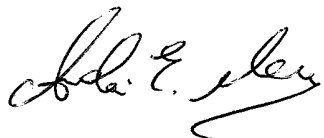
Dear Colleague

1. The attached circular on the application of Vacancy Control Procedures within local government has been agreed by the Local Government Reform Joint Forum (LGRJF) and is promulgated under the authority of the Local Government Staff Commission under Section 40(4) (f) of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972.

2. It is therefore issued by the Local Government Staff Commission as a statutory recommendation for adoption by councils from 1 October 2009.

3. In accordance with the Northern Ireland Executive's Guiding Principles all employing authorities should immediately engage with their local NIJC recognised Trade Unions to consider application and implementation arrangements.

4. Over the next number of weeks a further agreement from the LGRJF will issue on the establishment of Local Consultation and Negotiation Forums at Transition Committee Level. Once established all RPA matters that require local consultation and negotiation, including application of the Vacancy Control Procedure, will fall within the scope of the Local Forum.

5. Until the formal establishment of the Local Forum all local government Employers must consult/negotiate with the NIJC Trade Unions on application of the Vacancy Control measures.

6. The LGRJF in liaison with the Staff Commission will issue further detailed procedures and guidance on the application of Vacancy Controls to the 'at risk' group of employees. The LGRJF is currently examining the structure of the 'at risk' group.

7. Further guidance will also issue in the near future to take account of any special circumstances that may pertain. Further advice will be issued as necessary.

8. The LGRJF is also continuing to develop agreements on the related issues of:-

   (i) filling posts in new organisations; and
   (ii) the operation of a Staff Severance Scheme.

   Once agreement has been reached on these matters it will be important to ensure that consideration is given to the totality of the issues as they have an interdependency.
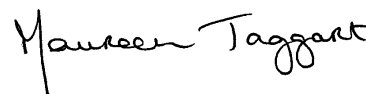
9. In the event that interpretation matters arise or clarification is necessary contact should in the first instance be made with the Staff Commission, or the LGRJF Joint Leads.

10. An Awareness Seminar will be provided for councils in mid to late November in order that real examples can be considered and the usefulness of the procedure in practice can be examined.

_____   _____   _____
A KERR   **B GRAHAM**   **M TAGGART**
LGSC   **LGRJF TUS Lead**   **LGRJF Employers' Lead**

18 SEPTEMBER 2009

Agenda Item 2d

Belfast City Council

Report to:	**Strategic Policy and Resources (Transition) Committee**
Subject:	**Northern Ireland Local Government Association**
Date:	**Friday 9th October 2009**
Reporting Officer:	**Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement**
Contact Officer:	**Kevin Heaney (ext 6202)**

1.0	**Relevant background information**
1.1	Members will be aware of the ongoing discussions over the past year in regards to strengthening the relationship between the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA) and the Council. The necessity for this is further reinforced by the fact that NILGA are viewed as the voice of local government within the Review of Public Administration (RPA) process.

2.0	**Key Issues**
2.1	Members will accept that the future role and remit of NILGA post RPA is somewhat uncertain at this stage. The Council has previously documented the need for a remodelled Local Government Association which is highly attuned, responsive and accountable to its constitute Councils and which provides a coherent single voice for the local government sector within Northern Ireland. Within the context of a smaller number of constitute Councils post 2011, there is a real opportunity to develop a more focused and effective role for NILGA as the representative voice of local government. NILGA themselves have indicated that the Association would be subject to review in the lead up to the new local government structures to be put in place in 2011.
2.2	Members will note that NILGA has requested a meeting between its Office Bearers and a delegation from Belfast City Council to discuss the RPA and the ongoing work of NILGA; specially with a view to ensuring that NILGA can respond to council needs and add value to the overall RPA process. A date of 16th November 2009 has been proposed for the joint meeting.
2.3	It is therefore recommended that a cross-party delegation consisting of the Chair and Deputy Chair (or nominees) of the Council's RPA Transition Committee (i.e. SP&R) and Party Group Leaders (or nominees) meet with NILGA's Office Bearers.

3.0	Resource Implications

Financial and Human Resources

- There are no financial of Human Resources implications attached to this report.

4.0	Recommendations

Members are asked consider the request from NILGA to meet and approve the attendance of a cross-party delegation comprising of the Chair and Deputy Chair of SP&R (or nominees) and Party Group Leaders (or nominees).

5.0	**Decision Tracking**

Convene meeting between NILGA Office Bearers and cross-party delegation from Belfast City Council for November 2009 - Director of Improvement

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Belfast City Council

Report to**:**	**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee**
Date**:**	**Friday, 9th October, 2009**
Subject**:**	**National Association of Councillors -** ** Annual Conference**
Reporting Officer**:**	**Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)**
Contact Officer**:**	**Mrs. Julie Lilley, Members' Liaison Officer (extension 6321)**

Relevant Background Information

The National Association of Councillors is holding its Annual Conference in Glasgow from Friday, 13th until Sunday, 15th November.

The theme of this years conference is 'Local Government – The Recession and Beyond'. The conference will consider the vast array of challenges Local Government has faced and continues to face as a result of the current economic climate. Consideration will also be given to the key role which Local Government has to play to make sure that local people, communities and businesses are in a position to benefit when the economy begins to recover.

The Council has been represented at the conference in previous years and those Members who have attended have found the event to be a valuable opportunity to increase their awareness of best practice in Local Government and to discuss with other Councillors issues of mutual interest and concern.

Key Issues

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

Resource Implications
Estimated Cost of Attendance at the National Association of Councillors AGM Delegate Fee: £350 Accommodation: £130 Travel: £100   ____ Total per delegate: £580

Recommendations
It is recommended that the Committee agrees to authorise: ▪ the attendance at the National Association of Councillors Annual Conference of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, the Council's representatives on the National Association of Councillors (NI Region), the Head of Committee and Members' Services (or their nominees) and a representative of each of the Party Groupings on the Council not represented by the aforementioned Members; and ▪ the payment of the appropriate travelling and subsistence allowances in connection therewith.

Decision Tracking
Mr Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services, will arrange for the attendance of delegates as appropriate before 3rd November, 2009.

Key to Abbreviations
N/A

Documents Attached
N/A

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	VIP Visit to City Hall
Date:	Friday, 9th October, 2009
Reporting Officer:	Mr Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)
Contact Officer:	Mr Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)

Relevant Background Information

The US Secretary of State, Mrs Hillary Clinton, will be paying a visit to Belfast on Monday next, 12th October. Mrs Clinton has fond memories of her previous visits to the City and has expressed a desire to once again visit the City Hall.

Key Issues

Discussions have been held with the US Consul General and it has been agreed that a lunchtime reception will be held in the City Hall Banqueting Hall. An invitation list is being drawn up currently in conjunction with Mrs Clinton's staff in Washington but it is anticipated that some 250 guests, including all Members of Council, will be invited to attend.

Detailed arrangements for the visit are being made on an on-going basis and, while it is recognised that such a high-profile visit will obviously cause a certain degree of inconvenience and even disruption, nevertheless the occasion represents an opportunity to present the City in a positive and favourable light. All of these arrangements are unavoidably last minute but the Chief Executive and the Lord Mayor's staff are doing everything possible to ensure that the event will be a success and will reflect well upon the City and the Council.

Mrs Clinton is keen to mark her affinity with Belfast and with the City Hall in particular, where she feels that her husband and herself were made extremely welcome when they visited in 1995, and she has indicated that she would like to repay the City in some manner. It was felt that it might be appropriate, given the re-opening of the City Hall after a two-year closure period, to have Mrs Clinton perform a simple ribbon-cutting opening ceremony upon her arrival on Monday. Mrs Clinton has agreed to this and again appropriate arrangements, including photo-opportunities incorporating all Members of Council, are being put in place.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to approve the use of the City Hall on Monday, 12th October for the hosting of a VIP visit by the US Secretary of State, Mrs Hillary Clinton, for the provision of hospitality in the form of a finger buffet reception and the holding of a simple ceremony to mark the re-opening of the City Hall after closure for refurbishment.

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Vacant Properties
Date:	9 October 2009

Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement
Contact Officers:	Ronan Cregan, Improvement Manager and Donal Rogan, Building Control

Relevant Background Information

Members are aware that during these difficult financial times it is vital for the organisation to ensure that its rates income is maximised within the context of rating policy. Over the past number of years the Council has suffered significant losses from vacant properties. Under current rating policy, vacant domestic properties are not charged rates and non-domestic vacant properties are only charged 50% rates. In order to manage the losses arising from vacant properties, the Council has used its Building Control Service to verify the actual status of all vacant properties included on Land and Property Services (LPS) database. To date, this work has resulted in additional rates bills being issued totalling £7.8m.

Key Issues

Since the last vacant property exercise 3,000 vacant properties have been added on to the LPS database and a large number of rates bills have been returned to LPS by Royal Mail as unopened. Members are therefore requested to agree to use the Building Control Service to verify the status of the new vacant properties and to investigate the returned rates bills. The exercise will need to start immediately so that the information on the properties can be passed to LPS in time for inclusion in the calculation of the Estimated Penny Product which is used to set the rate.

The exercise will cost approximately £40,000 and will paid for using existing budgets.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested:
1. To agree to use the Building Control Service to verify the status of the new vacant properties and to investigate the returned rates bills.
2. To agree to start the exercise on approval from the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

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Agenda Item 4b

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Request for a Special Committee Meeting on the Economic Downturn.
Date:	9th October, 2009
Reporting Officer:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive, Ext. 6002.
Contact Officer:	Marie-Thérèse McGivern Director of Development Ext. 3470

Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that Belfast City Council in February 2009 agreed a number of actions in response to the global economic downturn. The actions were taken across the Council and the Development Committee subsequently agreed the setting up of a cross-party Economic Downturn Steering Group, which has been meeting monthly since May 2009.

As part of the actions it was agreed the Strategic Policy and Resources and Development Committees would hold a special meeting to review actions later in the year.

Key Issues

Belfast City Council has undertaken a range of actions in relation to the economic downturn and amassed information and analysis on issues relating to its impact on Belfast. While that impact has been significant it has not been as severe as might have been predicted, however, the challenges facing Belfast in creating a long-term sustainable and successful economy remain formidable.

In this context, further discussion on how Belfast can best face the future is now extremely important. In August 2007, the Council commissioned a report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (O.E.C.D.) to look at future prospects for the City. The report was completed in November 2008. In addition, recent research by Oxford Economics for Council has added to the information provided by O.E.C.D. Both of the reports draw major conclusions about Belfast and its possibilities and make relevant recommendations.

It is suggested the proposed special meeting would consider the impact of the economic downturn on the City in the context of the outcome of the above reports and then make recommendations about the way forward for the City.

Resource Implications

None.

Recommendations

Members are asked to agree to the holding of a special meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, to which the Members of the Development Committee would be invited, to consider the effect of the economic downturn on the City.

Documents Attached

Abbreviations

O.E.C.D. – The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Agenda Item 4c

STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Procurement Workshop
Date:	9 October 2009
Reporting Officer:	Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement, Ext: 6217
Contact Officer:	Valerie Cupples, Procurement Manager, Ext: 3625

Key Issues

At Strategic Policy & Resources on 18 September 2009, Members raised general concerns regarding procurement. Recent reports relating to public procurement also prompted members to ask questions about the Council's procurement process.

The scope and scale of the City Hall refurbishment specification was also questioned by some Members.

To ensure that Members are fully apprised of the Council's procurement process the Procurement Manager will facilitate a workshop. The areas covered will include:

- Background
- Control mechanisms in place to ensure accountability
- Legislative requirements
- Strategic procurement
- Procurement Process
- Potential risks/Safeguards
- Ease of access/ developing suppliers
- Green procurement
- Role of Members
.

Resources

No additional resources are required other than approximately 2 hours of Member's time.

Recommendation

Members are asked to agree to participation in a Procurement Workshop within the next 4-6 weeks, date, time and venue to be agreed.

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Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	**INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS NEGOTIATIONS – SECURITY UNIT**
Date:	9th October 2009
Reporting Officer:	G Wright – Head of Facilities Management
Contact Officer:	G Wright – Ext. 5206/6232

Relevant Background Information

Members will recall that, at its meeting of 21st August 2009, the Committee approved a package of operational changes and an associated financial settlement in respect of both Security Officer and Control Room staff within the Security Unit, and authorised the making of a formal offer to the various trades unions having members in the unit. The total one-off buyout cost associated with this offer is **£248,686** and it was agreed that the Committee be updated on the ballot outcomes.

Following the Committee's decision the offer was set out in a letter to all trades unions dated 28th August 2009 together with a request that they seek their members' views by way of secret ballot after full Council ratification on 1st September 2009. Each of the trades unions involved agreed to this request and the ballots were duly carried out. Notification has now been received that, with regard to the ballots conducted in respect of 29 Security Officer staff by the UNITE(AT&GWU), NIPSA and GMB trades unions, a very significant majority voted in favour of the proposals.

On foot of the authority granted by the Committee the new shift rostering arrangements, job descriptions, 37-hour working week, revised staffing establishment, rotation requirements and 'pool' cover will therefore commence with effect from 4th October 2009, and the long-standing contractual and 'compulsory' overtime arrangements will cease. The new rates and the agreed buyout amounts have also now been processed for this group of staff, and all of this represents a comprehensive and agreed solution to a whole range of long-standing and difficult issues for the unit.

However, NIPSA has also informed us that the separate ballot conducted in respect of the group of 8 Control Room Operatives has resulted in this group of staff rejecting the offer. This is a surprising result, but it was made clear to all staff and their trades union representatives throughout the consultative and negotiating discussions that there could be no 'cherry-picking' of the package nor any partial acceptance of individual elements of it: the proposals formed an integrated package of measures which must be addressed in the round.

This being so, the obvious consequence of the 'no' vote is that the package is removed from the table in its entirety while alternatives are considered.

The Head of Facilities Management informed the Branch Chair of NIPSA of this position in writing on 18th September 2009 and also asked that he liaise with the various staff in the Control Room (all of whom are NIPSA members) in order to "try to summarise for me what elements of the overall package of proposals caused them to reject it in the ballot, as this will help inform our next steps". To date no acknowledgement or response has been received, and consequently the offer has not been modified.

The overall effect of the two differing ballot results is that the Security Officer staff have received their re-grading and buyout payments while the Control Room Operatives have received neither, and the latter continue to work 40-hr weeks (which are not Single Status-compliant) on the basis of out-dated job descriptions and also to work the un-necessary and expensive contractual and 'compulsory' overtime built in to the old rosters.

The principles which underpin the offer rejected by the Control Room Operatives remain valid and will form the basis of any revised offer made by management, however if there are specific issues on which the staff require clarification or assurance – or if minor changes to the practicalities of the proposal are deemed to be helpful and feasible – these will of course be pursued in an attempt to secure agreement. We are aware that there was some initial concern around a very modest (2 mornings per month) lone-working requirement and a fairly minor issue around rostering but these would scarcely be significant enough to cause a rejection of the entire package, and it was made clear to the staff involved that - even after a 'yes' vote - we would still be willing to make improvements where these could be mutually agreed, so the rejection is all the more puzzling.

Key Issues

It is essential that this matter be resolved during the current financial year, as no provision has been made in 2010/11. It is also essential that any new package does not involve additional costs over and above the amounts set out in the original proposal and also that it is compliant with the agreement on Single Status reached by management and trades unions in 2007.

It is therefore the intention of the Head of Facilities Management to seek to make one further and final offer in an attempt to deal with any concerns staff may have, however if this does not prove possible or is again rejected in a ballot then the categorization of the posts will take place in line with normal procedures.

Resource Implications

As outlined above, if a resolution to these issues is to be found it must be found during the current financial year, as no provision has been made in the 2010/11 revenue estimates.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:-
- (a) the Committee notes and endorses the agreement made and implemented in respect of Security Officers;
- (b) the Committee authorizes the Head of Facilities Management to make one further offer to Control Room staff on the basis that it will involve no additional cost; *and*
- (c) the Committee authorises the Head of Facilities Management to proceed to categorization if it becomes clear that agreement will not be reached during the current financial year.

Decision Tracking

A report will be presented to the Committee outlining the position in January 2010.

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Council Subscription to Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change
Date:	9 October 2009
Reporting Officer:	Mr William Francey, Director of Health and Environmental Services (ext. 3260)
Contact Officer:	Alastair Curran, Sustainable Development Manager (ext. 3309)

Relevant Background Information

In July 2009, government published the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan, which describes how the UK can fulfil its climate change obligations, secure its energy supply and achieve economic growth by moving towards a low carbon economy. The plan identifies a number of priority action areas including changing how we generate our energy, how we use energy in workplaces, in our homes and in our communities and how we use energy for transportation.

In developing the national plan, government has recognised that actions to address energy and climate change need to take place in all regions of the UK. The plan highlights therefore that the Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly have consented to extension of the Climate Change Act 2008 to Northern Ireland and have agreed to contribute towards UK carbon budgets and targets. In addressing these obligations, the Executive has committed initially to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% on 1990 baseline levels by 2025 through the Programme for Government 2008-2011.

The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan also highlights the important convening and leadership role that local government has to play in achieving greenhouse gas reduction targets. Government has stated that people should be able increasingly to look to their local authority to co-ordinate, tailor and drive the development of a low carbon economy in a way that addresses local priorities whilst deriving maximum benefit.

Within Northern Ireland, carbon dioxide accounts for around 75% of all greenhouse gas emissions. A carbon dioxide sectoral analysis indicates that around 34% of CO_2 emissions come from energy generation, a further 33% from transportation, 18% from residential sources and the remainder from the commercial, public and agricultural sectors. If the Council chose to lead the transition towards a low carbon economy within Belfast therefore, it would have to foster partner working with government departments, including the Department for Regional Development, the Department for Finance and Personnel and the Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment and the general public, within a recognised climate change performance management framework.

One such performance framework is provided by the Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change, launched in October 2008. Eurocities was founded in 1986 and is the network of major European cities. The network presently brings together local governments of more than 140 large cities in over 30 European countries by providing a platform for member cities to share knowledge and address pressing European and global issues. The Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change was developed with support and input from a range of member cities including Belfast and has already been subscribed to by around 62 cities.

Within the 2008-2011 Corporate Plan under Strategic Theme 3 - Better care for Belfast's environment - a clean, green city now and for the future, Council has already committed to reducing the city's impact on climate change and improving air quality. Moreover, a primary key performance indicator of '% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from council premises' has also been adopted.

Key Issues

Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change principal commitments.
The Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change commits signatories to tackle climate change by adapting global and national objectives to a regional level, developing and implementing a climate change plan and by regularly measuring and reporting advances in greenhouse gas emission reductions.

Working on urban planning and the quality of cities.
Specific Declaration commitments to be addressed in relation to improving urban planning and the quality of our cities include limiting urban sprawl, constructing energy efficient buildings, supporting the adaptation of existing buildings and planting trees to develop an urban canopy.

The Review of Public Administration (RPA) has recommended that local development plan functions and development control and enforcement should be returned to local authorities from 2011, which will enable these Declaration objectives to be addressed directly. In the intervening time however, it is considered that the Council is already meeting many of the Declaration obligations via the implementation of its Belfast City Masterplan. This development framework advances the concept of the compact city and commits the Council to raising the quality of the built environment by co-ordinating and monitoring the quality of urban design and architecture and by promoting building conservation.

Building Control is responsible for enforcing the Building Regulations, which prescribe how buildings are constructed. Part F technical booklets explain how premises can be constructed in order to minimise carbon dioxide emissions. Moreover, Building Control is also charged with the statutory enforcement of Display Energy Certificates for larger public buildings, which promote greater energy efficiency and reduced carbon dioxide emissions.

Finally, in relation to developing an urban canopy, Belfast City Council already has an extensive planting programme across its various parks and premises but it is also responsible for maintaining 11,000 trees in urban streetscape locations. These functions are also in accordance with the Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change commitments.

Working on transport and urban mobility.
With regard to Declaration commitments to work on transportation and urban mobility, signatories are required to develop soft mobility modes including walking and cycling, to link public transport networks together, to encourage the use of new types of vehicles and fuels and to support the use of ICT to reduce the need for travel.

Although responsibility for transport planning is scheduled to remain with the Department for Regional Development post RPA, the Council has nonetheless recently adopted a new Transport Policy, which establishes its transportation vision for the City until 2015. The key message of the new policy is to support and promote the development of a modern, safe, accessible and integrated transportation system to enhance the connectivity for Belfast and its wider regions, which benefits the environment, supports sustainable development; and enhances the quality of life of all those who live, work, visit and do business in the City. It is anticipated that the Council will employ its Transport Policy to lobby and engage with the Department for Regional Development and Translink in order to secure the most sustainable transportation system for the City. Additionally, the Council will also continue to promote walking, cycling and other sustainable transport modes amongst its own employees and other organisations within the city.

In terms of encouraging the use of new types of vehicles and fuels, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee recently adopted a recommendation that Council undertake research to enable the development of a carbon abatement strategy for its vehicle fleet. The opportunity to introduce new types of vehicles and low carbon fuels will be considered during the development of the strategy.

It is considered therefore, that the Council is already well placed to address many of the mobility components of the Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change.

Working on renewable energy and diversifying energy production.
In terms of developing renewable energy and diversifying energy production, as previously highlighted, local development plan functions and development control and enforcement is scheduled to be returned to local authorities from 2011. The opportunity to formulate development plans and planning policy for Belfast will provide the Council with the opportunity to incentivise the uptake of renewable energy as part of a wider community-planning obligation.

Key issues contd.

A further obligation under the renewable energy and diversifying energy production theme involves reducing waste at source through sorting and recycling. Waste Management and Cleansing Services already provide wide-ranging education programmes and recycling services to both the domestic and commercial sectors across the city. Moreover, Waste Management has recently completed a survey of the commercial sector in order to identify barriers to addressing the contributors to climate change and achieving sustainability. It is considered therefore, that the Council is already addressing the Declaration commitments in relation to waste reduction, reuse and recycling. Its community planning obligations post RPA will enable it to incentivise preferentially energy diversification and the uptake of renewable energy.

Implementing adaptation measures.
In terms of adaptation, the Eurocities Climate Change Declaration requires that signatories regulate their urban climates via enhancement of green and wooded zones, build housing adaptable to climate change, prevent flooding via the use of permeable surfaces, alert inhabitants to the dangers of climate change and prepare for climate driven health impacts on human and animal populations.

In relation to enhancing green and wooded zones, the Council's Open Space Strategy has already identified the economic, health and wellbeing, heritage, educational and community development benefits of open space within the urban environment. Accordingly, the strategy commits the Council to provide parks that offer areas for informal recreation and community events and that provide semi-natural habitats. The strategy also includes provisions for playing fields and play areas, allotments, greenways and civic and amenity areas.

In terms of building housing that will be adaptable to the climate in the future, the transfer of local development plan functions will provide the Council with the opportunity to influence how domestic properties are constructed as part of a wider community planning obligation.

In relation to preventing flooding via the use of permeable surfaces, the Council has participated in the development of a Strategy for Promoting the Use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) within Northern Ireland which proposes that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are established as the preferred approach for managing storm water discharges from developed land. Permeable surfaces that slow the velocity of runoff thereby allowing storage, filtering, evaporation and infiltration before discharge are classified as a sustainable drainage technique.

In terms of alerting inhabitants to the potential danger of extreme climate change and preparing for the health impacts on human and animal populations, UK Climate Projections indicate that Northern Ireland is likely to experience hotter drier summers and warmer wetter winters, coupled with increased frequency of extreme weather occurrences such as heatwaves, dry spells, heavy rain and flooding. It is considered that the Council will have an increasing opportunity to promote climate change mitigation and adaptation as a component of its forthcoming development control and community planning obligations.

Establishing long-term policies and strengthening international action.
Finally, the Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change also requires that signatories commit to partnership working with cities and territories of developing nations in order to help limit their greenhouse gas emissions, to refining public policies related to greenhouse gas emissions in order to achieve the best outcome and to supporting climate change initiatives with appropriate human and financial resources. The Council's participation in the Eurocities network already provides a mechanism for knowledge dissemination and partnership working with cities and territories of developing nations.

Subscribing to the Eurocities Climate Change Declaration.
Since its launch in October 2008, the Eurocities Climate Change Declaration has been signed by the political leaders of over 60 major European cities. Moreover, Eurocities has stated that as well as taking direct action to combat climate change, those subscribing to the Declaration are signifying the need for prompt action by national governments at events such as the United Nations Climate Change Conference 2009 where a successor to the Kyoto Protocol is scheduled to be agreed. It is considered that subscription to the Eurocities Climate Change Declaration will enable Council to demonstrate formal civic and political leadership in addressing climate change for the city.

The next formal opportunity to subscribe to the Declaration will be at the Eurocities Urban Challenges, Sustainable Solutions Conference to be held in Stockholm from 25 – 28 November 2009. The Declaration could be signed by the nominated political representative, usually the city mayor, in

person at this conference or, alternatively, by returning a signed certificate to the Eurocities office. Members may wish to note that the Development Committee, in considering council representation at the November Eurocities Conference decided, having regard to cost considerations, to limit Development Committee representation to one of its Members and two officers.

Resource Implications.

Financial.
There are no immediate financial implications associated with subscribing to the Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change however, as articulated within the Declaration text, signatories are required to support climate change initiatives with appropriate human and financial resources. Where specific projects are identified as a component of the Declaration commitments, proposals detailing financial, human resource and asset resource requirements will be presented to Elected Members for approval prior to inception.

If attendance of the Lord Mayor at the November Conference to sign the Declaration in person were to be authorised this would involve a cost of approximately £840.

Human Resources.
It is proposed that the Council's Sustainable Development Steering Group and Sustainable Development Manager will lead implementation of the Climate Change Declaration for the Council. All Departments will, however, need to identify how they can individually contribute towards Declaration commitments through their everyday business activities.

Asset and Other Implications.
N/A

Recommendations.

The Committee is requested to note the implications to the Council of subscribing to the Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change and to agree that the Council should subscribe to the Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change as a first step towards addressing climate change for the city and in order to promote the development of a low carbon economy.

The Committee is also requested to authorise the Lord Mayor, or other Council Member as appropriate, to sign the Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change on behalf of the city and to decide whether the decision is to be implemented by return of a signed certificate or through attendance at the Eurocities Urban Challenges, Sustainable Solutions Conference in Stockholm on 27 November 2009.

If the attendance of the Lord Mayor is to be authorised the Committee is also requested to approve all associated costs as estimated above.

Key to Abbreviations.

ICT   -   Information and communication technologies.
RPA   -   Review of Public Administration.
SuDS   -   Sustainable Drainage Systems.

Documents Attached.

Eurocities Declaration on Climate Change.

EUROCITIES
Declaration
on Climate Change

EUROCITIES is the network of major European cities. Founded in 1986, the network brings together the local governments over 130 large cities in some 34 European countries. EUROCITIES represents the interests of its members and engages in dialogue with the European institutions across a wide range of policy areas affecting cities. These include: economic development, the environment, transport and mobility, social affairs, culture, the information and knowledge society, and services of general interest.

We are happy to present the EUROCITIES Declaration on Climate Change.

It is the fruit of several months of work by a group of 20 European cities headed by Nantes Metropole. The Executive Committee of EUROCITIES entrusted this responsibility to Nantes Metropole, which has been committed to this issue for many years.

This Declaration demonstrates the cities' commitment to fighting climate change, a critical issues we will be facing in the coming years and whose effects are already being felt.

The role of elected officials is to anticipate and take political decisions, and this is the purpose of the Declaration, which has been signed by mayors and local council presidents on behalf of their cities.

The elected officials who have signed the Declaration believe that only concerted action involving all public policies can provide an effective response to the challenge of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adjusting public policies in light of foreseeable changes. In line with the commitments made via the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable Cities, the goal here is to affirm the relevance of local government when it comes to taking action, both in terms of initiatives in their areas of expertise and building awareness and encouraging positive change among the citizens.

To work toward the targets set by world conferences on climate, the support of the Member States is obviously necessary, but it is no longer sufficient. The States must delegate to the cities the authority to act on a local level to reduce emissions, and undertake with the European Union to provide funding for initiatives supporting public transportation, housing, and energy.

This Declaration also helps further the debate on climate change supported on a European level by the Commission through its initiatives such as the Covenant of Mayors, which EUROCITIES is associated with, and the consultation on climate change recently launched by the Environment Commissioner.

Global action is now being taken by major cities throughout Europe. We are awaiting the support of all the institutions of the European Union, including the Council, the Commission and the Parliament.

The Declaration also contributes to the global debate, because although local elected officials are in a better position to act locally, they are well aware that their actions will be in vain if they are not part of a global movement. EUROCITIES is a partner in other networks of European cities and supports the demand of local governments to be heard and participate in world conferences on climate.

In light of the risks and challenges inherent in this issue, Europe must take action and set an example. The major European cities are ready and waiting.

Gérard Collomb,
Mayor of Lyon
President of EUROCITIES

Jean-Marc Ayrault,
Mayor of Nantes
Chairman of the EUROCITIES
Working Group on Climate Change
and Energy

EUROCITIES Declaration on Climate Change

EUROCITIES, the network of major European cities, asserts that, in the perspective of a sustainable future, the fight against climate change is today a priority.

The EUROCITIES Declaration on Climate Change reiterates that the local level has an essential role to play in the fight against climate change and therefore cities are crucial partners, in coordination with the EU institutions and the Member States.

The Declaration reflects the commitment of EUROCITIES to fight against climate change.

We, Mayors and Leaders of EUROCITIES,

declare

- that fighting global warming demands the orchestration and harmonisation of public policies at the local level;

- that the local level, due to our proximity to citizens, is in a key position in the fight against global warming, uniting individual and collective efforts;

- that the articulation between the various levels, from local up to European, is a key factor for the success of our actions;

- that over 70% of the European population lives in an urban context, our role as organizing authorities, in charge of the management of urban services and urban planning, is vital in coordinating the mobilisation of civil society in our territories;

- that the public sector has a key role to play in the integration of this issue;

considering

- that the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC's fourth Assessment Report – AR4 - 2007) has confirmed that climate change is a real problem caused by human activities, and it is a major challenge for the future of humanity;

- that the international scientific community asserts that within industrialised countries, i.e. at European level, the minimum amount of effort to stabilise the climate is to divide by four our greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, compared with the figures of 1990;

- that Sir Nicholas Stern's report and the OECD's Environmental Outlook to 2030 point out the immediate necessity for actions to fight against global warming and insist on the disastrous consequences of inaction such as rising oceans, food and health crises, massive migrations of climate refugees and sudden economic changes;

- that climate change will affect the European continent unevenly. Our actions will have to be rooted in solidarity and exchange of know-how, in order to minimise the potential negative impacts of climate change. We are aware that in the future our territories will face important changes and we need to be prepared to address them. We will have to evaluate the coming changes so that our territories can adapt. The conclusions drawn from this evaluation will have to be taken into account in our public policies as soon as possible;

- that many of the actions required to combat climate change fall within the scope of many ambitious, coherent urban policies for which we are responsible. Our responsibility as organizing authorities for urban issues, public transportation, energy and urban services, and our role as territorial leaders, in cooperation with our citizens and the economic and social stakeholders working on local development, are at the heart of our commitment;

- that the Covenant of Mayors on Energy launched by the European Commission is an important initiative, supported by EUROCITIES, which recognises the decisive impact of the actions of local authorities in the fight against climate change, and will strengthen the partnership between the European and local levels. The EUROCITIES Declaration on Climate Change, as a political statement by the network of major European cities, reflecting the commitment of the network and its members to fight against climate change, supports and complements the aims of the Covenant of Mayors on Energy;

- that the response to this challenge cannot be found merely by adopting a new sectoral policy, instead we must refine all of our public policies to consistently address climate change and encourage mobilization of our territories;

- that we will not be able to achieve this objective without incorporating the issues of local government, social cohesion and balance, North/South and East/West exchanges in our urban strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions;

- that actions applied locally will contribute to enhance the general state of our territories and other regions. Climate protection will trigger important benefits for public health, for the protection of biodiversity, for water preservation, for the improvement of air quality;

- that it is essential to organise the sharing of good practices from cities and their dissemination and to act in close cooperation within international and European networks;

We, Mayors and Leaders of EUROCITIES,

believe

- that local policies must be consistent with the European sustainable development strategy adopted in Gothenburg and the Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities;

- that because we refuse to pay the price of inaction, we are ready to mobilize our resources and make climate change a priority in our budgeting decisions. We emphasise the need for close cooperation between the various levels of action, both in drafting laws and directives and in funding initiatives, given the diversity of the local public policies involved;

- that the reduction of our territories' carbon imprint is a major challenge we must face by limiting direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions (CO2, CH4N2O, HFC, PFC, SF6);

- that technical innovation will play a key role to win the fight against climate change;

- that it is our responsibility to act on this global issue;

- and that, as such, the EUROCITIES Declaration on Climate Change is not a binding agenda but a concrete text covering the diversity of public policies, and providing guidelines that can be used to implement policies on our territories to reach the targeted reductions in greenhouse gases, which are crucial to climate stabilisation;

we therefore undertake:

to implement a strategy to fight against climate change, by:

- **adapting global objectives, defined by international negotiation and the scientific community**, to the level of our territories and through the combination of our efforts;

- **implementing a climate plan in each of our territories**, based on concrete actions, in order to reach a local objective that is consistent with the overall European and international objectives. The creation of this climate plan must begin with a detailed understanding of the territory's emissions and should also include the assessment of its weaknesses so that it can be adapted;

- **regularly measuring and reporting reductions in emissions** of greenhouse gases in order to assess and evaluate the efficiency of the climate plan's actions, using truthful and reliable techniques;

we therefore undertake:

to involve all the actors on our territory, by:

- **involving local actors with our actions, starting with citizens**, in an organized and coherent manner to respond collectively to the challenge of global warming and to promote and support private and public initiatives for climate protection. The mobilisation of business actors is essential and will be actively pursued;

- **developing innovative partnerships in the fields of research and higher education;**

- **informing and heightening the awareness of the public, in an atmosphere of shared responsibility** between individuals and society, in order to promote "carbon-friendly" behaviour. The dissemination of scientific knowledge on global warming is a key element to heighten public awareness;

- **focusing our priority on disadvantaged sectors of society**, following the principles of sustainable development. With the recognition that natural resources, particularly energy, are limited, we will pay particular attention to the people that are most at risk, both in our territories and elsewhere;

- **setting an example with public services** and reducing their carbon imprints by improving professional practices and exploring technological innovations;

- **adopting ambitious sustainable public procurement policies**, which play a key role in the action against climate change, both as an example for citizens and by creating economic demand and supporting this growing economic sector;

T

to design public policies that withstand the challenge of climate change through:

working on urban planning and the quality of our cities by:

- **limiting urban sprawl and developing compact cities**, which reduce space and energy needs, where a collective lifestyle is also an attractive factor. Urban sprawl devours agricultural and natural spaces, gives rise to additional transportation requirements, and is thus an important factor behind an increase in greenhouse gases. Its limitation is a major urban policy issue. Compact cities need to be designed with a dual objective of urban quality and quality of life, meaning maintaining sufficient green spaces. The management of pollution and other disruptive impacts will be a priority for our cities to become more attractive and appealing;

- **creating new "eco-quarters"**, where population density, social and cultural integration, and economic diversity represent fundamental values, and where the best environmental innovations in the fields of transportation, housing, public space, vegetation, waste and water management are implemented;

- **constructing energy-efficient buildings,** and promoting eco-building in our territories, satisfying high thermal standards and using eco-materials. Eco-building must become a standard for all construction work, both new and rehabilitation. Active support for the evolution of the professional trades in the construction industry also falls under this commitment;

- **supporting the adaptation of existing buildings**, which represent, due to their large contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, a major challenge in the fight against global warming. This rehabilitation must preserve cultural and social diversity at local level;

- **ensuring the preservation and development of a true, high-quality urban canopy by planting tree**s in streets, in public and private gardens, and in new peri-urban forest zones on the outskirts of urban areas, which will play an important role as carbon stocks. New planting schemes will respect landscapes and biodiversity specific to our territories;

.../...

working on transport and urban mobility by:

- **developing public transportation, soft modes (walking and cycling,...) and new forms of mobility**, with reduced carbon emissions and less dependence on fossil fuels. To enable this, we must offer high-quality alternative modes of transportation for people and goods, which respect the environment;

- **linking together territories and interconnecting public transport networks** to secure the most favourable conditions for the movement of people and goods; inventing new types of mobility management with the implementation of road traffic regulations in city centres;

- **encouraging technological innovation for vehicles and the use of new forms of energy in any travel**. Experimentation could take place on our territories, and particularly through technological research on our transportation systems. The creation of specialised research centres will also be facilitated;

- **supporting and developing the use of Information and Communication Technologies**, such as Internet, videoconference, etc., which can help reduce unnecessary travel and as a consequence, emissions;

working on renewable energy and diversifying energy production by:

- **developing the production of renewable energy** and exceeding the current objectives of the European Commission by supporting the development of technical innovations for the use of renewable energy to improve their energy efficiency and market implementation. The production of heat or electricity should be appropriate with the geography of our territories;

- **reducing the energy consumption of urban systems**: transportation, buildings, energy networks, water networks; and researching and promoting the use of more energy-efficient technologies;

- **reducing waste at the source, through sorting and recycling**, and recovering energy from non-recyclable wastes (heat, biogas);

- **working together with national and European authorities in order to guarantee the reliability of the energy supply**. Energy security will be at the heart of our action plans for sustainable energy;

implementing adaptation measures by:

- **regulating urban climate** via the enhancement of green and wooded zones within urban areas. The urban heat island effect can be lessened by reducing mineralised surfaces and increasing the density of vegetal spaces;

- **building housing that will be adaptable to the climate in the future and in particular increasing temperatures**. We will ensure that new buildings only use low carbon cooling technologies;

- **preventing flooding** by using permeable surfaces which are adaptable to urban uses. It would also help to expand water drainage systems and to integrate flood prone areas in urban planning;

- **protecting costal cities and areas from the increasing ocean levels and storms** by implementing a protection system adapted to local environments;

- **enhancing the strength and resistance of energy networks to extreme climate changes**, in coordination with energy providers;

- **reducing the vulnerability of certain sectors, such as farming and fishing, towards the potential impacts of climate change**, working together with the professionals and associated organisations;

- **alerting our inhabitants to the potential danger of extreme climate change**, and particularly to more vulnerable people such as the elderly;

- **preparing for the health impacts on human and animal populations of climate change** in working with the professionals of that field. Specific campaigns could also be set up to serve this purpose;

strengthen our international action by:

- **reinforcing, in a framework of international cooperation, partnerships with cities and territories of developing nations**, promoting actions that will allow limitation of greenhouse gases through projects targeting transportation, waste and energy management and reforestation, etc.;

- acting upon de-forestation, which represents 20% of global greenhouse gas emissions, by shifting our practices of public purchases towards eco-certified wood and to help reforestation projects;

And by setting up long term policies:

- **carrying out long-term assessments of public policies related to greenhouse gas emission**s with a view to making adjustments and corrections to the approaches used in our territories. Carbon footprint measurement should allow the measurement of performance with respect to a high standards (high quality of public services);

- **applying the required financial and human resources** to the implementation of our climate plans, through long-term rethinking of our budgets, recognizing the reality of global warming;

- **seeking the most appropriate forms of long-term investments** needed to achieve these actions, in cooperation with financial partners;

recalling

- **that the quantitative objectives** in the fight against the greenhouse effect may differ from one city to another, owing to their historical, geographical, organizational, economic and demographic differences.

.../...

F

finally, we recommend

that the European Union:

- **continues to fight global warming as a priority at the international level, with a goal of defining a global agreement worthy of this worldwide challenge**. In the framework of the Conferences of the Parties (COP) and the supporting role of local authorities in this domain, the European Commission can count on the support of EUROCITIES and its member cities, who must be associated to this negotiation;

- **to incite further our local governments to achieve higher standards through European programmes that reinforce best practices and networking;**

- **to acknowledge cities' actions against climate change and to directly fund their implementation according to mechanisms commonly agreed;**

that the European Union and its Member States:

- **provide local authorities with access to precise energy consumption data for their territories**, and to require energy operators to report this data. This is the only data that will allow verification of the actual effects of the actions composing our climate plans;

- **make it a higher priority to increase the financial resources available to local governments, especially for public transport.** In the absence of these resources, local action cannot be sufficient to combat the issues of global warming. More generally, national and European financing must be allocated in priority to actions that are in the context of a global, quantified strategy to fight global warming;

- **stimulate research on means of adaptation,** in collaboration with non European states, who are highly vulnerable and who will rapidly develop strategies to lessen the impacts of global warming. The exchange of knowledge and good practices will have to be at the centre of transnational research;

That the European Union, the Member States and the European cities:

- **provide tools for cities and local authorities in order to limit urban sprawl;**

that European cities:

- **network European and international local authorities together and continue to share collective reflection,** best practices and their dissemination;

- **provide the cities that are least advanced in the fight against the greenhouse effect with the methods and tools needed to develop climate plans**, in a spirit of subsidiarity and cooperation across all territorial levels.