

Document Pack

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



19th October, 2009

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, 23rd October, 2009 at 10.00 am, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully

PETER McNANEY

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters
 - (a) Apologies
2. Presentation
 - (a) To receive a presentation from representatives of the Patient and Client Council (Pages 1 - 4)
3. Major Projects
 - (a) Titanic Signature Project (Pages 5 - 6)
4. Transition Committee Business
 - (a) Response to the Finance Bill (To Follow)
5. Democratic Services and Governance
 - (a) Requests for the Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality (Pages 7 - 14)

6. Finance

- (a) Peace III Priority 2.1 Creating Shared Public Spaces (Pages 15 - 22)
- (b) Minutes of Meeting of Budget and Transformation Panel of 16th October (To Follow)
- (c) 2009/10 Budget Update
- (d) 2010/11 Estimates Update (Verbal Report)
- (e) Debt Management (Pages 23 - 30)
- (f) Capital Programme - Update (Pages 31 - 40)

7. Human Resources

- (a) Post of Director of Property and Projects

8. Asset Management

- (a) Connswater Community Greenway Update (Pages 41 - 44)
- (b) Acquisition of Land at Carrick Hill Playground (Pages 45 - 48)
- (c) Disposal of Land at 67 Schomberg Avenue (Pages 49 - 54)
- (d) Conditions of Hire for Council Facilities
- (e) London 2012 Cultural Olympiad - Live Sites Screen (Pages 55 - 58)

9. Good Relations and Equality

- (a) Minutes of Meeting of Good Relations Partnership of 16th October (To Follow)

10. Cross-Cutting Issues

- (a) Consultation Response - Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2009 (Pages 59 - 80)
- (b) Swine Flu Update (Pages 81 - 96)
- (c) Consultation Response - Bioenergy Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2009-2014 (Pages 97 - 100)

The Patient & Client Council

Maeve Hully
Chief Executive



What is the Patient & Client Council?

A powerful, independent voice in health and social care for

- patients
- clients,
- carers
- communities



Statutory Functions

- Engages with the public
- Promotes the involvement of the public
- Helps people making a complaint
- Provides advice and information



Values

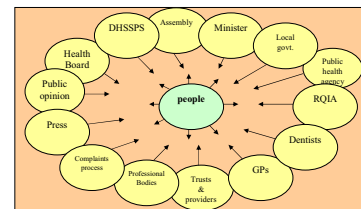
- Patient/client at the centre
- Listen, open and approachable
- Determined
- 'Critical friend', frank and honest
- 'Partnership approach'
- Constructive challenge



Landscape

- National Health Service 3rd largest employer in world
 - HSC workforce 78,000
 - More than 10% of workforce in NI
- Health and Social Care budget 48% of local budget spend
- Dynamic environment
- Local Minister
- Trusts established for 2 years
- 4500 independent community and voluntary sector organisations in Northern Ireland

External Environment

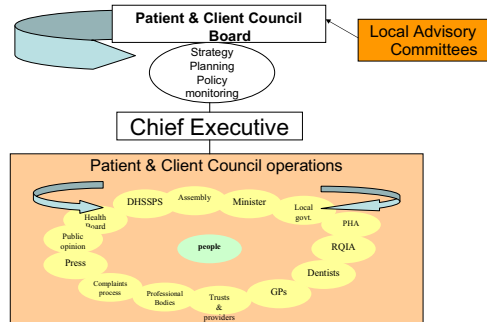


How will Patient & Client Council work?

- Chair – John Keanie
- Chief Executive – Maeve Hully
- Board with 16 members
 - Lay people
 - Community and Voluntary sector
 - Local councillors
 - Trade Union
- Meet monthly
- Local Advisory Committees



How will Patient & Client Council work?



Local Advisory Committees

- 5 committees
- Advisory input to Board through Chair
- Local people
- Rooted in community
- Appointed through public recruitment process



Where is the Patient & Client Council?

- Regional Office (Antrim, soon!)
- 5 local offices
 - Belfast
 - Lurgan
 - Omagh
 - Broughshane
 - Newtownards (soon!)



Current Key Work Streams

- Priorities for Action
- Bamford Monitoring Group
- Review of chemotherapy services
- Healthcare Associated Infection
- GP Out of Hours
- Dental Survey – Access to services



Current Key Work Streams

- Advocacy
 - Over 2000 people have contacted us since 1st April
 - Provided information
 - Helped people through complaints process
 - Current case load approaching 200



Current Key Work Streams

- Patient and Public Involvement
 - Statutory duty to promote
 - Spoken to almost 1000 people
 - Research
 - Best practice



Contact us

Telephone

0800 9170222

Website

www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net

Local offices

Belfast, Omagh, Lurgan, Broughshane



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Belfast City Council

Report to: Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Subject: Titanic Signature Project

Date: 23 October 2009

Reporting Officer: Mr Peter McNaney, Chief Executive

Contact Officer: Mr Peter McNaney, Chief Executive

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to
 - (i) provide Members with an update on the Titanic Signature Project;
 - (ii) confirm that the conditions on which the Council offer of funding was made have now been satisfied; and
 - (iii) seek approval for completion of the formal legal documentation.

Background

2. Members will recall that at its meeting on 16 December 2008 the Committee considered a Due Diligence Report on the TSP project prepared by Deloitte, reviewing the Economic Appraisal for the project. The Committee then agreed to commit a maximum of £10million towards the realisation of a £97million iconic Titanic Signature Project to be built in Titanic Quarter in the city. This decision was ratified by Council on 5 January 2009.
3. The Council decision was subject to the preparation of a legal agreement that committed the relevant parties to their share of the funding package (£43.5m from Government; £43.5m from the private sector; and £10m from the Council) and ensured that the risks to the public sector of cost overrun and non completion were minimised.
4. The Council also sought an acknowledgement from Government that the Council's contribution of £10m was a "once and for all" commitment and that the Council should not be required to carry any funding risk (operational or capital) beyond that amount.

Key Issues

5. At the Northern Ireland Executive meeting on 1 October 2009 the Executive agreed to proceed with its funding of the Titanic Signature Project. In reaching that decision the Executive concluded that the guarantee arrangements to cover TQL's (the private sector contributors to the project) should provide a substantial mitigation of the funding and operating risks. In addition the Executive acknowledged that Belfast City Council should not be required to carry any funding risk (operational or capital) beyond its £10m donation and accepted that any additional financial risk for the completion of the project would be borne by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Industry.

6. DETI have now written to the Council by letter dated 5 October 2009 confirming the above, and further advising that their technical advisers to the project have confirmed that because TQL, at its own financial risk, has commenced work on the site in May, the project can be delivered by April 2012. At present it is estimated that TQL have spent over £6m in carrying out the groundworks and piling required for the TSP building. Belfast Harbour Commissioners have also confirmed their funding commitment to the project.
7. Arthur Cox, specialist banking solicitors, were instructed to act for the Council by the Director of Legal Services and the detailed legal negotiations have now been completed. The Director of Legal Services has confirmed that the Council's interests have been satisfactorily secured in the various legal documents, including the multi-party Funding Agreement, together with the under-pinning security documents and guarantee and assurance arrangements. In particular, the Funding Agreement provides that the Council contribution to the project is not due for payment until all the other funders have paid over the full amount of their grant commitments. In addition Deloitte have prepared an addendum to their Due Diligence Report concluding that the Order of Payment clause in the Funding Agreement and the Executive's confirmation that the Council will bear no funding risk over its £10m contribution provides strong protection to the Council against any funding or construction risk associated with the project.

Resource Implications

8. Financial Resources

The Council's £10m financial contribution to the project will be required in the financial year 2011/2012. The Director of Corporate Services has confirmed that the City Investment Fund will have sufficient funds available to it at that time to meet this commitment.

Recommendations

9. Members are asked to note the contents of this report and confirm that the formal legal documentation for the project can now be signed by the Council.



Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality |
| Date: | Friday, 23 rd October, 2009 |
| Reporting Officer: | Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (ext. 6325) |
| Contact Officer: | Mr. Gareth Quinn, Development Officer (ext. 6316) |

Relevant Background Information

A schedule of applications, together with an indication as to whether they fall within the criteria approved by the Committee, is attached as Appendix 1.

Key Issues

To advise the Committee of applications which have been received for the Use of Accommodation in the City Hall and/or the Provision of Civic Hospitality.

Resource Implications

Provision has been made in the Revenue Estimates for hospitality.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to approve the recommendations as set out in the Appendix.

Key to Abbreviations

Not applicable

Decision Tracking

If the Committee approves the recommendations, the organisations will be notified and the necessary arrangements put in place following ratification by the Council.

Officer responsible – Gareth Quinn.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Schedule of Applications

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**SCHEDULE OF APPLICATIONS FOR THE USE OF THE CITY HALL AND
THE PROVISION OF HOSPITALITY**

| Organisation / Body | Event / Date – Number of Delegates / Guests | Request | Comments | Recommendation |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| Health and Environmental Services Department - Building Control Service | Northern Ireland Building Control Annual Convention Dinner 12 th November, 2009 Approximately 150 attending | The provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception. | It is estimated that 75 delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Services – listening and delivering'. | The provision of a pre-dinner drinks reception in the form of wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £600 |
| Northern Ireland Women's European Platform | Northern Ireland Women's European Platform Conference Reception 3 rd December, 2009 Approximately 50 attending | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception. | It is estimated that 40 delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'. | The use of the City Hall and the provision of a drinks reception in the form of wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £200 |
| Queen's University Belfast | Association of Directors of Estates Conference Reception 29 th March, 2010 Approximately 250 attending | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception. | It is estimated that 400 delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'. | The use of the City Hall and the provision of a drinks reception in the form of wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £1,000 |
| The National Community Safety Network | National Community Safety Network Conference Gala Dinner 16 th June, 2010 Approximately 400 attending | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a Civic Dinner. | The conference aims to provide a forum for sharing knowledge and best practice in respect of tackling the issues of crime, fear of crime and antisocial behaviour. This event would contribute directly to the Council's Key Theme of providing support for people and communities and would be an extension of its role as the lead partner in the Belfast Community Safety Partnership. The Council's community safety team will work closely with the National Community Safety Network to showcase the work undertaken by Belfast City Council, specifically this will include | The use of the City Hall and the provision of a Civic Dinner. Approximate cost £14,000 |

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| | | | <p>initiatives such as our city-wide warden service and alleygating scheme.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together', 'Better Services – listening and delivering' and 'Better Value for Money – a can-do, accountable, efficient Council'.</p> | |
| Association of Port Health Authorities | <p>Association of Port Health Authorities Conference Dinner</p> <p>9th September, 2010</p> <p>Approximately 150 attending</p> | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a Civic Dinner. | <p>The conference aims to update delegates on current and emerging port health issues, whilst sharing knowledge and best practice between member authorities and learning from approaches taken in other parts of the world.</p> <p>Belfast City Council is a corporate member of the Association of Port Health Authorities and the Chair of the Health and Environmental Services Committee is currently President of the association. Furthermore, the Health and Environmental Services Committee, at its meeting on 8th April, agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be recommended to provide hospitality at the event.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together', 'Better Services – listening and delivering' and 'Better Value for Money – a can-do, accountable, efficient Council'.</p> | <p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of a Civic Dinner.</p> <p>Approximate cost £5,250</p> |
| Royal Military Police Association | <p>Royal Military Police Association Annual Conference Dinner</p> <p>21st May, 2011</p> <p>Approximately 250 attending</p> | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception. | <p>It is estimated that 200 delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.</p> | <p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of a pre-dinner drinks reception in the form of wine and soft drinks.</p> <p>Approximate cost £1,000</p> |
| British Society of Periodontology | <p>British Society of Periodontology Conference Dinner</p> <p>26th May, 2011</p> <p>Approximately 200 attending</p> | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception. | <p>It is estimated that 250 delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.</p> | <p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of a pre-dinner drinks reception in the form of wine and soft drinks.</p> <p>Approximate cost £800</p> |

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| <p>Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister</p> <p>Central Anti-Poverty Unit</p> | <p>Launch of 'Promoting Social Inclusion' Disability Report</p> <p>3rd December, 2009</p> <p>Approximately 200 attending</p> | <p>The use of the City Hall</p> | <p>This event, which will launch the 'Promoting Social Inclusion' Disability Report, will take place on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.</p> <p>The Report seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address the issues of rights, inequality and discrimination; • identify the extent to which disabled people have negative experiences in their everyday lives; • assess the current position in terms of service provision for disabled people and identify any gaps that may exist; and • consider ways of improving how services for disabled people are delivered. <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'.</p> | <p>The use of the City Hall</p> |
| <p>The HIV Support Centre</p> | <p>Reception to mark World Aids Day 2009</p> <p>1st December, 2009</p> <p>Approximately 70 attending</p> | <p>The use of the City Hall</p> | <p>This event, which will mark World Aids Day, seeks to raise awareness of HIV and Aids around the world and to breakdown the associated stigma.</p> <p>The theme for World Aids Day focuses on the 'reality of HIV today' and promotes human rights along with the need for the appropriate access to treatment.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'.</p> | <p>The use of the City Hall</p> |
| <p>Stop Climate Chaos Northern Ireland Coalition</p> | <p>Reception to mark the United Nations Climate Change Conference</p> <p>5th December 2009</p> <p>Approximately 100 attending</p> | <p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception.</p> | <p>This reception will follow an event taking place at the front of the City Hall which will include music and other on street entertainment. The event and reception seeks to demonstrate public support for the international climate change negotiations which will be held in Copenhagen on 7th December.</p> <p>The aim of the negotiations in Copenhagen is to establish a new global treaty on climate change.</p> <p>This event would contribute</p> | <p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of a drinks reception in the form of wine and soft drinks.</p> <p>Approximate cost £400</p> |

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| | | | to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better care for Belfast's environment'. | |
| Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister Machinery of Government Division | Annual regional Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration 27 th January, 2010 Approximately 100 attending | The use of the City Hall | This event seeks to provide an opportunity to remember the victims of the Holocaust and of genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur and to reflect on the horrors of the past and the lessons to be learned. In addition, the event aims to emphasise the importance of remembering those who have died and the sufferings of survivors with a view to learning from their experiences and seeking to improve the future for our young people. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'. | The use of the City Hall |
| Association for Real Change NI | 'Telling It Like It Is' Awards Ceremony 30 th November, 2009 Approximately 150 attending | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-event drinks reception. | The Association for Real Change aims to work with its members to help improve the lives of people with learning disabilities and their families. This awards ceremony seeks to celebrate the achievements of people with learning disabilities who have taken part on the 'Telling It Like It Is' training programme. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'. | The use of the City Hall and the provision of a pre-event drinks reception in the form of wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £600 |
| Girlguiding Ulster | 100 th Anniversary Dinner 5 th June, 2010 Approximately 300 attending | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception. | This event seeks to celebrate the 100 th Anniversary of Girlguiding Ulster and to acknowledge its contribution to the general life and well-being of the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'. | The use of the City Hall and the provision of a pre-dinner drinks reception in the form of wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £1,200 |

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| Northern Ireland School Caterers Association | Northern Ireland School Caterers Association Awards Ceremony 10 th July, 2010 Approximately 300 attending | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-event drinks reception. | This awards ceremony aims to acknowledge school caterers at primary, post primary and management level who have clearly demonstrated their commitment to continuous service development within their particular school or area. The event seeks to recognise the strong leadership of the school caterers as they worked in partnership with local schools, local communities, Local Government and health authorities in driving forward the recently established nutritional standards. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'. | The use of the City Hall and the provision of a pre-event drinks reception in the form of wine and soft drinks. Approximate cost £1,200 |
| Army Cadet Force Association | Army Cadet Force Association Awards Ceremony 19 th September, 2010 Approximately 500 attending | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception. | The Army Cadet Force Association aims to develop young people physically and mentally, improving self-confidence, teamwork, friendship and leadership. The Awards Ceremony seeks to recognise the vocational qualifications, which is equal to four GCSEs, achieved by its senior cadets. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'. | The use of the City Hall and the provision of a pre-dinner drinks reception in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits. Approximate cost £1,250 |
| Upper Springfield Development Company Ltd | Upper Springfield's Got Talent 27 th February, 2010 | The use of the City Hall | This community event seeks to showcase the talents of the children and young people in the Upper Springfield area with a view to promoting the message that young people can contribute positively to the community within which they live. The event aims to bring together the people of the area in a social capacity and will allow many people who have never had an opportunity to attend an event in the City Hall to do so. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme | The use of the City Hall |

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| | | | of 'Better Support for People and Communities'. | |
| Ulster Sports Museum Association | <p>Reception to mark the launch of the Ulster Sports Museum Exhibition</p> <p>30th November, 2009</p> <p>Approximately 400 attending</p> | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of Finger Buffet reception. | <p>The Exhibition, which will be on display in the City Hall East Entrance throughout December, seeks to tell the story of Ulster's many sporting heroes and will display memorabilia which will capture their sporting achievements.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.</p> | <p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of a Finger Buffet reception.</p> <p>Approximate cost £6,000</p> |
| The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and the Environment and Planning Law Association | <p>Annual Planning and Development Forum</p> <p>3rd March, 2010</p> <p>Approximately 150 attending</p> | The use of the City Hall | <p>This event aims to bring about the successful regeneration of the city through discussion on the latest theory on planning law and practice.</p> <p>The event also seeks to improve the lives of those living and working in the city and empower communities to participate on the future plans for housing, employment and open space.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the criteria relating to the use of the City Hall does not permit the holding of conferences by external organisations.</p> | Not recommended |



Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Peace III Priority 2.1 Creating Shared Public Spaces |
| Date: | 23rd October, 2009 |
| Reporting Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement |
| Contact Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement (extension 6217) |

Relevant Background Information

The Committee will recall that, at its meeting on 18th September, it considered a report detailing possible projects for submission for funding under Peace III Priority 2.1 Creating Share Public Spaces.

The Committee agreed that the Cultural Corridor and the Public Service Centre at Girdwood Projects be further developed and submitted for funding and that further investigation be undertaken in relation to the HMS Caroline.

The Council, at its meeting on 1st October, at the request of Councillor McCann, agreed that the matter be referred back to the Committee for further consideration. The Committee, at its meeting on 9th October, agreed to affirm its previous decision regarding the projects to be submitted for funding and agreed also that, in the meantime, discussions be held with the Party Groups in order to identify any further projects which could be developed and submitted for funding and that a report thereon be presented to the Committee on 23rd October.

Key Issues

The Director of Improvement has met with a number of Party Groups and will provide an oral update at the meeting.

Resource Implications

There will be considerable officer time commitment required to develop the detailed business cases and full costings of any projects selected for submission for funding.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the information which has been provided and, following the update of the Director of Improvement, identify which, if any, additional projects should be submitted for funding.

Decision Tracking

Following the decision of the Committee, funding applications will be submitted prior to the closing date of 13th November.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Extract of minutes of meeting of 18th September.

Extract from minutes of -

STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

18th SEPTEMBER, 2009

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

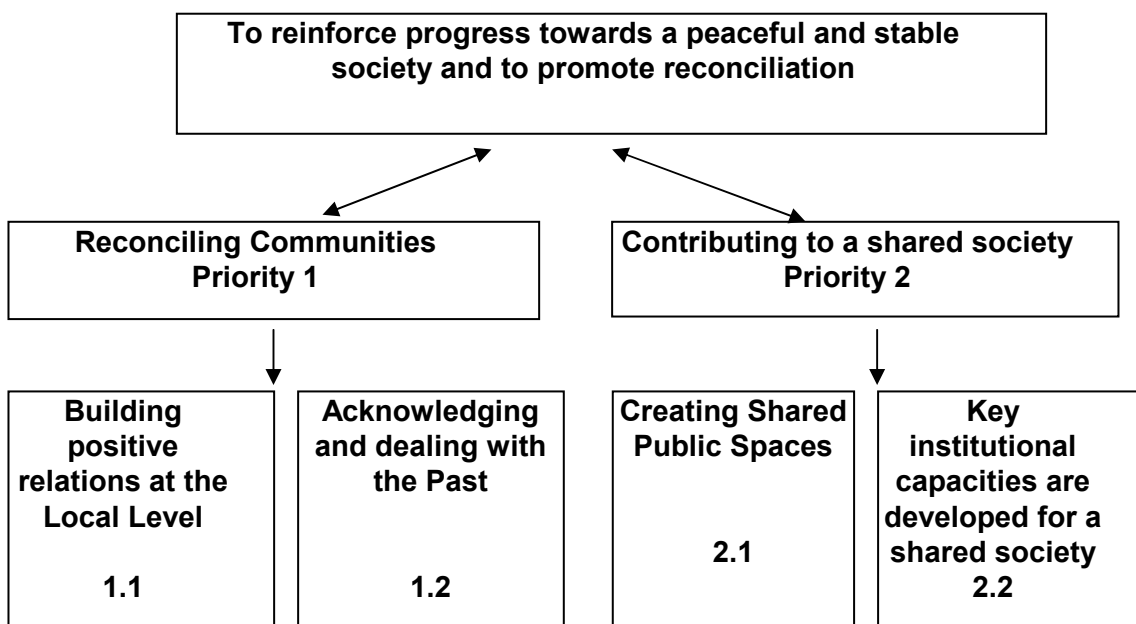
The Committee considered the undernoted report in relation to the funding of projects under Priority 2.1 of the Peace III Programme:

‘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;



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 feel 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:

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| <p><u>Welcoming</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Branding and symbols b. Promotion and publicity c. Management and governance d. Volunteering e. Community engagement <p><u>Good quality</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> j. physical design k. programming events l. sharing high-quality resources m. Recruitment, development and progression of locally recruited volunteers and staff n. promoting unique cultural heritage | <p><u>Safe</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. Physical design g. Policing/Stewarding h. Codes of conduct and enforcement i. Managing critical incidents <p><u>Accessible</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o. Location p. well-served by public transport q. well-served by pedestrian and cycle links r. Affordability s. Involving under-represented groups e.g. disabled groups t. Youth programming u. monitoring participation of all groups and targeted campaigns/programmes |
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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.

- 5 -

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 Committee |
| Subject: | Debt Management |
| Date: | 23 October 2009 |
| Reporting Officers: | Trevor Salmon, Director of Corporate Services |
| Contact Officers: | Trevor Wallace, Financial Accounting Manager Paula McKissick, Operational Manager CTU |

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to apprise Committee of the current level of debt awaiting write off and to seek authority to proceed with the write off.

Relevant Background Information

(a) General

The Council is responsible for the administration of public money and must have effective arrangements in place for ensuring that customers pay for the services they receive. Where payment is not forthcoming, the Council must take all reasonable steps to pursue the outstanding debt, including legal action where appropriate.

The issue of writing off outstanding debt whereby the amount is deemed to be irrecoverable was discussed at a previous COMT Meeting, dated the 16th September 2009, and it was agreed that the Director of Corporate Services would bring a report to address this matter.

This report has been prepared for Committee at the request of the Director of Corporate Services who has been overseeing the Council's debt management.

This paper explains the level of debt requiring writing off and the steps taken to try and recover the debt.

A copy of the Council's policy for writing off bad debt is set out in Appendix 1. Some further information on individual debt is given in Appendix 2.

(b) Implementation of SAP Accounting System and Central Transactions Unit

Prior to October 2007 departments were responsible for debt management which included granting of credit through to the recovery of debt. With the introduction of SAP and the Central Transactions Unit (CTU) the responsibility for pursuing and recovery of debt transferred to the CTU.

With the Council's approach to debt management changing and the implementation of a new Accounting System, departments were asked to deal with any debt which was waiting writing off prior to the go-live date of SAP which was October 2007.

(c) CTU

CTU have conducted monthly meetings with each Council department to ensure that any actions required, with regards to the debt, are actioned accordingly and have been brought to the attention of the relevant business units.

The overall amount of debt awaiting writing off for four Sales Offices is detailed below and totals **£32,643.47**.

| Sales Office | Name | Amount |
|----------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| W01 | Waterfront Hall | 21,352.89 |
| J01 | CIT | 2,537.76 |
| F01 | Landfill | 6,372.82 |
| R01 | Development | 2,380.00 |
| OVERALL TOTAL | | 32,643.47 |

Key Issues

Committee is asked to approve the writing off of the above debt amounting to £32,643.47.

Documentation Attached

Appendix 1 – Council's Bad Debt / Write off Policy
Appendix 2 - Breakdown of write off by Sales Office

Appendix 1 – Council's Bad debt / Write-off Policies

3.20 Writing off Bad Debts

3.20.1 In order that the value of debtors may not be overstated in the Council's balance Sheet at 31 March in any year, the Central Transactions Unit should examine the debtors list each month and arrange to have bad debts dealt with in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

Amounts up to and including £500

3.20.2 The chief officer certifies that the debt is to be written off.

3.20.3 A write-off journal should then be raised, showing the amount of VAT applicable to the debt.

Amounts over £500

3.20.4 The chief officer must be advised that the debt should be written off and a report prepared for committee. The report must indicate at least:

- the amount of the debt
- the service provided which gives rise to the debt
- the name and address of the debtor
- a statement that all reasonable steps in accordance with the Council's procedures have been taken to recover the debt including, where necessary, details of the action that has actually been taken.

3.20.5 When the Council has approved the committee decision the Central Transactions Unit must ensure that action is taken promptly by raising a write-off journal, showing the amount of VAT applicable to the debt.

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APPENDIX 2

WRITE OFFs for SALES OFFICE W01 - WATERFRONT HALL

| Account | Customer Name | Inv. ref. | Invoice Detail | Doc. Date | Arrear | Net due | Amount | Additional Information |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------------|--|------------|--------|------------|-----------------|---|
| 230 | So Good Promotions | 9300005886 | Entertainment Hire Cancellation Fee | 18.10.2004 | 1,763 | 17.11.2004 | 3,315.25 | Case referred to Legal by Sales office as promoter cancelled and the fee was disputed. Legal referral 20/01/05 and as per advise from Colin Campbell this amount was to be written off. |
| 230 Total | | | | | | | 3,315.25 | |
| 570 | Britvic International | 9300006119 | Club Membership sponsorship of Comedy Club | 30.03.2004 | 1,965 | 29.04.2004 | 9,625.00 | Taken to court by Legal - Invoice was originally for £17,625.00 this represents balance of Centre Stage Sponsorship not recovered |
| 570 Total | | | | | | | 9,625.00 | |
| 1690 | Blacksheep Ltd | 9300005881 | Use of W/Hall Club Membership | 31.10.2002 | 2,481 | 30.11.2002 | 3,231.25 | Mr Gatson verbally agreed to offset his debt against ours thereby cancelling the debts owed to both parties. You confirmed this proposal on 2nd February 2007 and I confirmed this in writing to Mr Gatson on 16th February 2007. As per instructions from Legal this case is to be closed. |
| 1690 Total | | | | | | | 3,231.25 | |
| 2961 | Murtagh and Partners | 9300005629 | Use of W/Hall Conference 19-20 Oct 1999 | 30.09.1999 | 3,608 | 30.10.1999 | 971.73 | Referred to Legal date unknown, no progress. Incurred Oct 1999 - client refused to pay as VAT was charged. Checked with Legal and the file on this invoice cannot be located, Referred to Business Manager for write off. |
| 2961 Total | | | | | | | 971.73 | |
| 1826 | ED Farrell Irishtown | 9300005501 | Use of W/Hall Rebecca Storm 24 Mar 03 | 30.03.03 | 2,358 | 29.04.2003 | 705.00 | Referred to Legal 20/01/04 for follow up and resolution. Reply to Legal dated the 20/11/07 Dear Lisa, Thank you for your letter of 14th instant to my colleague Carol Abel regarding the above WFH debtor. Since Mr Farrell has been declared bankrupt, we are content that this file should now be closed and that no further action should be taken to recover this debt. Thank you very much for your assistance with this matter. Yours sincerely, Sean ----- J. K. Glynn Finance and Administration Manager |
| 1826 Total | | | | | | | 705.00 | |
| 14178 | Institute of M,P&T | 90060273 | International Conference 9 - 11 Sept 2009 | 23.04.2008 | 124 | 23.05.2008 | 2,435.41 | As per legal no instructions given to chase the debt. Sales office detailed that the debt cannot be pursued as no contract was signed for by the customer therefore no legal binding contract to pay. |
| 14178 Total | | | | | | | 2,435.41 | |
| 4040 | Inspirational Media | 9300005661 | NICCI Awards 21- 22 May 2003 | 23.06.2003 | 2273 | 23.07.2003 | 1,069.25 | Referred to Legal for recovery. Checked with Legal no further information available. |
| 4040 Total | | | | | | | 1,069.25 | |

OVERALL TOTAL 21,352.89

APPENDIX 2

WRITE OFFs FOR SALES OFFICE - JO1 CORE IMPROVEMENT

| Account | Customer Name | Inv. ref. | Invoice Detail | Doc. Date | Arrear | Net due | Amount | Additional Information |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------|------------------------------------|------------|--------|------------|-----------------|--|
| 3827 | Rite Price Carpets & Suites | 9300005760 | Provision of New walls and railing | 30.09.2005 | 1,416 | 30.10.2005 | 1,705.26 | Case referred to Legal 04/10/04 and since have gone into liquidation. Legal are awaiting further instruction from the dept |
| 3827 Total | | | | | | | 1,705.26 | |
| 2584 | Leisureworld | 90020447 | Half Yearly arrears | 21.04.2008 | 482 | 21.05.2008 | 138.75 | Firm have gone into liquidation unable to pursue debt have checked with Legal and they have no further information available |
| 2584 | | 90036346 | May - Oct 06 | 08.10.2008 | 312 | 07.11.2008 | 138.75 | |
| 2584 | | 9300004170 | Half Yearly arrears | 09.11.2005 | 1,376 | 09.12.2005 | 138.75 | |
| 2584 | | 9300004171 | Nov - Apr 07 | 13.10.2006 | 1,038 | 12.11.2006 | 138.75 | |
| 2584 | | 9300004172 | Nov - Apr 08 | 30.03.2006 | 1,235 | 29.04.2006 | 138.75 | |
| 2584 | | 9300004173 | Nov 08 - Apr 09 | 30.04.2007 | 839 | 30.05.2007 | 138.75 | |
| 2584 Total | | | | | | | 832.5 | |

OVERALL TOTAL 2,537.76

APPENDIX 2

WRITE OFFs for SALES OFFICE F01 - LANDFILL

| Account | Customer Name | Inv. ref. | Invoice Detail | Doc. Date | Arrear | Net due | Amount | Additional Information |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|---|
| 3830 | Events 22 Oxfordshire | 9300006003 | Clay dumped at Dargan Road | 14.12.2006 | 976 | 13.01.2007 | 6,372.82 | Debt could not be pursued as no application signed by customer prior to use of site. Debt void. Legal emailed Tina Mollou 26/02/09 and advised that the company had been struck off 14 March. Firm being pursued by Companies House and it is unlikely we will receive any money. |
| 3830 Total | | | | | | | 6,372.82 | |
| OVERALL TOTAL | | | | | | | 6,372.82 | |

APPENDIX 2

WRITE OFFs FOR SALES OFFICE - R01 DEVELOPMENT

| Account | Customer Name | Inv. ref. | Invoice Detail | Doc. Date | Arrear | Net due | Amount | Additional Information |
|----------------------|---------------|------------|---------------------------|------------|--------|------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 617 | TG Marketing | 9300005834 | Hire of St Georges Market | 21.05.2007 | 827 | 20.06.2007 | 2,380.00 | Customer no longer trading |
| 617 Total | | | | | | | 2,380.00 | |
| OVERALL TOTAL | | | | | | | 2,380.00 | |



Belfast City Council

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Report to: | Strategic Policy & Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Capital Programme - Update |
| Date: | 23 October 2009 |
| Reporting Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement, Ext: 6217 |
| Contact Officer: | Michael Stanley, Project Manager, Ext: 348 |

Relevant Background Information

The Capital Programme for 2008/09 was initially presented to, and approved by, the SP&R Committee on 13 June 2008. This listed the projects which the Council considered as "Committed" and other proposals which were to be considered as "Uncommitted".

Several additional proposals have been approved as committed projects at subsequent SP&R Committees.

The financial resource implications of undertaking the committed proposals were presented to the SP&R Committee on 21 November 2008.

Key Issues

The capital programme for 2010/11 and Future Years is currently being developed to enable budget estimates to be prepared and it is anticipated that this will be presented to the Committee in November.

In the absence of any prioritisation or a capital financing strategy, a significant number of potential proposals remain uncommitted; however, two of these proposals have received offers of grant aid:

The Parks & Leisure Committee agreed in principle to the acquisition of lands for, and the provision of playgrounds at both *Eversleigh Street*, off My Lady's Road and *Sliabh Dubh*, off the Springfield Road at their meetings on 14 February 2008 and 9 October 2008 respectively, subject to external funding to cover all initial capital costs.

The SP&R Committee noted these decisions at their meetings on 19 September 2008

and 23 January 2009 respectively.

The Department of Social Development has since offered 100% grant aid for the *Eversleigh Street* proposal and has indicated that it may be in a position to offer 100% grant aid towards the costs of the *Siabh Dubh* proposal subject to the outcome of contaminated land assessment of the site (which it has committed to fund).

The SP&R Committee is consequently asked to consider adding these two proposals to the list of “Committed” capital programme projects to enable them to be advanced, subject to confirmation of external funding to cover all costs incurred by BCC. Further details of these proposals are attached at Appendix A.

Resource Implications

The estimated gross cost of providing the playground facility at *Eversleigh Street* is £170k (with 100% capital grant aid anticipated);

The estimated gross cost of providing the playground facility at *Siabh Dubh* is £250k, excluding costs associated with the contaminated land assessment (with 100% capital grant aid anticipated).

Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee note the current issues outlined above and:

- 1 consider whether the playgrounds at *Eversleigh Street* and *Siabh Dubh* should be included as “Committed” capital projects, subject to 100% external funding ;
- 2 approve the invitation of tenders relating to the works (tenders to be evaluated in accordance with BCC procurement procedures, with awards to be made to the most economically advantageous offers based on cost and quality criteria).

Decision Tracking

It is anticipated that the work for to provide the playground facilities at *Eversleigh Street* and at *Siabh Dubh* will commence this financial year.

Key to Abbreviations

Documents Attached

- Appendix A1 – Further details of *Eversleigh Street* Playground proposal
- Appendix A2 – Further details of *Siabh Dubh* Playground proposal

Appendix A

Further details of the Eversleigh Street and Sliabh Dubh playground proposals

Extract from minutes of P&L Committee: 14 February 2008

Proposed Playground at Eversleigh Street

Relevant Background Information

The Committee will recall that it received a report at its meeting on 17 January 2008 regarding the provision of a play facility at Eversleigh Street in the Woodstock area. The report highlighted the concerns of Officers in regard to:

- Technical issues around the proposed location;
- The lack of a firm proposal regarding the development of the site; and
- Uncertainty around capital funding;

Members were sympathetic to the needs of the local area and requested that a meeting be held with local representatives and other statutory organisations involved to explore how the community might be supported in their desire for a play area.

A meeting took place on 31 January. The meeting considered a number of issues as outlined below:

Suitability of the site

At the meeting, Council Officers presented drawings to demonstrate that a typical play unit could not be accommodated within the site owing to space restrictions. However, Officers demonstrated that it would be possible to install individual elements such as a two cradle unit for toddlers; a roundabout; and a spring rocker; although the solution remains a less than ideal.

It was further pointed out that it would be necessary to commission a civil engineers report to establish the scope and cost of the work needed to provide a suitable surface for a play area for toddlers. The Council would not be in a position to commission such a report as it does not own the land and there has been no provision made within the estimates, it is estimated that the report could cost in the region of £5k-£10k. It is, the view of Officers that it would be necessary to either raise the level of the ground at the bottom of the street, which would result in a drop of between 2-3m or lower the ground level at the top of the street, but this would mean install a ramp or steps to access the playground and would present further access issues. These issues and solutions would be explored by the engineering report. Council Officers could assist through way of advice to the Community in this matter on the preparation of a specification for the work.

Ownership of the land

The Housing Executive officials have again verbally indicated that the Executive would be willing to transfer ownership of the land to the Council at nil cost.

Funding

This issue requires further clarification. The Belfast Regeneration Office has indicated that it would not be in a position to meet the total cost of the scheme and indicated a

percentage figure of 49% of the total cost. BRO have indicated that their preference would be for an application from the Council. A further meeting has been arranged with BRO to consider this matter.

Key Issues

The Committee is asked to note the following points

1. The Council recognises the need for a facility in the area;
2. Officers remain concerned as regards location;
3. It will be necessary to commission an engineer's report to establish the extent and cost of the site preparation work needed;
4. It will be necessary to consider the implications of the engineer's report ;
5. The Housing Executive has intimated it would be willing to transfer the land at nil cost;
6. Members are asked to consider whether the land should be acquired in the absence of an agreed and funded project;
7. There remains uncertainty regarding the capital funding from BRO;
8. Should Members be of a mind to co fund the project it would set a precedent for other similar projects, currently under discussion; and
9. As the work is of a capital nature it would be necessary to put the project forward for consideration for inclusion in the Council's programme, which has been agreed for 2008/2009.

Resource Implications

Financial

The acquisition of the land will have revenue implications in terms of ongoing maintenance.

Human Resources

There are no significant human resource implications.

Asset and Other Implications

There is a need for a play facility to meet the needs of the young people in the area.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee agree in principle to accept the acquisition of the land at nil cost from the Housing Executive on condition that:

1. It is used to provide a play facility;
2. An agreement can be reached on a scheme design; and

3. External funding is secured.

It is further recommended that the Council's contribution to the project will include:

- a. The management of the facility upon completion of the works including inspection for defects; routine maintenance and future equipment replacement as necessary; and
- b. Carrying the public liability insurance in respect of the facility”

The Committee agreed to adopt the recommendations, subject to notification, in accordance with Standing Order 60, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Extract from minutes of SP&R Committee: 19 September 2008

Proposed Acquisition of Land at Eversleigh Street

The Committee was informed that the Parks and Leisure Committee, at its meeting on 14th February, had agreed, in principle, to accept the acquisition of land at Eversleigh Street, off My Lady's Road, from the Housing Executive at nil cost but subject to:

- (i) the land being used to provide a play facility;
- (ii) an agreement being reached on the scheme design;
- (iii) external funding being secured; and
- (iv) the Council managing the completed facility and becoming responsible for routine maintenance and equipment replacement as necessary. In addition, the Council would be required to carry public liability insurance for the facility following completion of the works.

In accordance with Standing Order 60, the Committee noted the acquisition of the land.

Extract from minutes of P&L Committee: 9 October 2008

Playground Provision – Eversleigh Street/Sliabh Dubh

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

Officers from Parks and Cemeteries have been involved in discussions with local residents and other statutory agencies including Belfast Regeneration Office and Fold Housing Association. These discussions have centred on the need for a play area within the newly constructed Sliabh Dubh Housing Estate in West Belfast and for a similar facility in Eversleigh Street in the East of the City.

The Committee is reminded that at its meetings in January and February 2008 it received reports related to the provision of a playground at Eversleigh street in the Woodstock Road area. The Committee has agreed that the Council would seek the acquisition of the land from the Housing Executive at nil cost, would provide project management and design support to the community and would support the community in attracting external funding to meet the capital cost of the project.

The Committee is advised that a scheme has been prepared and the Department for Social Department (Physical Renewal Branch) has agreed to meet the capital cost of the work at Eversleigh Street (£192k).

Officers have been approached by local residents from Sliabh Dubh estate, Springfield Road, regarding the provision of a playground. Officers advised the residents that while the Council supports the need for play facilities for local children it was not in a position to meet the capital costs. Following further meetings between Officers from Belfast Regeneration Office, Fold Housing Association and the Council, the Department for Social Development agreed to meet the cost, estimated to be in the region of £160k.

The land is currently owned by Fold Housing Association which has agreed to transfer the land at nil cost to the Council.

Key Issues

The Committee is asked to note the following points:

1. Residents from the Eversleigh Street area have no access to junior play facilities;
2. Sliabh Dubh is a new housing estate in West Belfast, in excess of 200 units have been constructed with no play facilities. Planning Policy Statement 8 (PPS 8) requires that play provision be provided where there are 100 new housing units, unfortunately this scheme pre-dates PPS 8;
3. The Department for Social Development has agreed to meet the capital cost of both projects (total cost is in the region of (£350K) on the basis that the Council agree to accept the transfer of land and undertake the management and maintenance responsibilities associated with playground provision;
4. Officers from Parks and Cemeteries are currently reviewing playground provision and will bring forward, to a future meeting, a draft framework to guide decisions as to playground provision. However, in both cases, Officers are satisfied that there is local need due to the lack of play areas in the vicinity of local housing.

Resource Implications

The Members have stressed that one of their key requirements in the new governance arrangements is to take control of the Council resources at a strategic level. In order for this to be done, it is considered that this section of the new reporting structure needs to be much more robust.

Financial

The Committee is asked to note that the capital cost of provision will be met by the Department for Social Development.

The schemes will have revenue implications. The acquisition will represent additional, stand alone, facilities, which will need to be inspected and cleaned. It is estimated that the cost of this will be in the region of £1,500 per annum per site. This does not take account of damage to the facility through vandalism or use.

Members are asked to note that the typical life expectancy of play equipment and the surface would be approximately 10-12 years, again depending on levels of use and abuse over time. Members should be aware that these items will require replacement in the future.

Human Resources

This project will require Officer time from the Landscape Planning and Development and the Estates Management Unit.

Asset and Other Implications

These projects will add to the Council land holding and will, upon completion, increase the number of playgrounds to 76.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. agree to acquire the land at Eversleigh Street and Sliabh Dubh at nil cost to the Council and authorise officers to enter into the necessary discussions and the appropriate agreements in respect of the land;
2. agree that Officers from Landscape Planning and Development continue to provide support to the communities and undertake the project management of the project;
3. agree to accept the management and maintenance responsibilities associated with the new facilities and to the inclusion of additional provision within the revenue estimates for 2009/10 and for subsequent future years;
4. agree that the facilities be added to the Council's insurance schedule;
5. agree that the Landscape Planning and Development Unit continue to manage the projects; and
6. agree that the projects be forwarded for inclusion in the list of capital projects at no cost to the Council."

The Committee adopted the recommendations within the report.

Extract from minutes of SP&R Committee: 23 January 2009

Land at Sliabh Dubh

In accordance with Standing Order 60, the Committee was notified that the Parks and Leisure Committee, at its meeting on 9th October, had agreed to the acquisition of a portion of land at Sliabh Dubh, off the Springfield Road, Belfast at nil capital cost and rent free for the purpose of providing a children's playground. The Committee noted also that the estimated cost of the playground would be £200,000 and the acquisition would be subject to the Council's Capital Projects Gateway process.

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Belfast City Council

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|---------------------------|---|
| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Connswater Community Greenway Update |
| Date: | 23 October 2009 |
| Reporting Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement, Ext 6217 |
| Contact Officer: | Celine Dunlop, Estates Surveyor, Core Improvement, Ext 3419 |

Relevant Background Information

Belfast City Council, as part of the City Investment Strategy, has agreed to coordinate the acquisition of lands to enable the Connswater Community Greenway Programme to proceed. The Council will secure rights over the land needed for the Greenway and shall be responsible for the management and maintenance of this land and any assets on the land. The Greenway must be accessible for 40 years to comply with the Big Lottery Fund letter of offer, although the intention is to secure rights for longer if possible.

Key Issues

A key part of the Greenway is the creation of a network of paths and associated landscaping on the area of land between the junction of the Knock and Loop Rivers adjacent to Clanmil Housing Association's properties at Linen Court off Woodcot Ave. Council officials have agreed with the landowner, J&J Properties, subject to Committee approval, to purchase two small plots of land outlined red on the attached plan and measuring 0.291 acres for £10000.

Resource Implications

Financial

The proposal requires a maximum expenditure of £10000 plus legal fees to purchase the land required. Land purchase costs are included within the Connswater Community Greenway budget including in the City Investment Fund and there will be no additional cost to the Council.

Human Resources

No additional human resources required

Asset and Other Implications

The additional land will form part of the Connswater Community Greenway which when complete will be managed and maintained by the Council.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee grant approval to the purchase of the plots of land outlined red on the plan attached at Appendix 1.

Decision Tracking

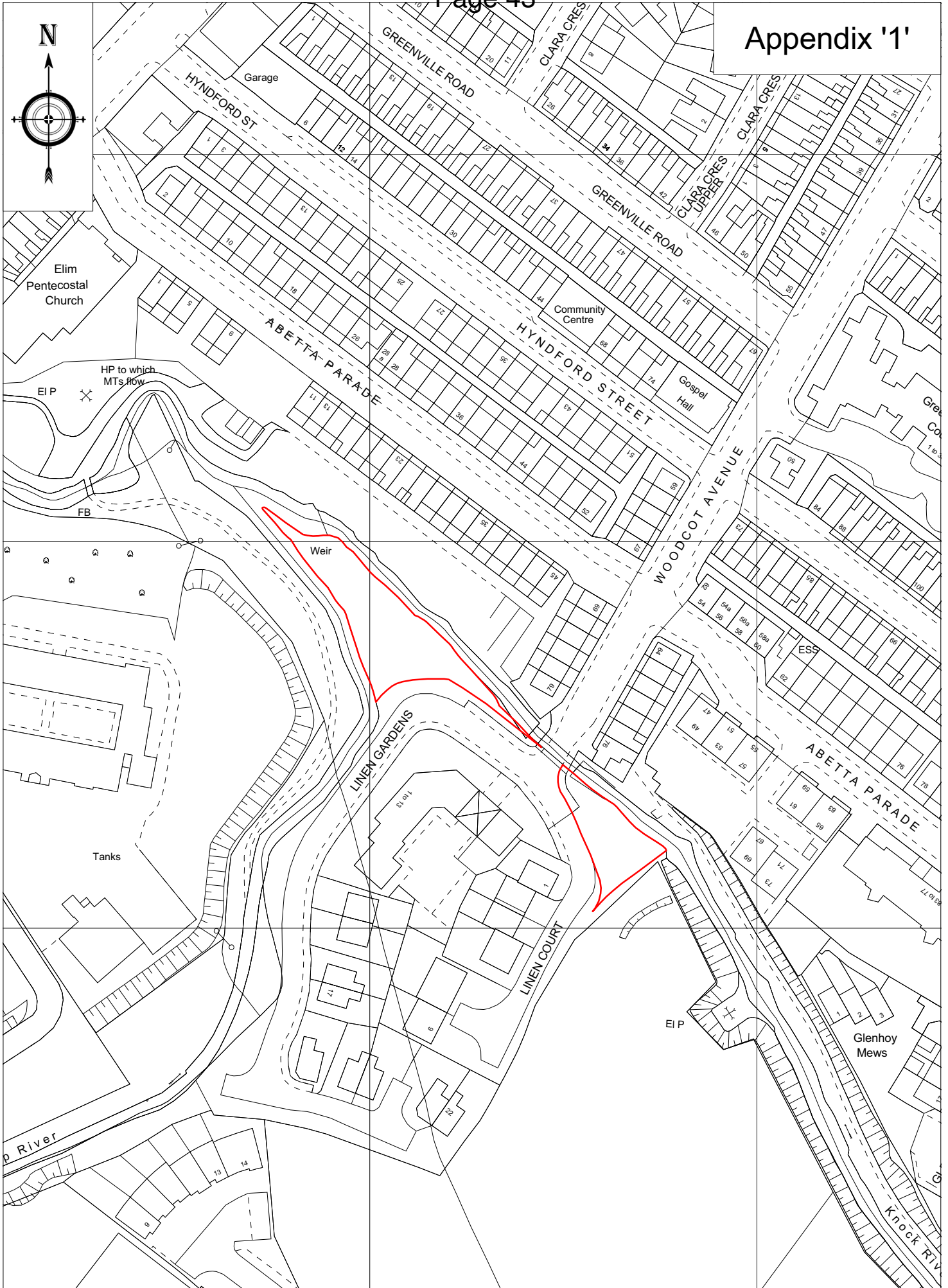
Action by Celine Dunlop to be completed by Dec 2009.

Key to Abbreviations

N/A.

Documents Attached

Plan at Appendix 1.



Scale 1:1250

Connswater Community Greenway - Plots 43p & 43q

Area 0.291 acres

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Belfast City Council

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Acquisition of Land at Carrick Hill Playground |
| Date: | 23 October 2009 |
| Reporting Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement, Ext 6217. |
| Contact Officer: | Ken Anderson, Estates Surveyor, Core Improvement, Ext. 3496. |

Relevant Background Information

Carrick Hill Playground was acquired by the Council from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive on a 10,000 year lease dated 31 October 1994, for a nominal sum, subject to restrictions as to the use etc. of the property.

The mapping associated with the 1994 lease shows a street layout and arrangement of buildings which have now altered and it has only recently come to light that a small portion of the playground site falls outside the area defined in the 1994 lease.

In discussions with the Housing Executive they have confirmed a willingness to correct the anomaly and arrange for transfer of the land (portion shown hatched on Appendix 1 attached) to the Council on terms similar to those contained in the 1994 lease.

Key Issues

Proposed acquisition of approximately 33 square metres of land from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive by way of a long lease for a nominal sum, subject to restrictions on use similar to those on adjoining land held in similar fashion by the Council from NIHE.

Resource Implications

Financial

Nominal acquisition costs. Acquisition rectifies an anomaly in title and has nominal or

no financial impact on future maintenance costs.

Human Resources

No additional human resources required. Legal Services and Estates Management resources required during land acquisition process.

Asset and Other Implications

Regularises integrity of current land asset.

Recommendations

Committee is recommended to approve the acquisition of approximately 33 square metres of land (shown hatched black on Appendix 1) from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive on a long lease (10,000 years or similar) for a nominal sum, subject to the future use of the land being restricted to playground purposes and appropriate terms to be included in a suitable legal agreement.

Decision Tracking

The land will be purchased following the completion of the agreements.

Officer responsible – Ken Anderson

Key to Abbreviations

NIHE – Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Map showing (hatched black) an area of approximately 33 square metres to be acquired from NIHE. Area shaded grey is land currently held by the Council on lease from NIHE.



REGENT STREET

STANHOPE

46-48

8

9

7

SRÁID NA RÍONA

Stanhope Street Nursery Sch

Playground

2a

LOWER

REG ENT

2.15m

Community Centre

5

1

7

7

8-10

14

2

Scale 1:500

PL

SW

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Belfast City Council

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Disposal of Land at 67 Schomberg Avenue, Belfast |
| Date: | 23 October 2009 |
| Reporting Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement, Ext. 6217. |
| Contact Officer: | Ken Anderson, Estates Surveyor, Core Improvement, Ext. 3496. |

Relevant Background Information

At its meeting on 12 February 2009 the Parks and Leisure Committee received a report entitled "Interim Policy on Land Disposal". Among other things the report recommended that the Council should progress with three enquiries already received from members of the public to purchase portions of park at different locations across the city. An extract from the Committee minute is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Among the terms of disposal set out in the above mentioned Parks and Leisure Committee was a condition that the land be retained for use as open space. This condition was to be applied to all three disposals and on this basis the following outline terms were agreed with the prospective purchaser of 67 Schomberg Avenue:

- i) Area for disposal comprises approximately 82 square metres as outlined with a heavy black line on the attached map (Appendix 2).
- ii) Use of the land will be restricted to open space and to garden use in particular.
- iii) Disposal price agreed at £10,000.
- iv) Purchasers will re-locate boundary fence at their own expense.

Following agreement on the above terms the owner of 67 Schomberg Avenue has requested that the restriction which would limit use of the land to open space be varied to allow a small part of a single storey house extension to be constructed on the land being acquired. From plans currently available the extent of the proposed building on Council land is minimal (approximately 0.13 square metres) but it would contravene the proposed restriction as agreed by Parks and Leisure Committee.

Key Issues

- Disposal of land following Parks and Leisure Committee decision of 12 February 2009.
- Terms of Disposal had been agreed with prospective purchaser Dr JM Cartwright-Shamoon, but variation of these requested to allow minimal building on the land.
- Legal advice has been obtained which indicates the approval of the Department of the Environment is not required in this instance in order to comply with the Local Government Act (NI) 1972.

Resource Implications

Financial

Small capital receipt, no additional revenue or capital costs to Council.

Human Resources

No additional human resources required. Resources in Estates Management Unit and Legal Services Department required to bring the disposal to a conclusion.

Asset and Other Implications

Loss of a small portion of Council land at boundary of Belmont Park. The land has some tree cover and associated woodland undergrowth. It is of benefit to the owner of the dwelling at 67 Schomberg Avenue by enlarging their limited garden amenity area and thus making the property more attractive. The proposed restriction on use to open space guards against redevelopment of this portion of the site for housing or other commercial purposes and helps retain a buffer between the park and neighbouring buildings. The minimal portion of building now sought by the proposed purchaser, while being unwelcome in close proximity to the park, does not significantly diminish the buffer.

Recommendations

Disposal of 82 square metres shown outlined with a heavy black line on the attached map (Appendix 2) at the price of £10,000, is recommended on the basis of the terms outlined in this report, to DR JM Cartwright-Shamoon, subject to a suitable legal agreement to be prepared by the Director of Legal Services, such agreement to permit the placing of a small area of building on the land (as referred to in the body of this report) and strictly subject to no further building being permitted.

Decision Tracking

Director of Improvement to arrange completion of disposal by 31 March 2010.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Extract from minute of the Parks and Leisure Committee of 12 February 2009.

Appendix 2 – Map showing the land for disposal outlined with a heavy black line.

APPENDIX 1

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Parks and Leisure Committee,
Thursday, 12th February, 2009

As an interim measure, pending the development and approval of a revised Council Policy on this land acquisition and disposal, it is proposed that the Council does not dispose of public open space land unless it has been declared surplus to requirements. It is proposed that this be implemented with immediate effect subject to the following exceptions.

The Committee is asked to note that there are three outstanding requests from private individuals seeking the disposal of open space land for domestic purposes. The requests relate to properties at: 702 Antrim Road; 67 Schomberg Avenue; and 35 Brookvale Avenue.

In each of the above cases the Council has been requested to dispose of small pieces of land adjacent to each of the properties. In each case the owner of the property wishes to enhance their garden for personal use.

Given that these requests are already in the system it is proposed that the Council permit these disposals to proceed subject to agreement on appropriate terms in line with the requirements of the Local Government (NI) Act 1972 and on condition that there be no development on the land without Council consent in line with similar disposals in the past.

Resource Implications

Financial

There are no significant financial implications at this time, although the Council will benefit from a small capital receipt in relation to each of the proposed disposals outlined above.

Human Resources

There are no additional human resource implications at this time.

Asset and Other Implications

This proposal will support the taking of a more strategic approach to the disposal of Council land.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1. agree to dispose three small parcels of land adjacent to the properties outlined above;**
- 2. agree that the land be disposed on condition that it be retained for use as open space;**
- 3. agree that the disposal should be within the terms of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972; and**
- 4. agree that as an interim measure, until an agreed Council policy on land acquisition and disposal has been agreed, all such requests be rejected unless the land has been declared as surplus to operational requirements and/or a better use for the asset has been identified subject to its disposal enhancing the quality and/or quantity of open space elsewhere in the City, especially in areas of greater need and/or enhancing the increased use of open space.”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations, subject to notification of the disposal, in accordance with Standing Order 60, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.



PARKWAY

FB

67

53

59

41

SCHOMBERG AVENUE

Scale 1:500

SW

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**Belfast City Council**

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | London 2012 Cultural Olympiad - Live Sites Screen |
| Date: | 23 October 2009 |
| Reporting Officer: | Tim Husbands Head of City Events and Venues ext. 3459 |
| Contact Officer: | Gerry Copeland Events Manager ext. 3412 |

Relevant Background Information

In May, August and December 2008 the Development Committee of the Council received details of plans for the Cultural Olympiad to be staged leading up to and during the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games. As part of the original ethos, Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympic Movement, mirrored the classical Greeks in maintaining that the purpose of the Olympic Games was to celebrate mind, body and spirit. Up until 1948 medals were awarded for sculpture, music, literature and art. The modern Cultural Olympiad, which will be part of the 2012 Games, will focus on the following themes:

- Bringing together culture and sport
- Encouraging audiences to take part
- Animating public spaces – through street theatre, public art, circus skills, live big screen sites
- Using culture and sport to raise issues of environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing
- Honouring and sharing the values of the Olympic and Paralympic Games
- Encouraging collaborations and innovation between communities and cultural sectors
- Enhancing the learning, skills and personal development of young people by linking with education programmes

The key to this process for the 2012 Games has been the development of a series of 'live sites' which involve large LED screens being installed within public performance spaces across the United Kingdom. In December 2008 the Development Committee received formal details on the costs for such a project. The Development Committee agreed the concept, which was then subsequently referred to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in January 2009 for formal consideration. At this point the report was withdrawn due to a lack of financial resources being made available.

Since this date DCAL and LOCOG have restructured the financial commitment required from Council, which has been reduced from an original figure of £70,000 to £20,000. A report detailing the new financial arrangement was then presented to the Development

Committee in September and again in October 2009 when the Committee agreed to provide funding for a three year period towards the costs of the Live Sites Screen.

Members of the Strategic, Policy and Resources Committee are now being asked to approve the use of the City Hall grounds for this project.

Key Issues

London 2012 Cultural Olympiad - 'Live Sites' Public Screen

The proposal would see a 25sq m screen, valued by the BBC and LOCOG 2012 at £500,000, positioned in the heart of the city centre. Therefore LOCOG, along with DSD, are proposing that the screen be located within the grounds of City Hall – probably facing into the lawn from Donegall Square West. The initial concept was for the screen to be positioned as a permanent feature, but LOCOG will now accept a three year term for the screen at City Hall. This would mean that a secondary position, post 2012, will need to be sought along with funding for the removal and installation from all partners. It is likely that the new site would be somewhere in the city centre.

The concept would mean that the BBC, LOCOG 2012 and BCC would share broadcasting time on the screen which would operate approximately between twelve and sixteen hours a day, 364 days a year. The screen could also be utilised for major events including a number of London 2012 events. After the Council's rejection of the December 2008 report, due to its indicative costs, LOCOG and DCAL have resubmitted new proposed costs, which are stated below.

- Installation - £50k and planning £6k (DSD) one-off fee
- Maintenance - £20 k (BCC) per year
- Event programming & management - £30k (NITB's event funding) per year for 3 years
- Screen programmer - £20k (DCAL) per year for the first three years

In total BCC would have an estimated annual cost of £20,000 for maintenance of the screen, inclusive of security costs, plus have input to the screen programmer funded by DCAL. Should the Council agree to support this initiative BCC officers have agreement in principle from DSD, as part of their 'Streets Ahead' programme, to meet the installation costs which includes the cost of a 1 m x 1 m control room in the basement of City Hall. For the 3 year period leading up to the 2012 Olympics the screen would be the property of LOCOG with a guaranteed link to the BBC's national public screens programme for BCC. After this period the screen would become the property of BCC and its local partners with a similar link to the BBC's public broadcast network.

Live Screens Location

The proposed location, if approved by Members, would be within the grounds of City Hall, with a suggested location being the west side of the grounds (CGI images of the screen will be presented to Members at Committee). The installation of the screen would not only be subject to approval by the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee but also subject to an economic appraisal by DSD, planning approval by the NI Planning Service and full legal agreements with all the relevant bodies and funders.

Resource Implications

Financial

The Council funding would involve £20,000 annually. This has been approved for a three year period by the Development Committee at its October 2009 meeting.

Recommendations

Members are requested to approve the use of the City Hall grounds for the project for three years and to agree to the use of an area 1m x 1m in size for use as a control room for the screen.

Documents Attached

None

Abbreviations

BCC – Belfast City Council
DCAL – Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
LOCOG 2012 – London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games 2012
DSD – Department of Social Development
CGI – Computer Generated Image

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Belfast City Council

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Report to: | Strategic Policy & Resources Committee |
| Subject: | CONSULTATION RESPONSE – NORTHERN IRELAND MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION MEASURE 2009 |
| Date: | Friday 23 rd October 2009 |
| Reporting Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Improvement, ext 6217 |
| Contact Officer: | Sharon McNicholl, Strategic Planning & Policy Manager. ext 6207 |

Relevant Background Information

Purpose

To bring to the attention of Members details of a consultation by NISRA – Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2009.

Background

NISRA have commenced work on updating the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2005 (also known as the 'Noble' measures). A consultation document proposing the way in which the measures will be updated was published on 27th July 2009. The consultation process will end on 6th November 2009.

The consultation documents are available at

http://www.nisra.gov.uk/deprivation/update_of_nimdm_2005.htm

The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2005 is the current measure of the spatial distribution of deprivation in Northern Ireland. Government and others use spatial deprivation measures to target resources on the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland and to monitor the spatial impact of policy interventions.

The 2005 measures of deprivation provide information on seven types or 'domains' of deprivation (Income; Employment; Health Deprivation and Disability; Education, Skills and Training; Proximity to services; Crime and Disorder and Living Environment) and an overall measure of multiple deprivation comprising a weighted combination of the seven domains.

Key Issues

NISRA is recommending that the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2005, based mostly on data relating to 2003, is now updated. A fuller methodological review of the measures will follow after publication of the small area results from the 2011 census.

The scope of the update is broadly limited to temporal updating of the indicators and domains used in the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2005 research, i.e. using the most recently available data. The intention is to revise statistical indicators only where explicitly recommended in the 2005 report, where indicators are no longer available or where administrative data have been significantly enhanced.

There are a number of changes recommended to each domain which are outlined in full at Appendix 1

The Council's proposed response to the update of Multiple Deprivation Measures for 2009 is attached at Appendix 2. The central premise being that areas of deprivation must be effectively and efficiently identified across Northern Ireland.

It is important to note that this is not a full review of the Measure. A fuller methodological review of the measures will be needed post RPA and the 2011 Census.

Resource Implications

N/A

Recommendations

The Strategic Policy & Resources Committee is asked to note the content of the report and to approve the response to the consultation document and its submission to NISRA. Members are asked to outline any additional comments that they would wish to make in the response.

Key to Abbreviations

NISRA – Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
NIMDM – Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure

Documents Attached

APPENDIX 1: Changes to Domains as outlined in the consultation document
APPENDIX 2: Draft copy of response to NISRA

Appendix One – Proposed Changes to Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures Domains

Income Domain

| | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Adults and Children in Income Support Households | Remaining |
| Adults and children in State Pension Credit households | Proposed new addition |
| Adults and children in income based Employment and Support Allowance Households | Proposed new addition |
| Adults and children in income based Jobseeker's Allowance Households | Remaining |
| Adults and children in Working Families' Tax Credit households | To be removed from Domain |
| Adults and children in Disabled Person's Tax Credit households | To be removed from Domain |
| Adults and children in Housing Benefit households | Proposed new addition |

Proposed updated Income domain is as follows:**Purpose of the Domain**

The purpose of the income deprivation domain is to identify the proportion of the population experiencing income deprivation at the small area level. This proportion is calculated by obtaining a non overlapping count of individuals living in households in receipt of income related benefits.

- Adults and children in Income Support households (2008/09 Source: DSD)
- Adults and children in State Pension Credit households (2008/09 Source: DSD)
- Adults and children in income based Employment and Support Allowance households (2008/09 Source: DSD)
- Adults and children in income based Jobseeker's Allowance households (2008/09 Source: DSD)
- Adults and children in Housing Benefit households (2008/09 Source: DSD)

Appendix One – Proposed Changes to Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures Domains

Employment Domain

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Unemployment claimant count | Remaining |
| Incapacity Benefit claimants | Remaining |
| Employment and Support Allowance claimants | Proposed new addition |
| Severe Disablement Allowance claimants | Remaining |
| Carer's Allowance claimants | Remaining |
| Participants in New Deal for Young People (18-24 years) who are not included in the claimant count | To be removed from Domain |
| Participants in New Deal for 25+ who are not included in the claimant count | To be removed from Domain |

Proposed updated Employment domain is as follows:**Purpose of the Domain**

This domain measures employment deprivation defined as involuntary exclusion of the working age population from work.

- Unemployment claimant count of women aged 18-59 and men aged 18-64. (2008/09 Source: DSD)
- Incapacity Benefit claimants women aged 18-59 and men aged 18-64. (2008/09 Source: DSD)
- Employment and Support Allowance claimants women aged 18-59 and men aged 18-64. (2008/09 Source: DSD)
- Severe Disablement Allowance claimants women aged 18- 59 and men aged 18-64. (2008/09 Source: DSD)
- Carer's Allowance claimants women aged 18-59 and men aged 18-64. (2008/09 Source: DSD)

Appendix One – Proposed Changes to Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures Domains

Health Deprivation and Disability Domain

| | |
|--|--|
| Years of Potential Life Lost | Remaining |
| Comparative Illness and Disability Ratio | Remaining |
| A combined measure: i) individuals suffering from mood and anxiety disorders, based on prescribing data ii) suicides iii) mental health inpatient stays | Remaining with addition of iii) mental health inpatient stays |
| People registered as having cancer | Remaining |
| Emergency Admission Rate | Proposed new addition |
| Low Birth Weight | Proposed new addition |
| Children's Dental Extractions | Proposed new addition |

Proposed updated Health Deprivation and Disability domain is as follows:**Purpose of the Domain**

The Health Deprivation and Disability Domain identifies areas with relatively high rates of premature deaths and areas where relatively high proportions of the population's quality of life is impaired by poor health or who are disabled.

- Years of Potential Life Lost (2004 to 2008 Source: GRO)
- Comparative Illness and Disability Ratio (Income Support claimants in receipt of disability premium, State Pension Credit claimants in receipt of severe disability premium, Attendance Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Incapacity Benefit and Employment and Support Allowance. 2008/09 Source: DSD)
- A combined measure of three indicators
 - i) Individuals suffering from mood and anxiety disorders, based on prescribing data (2008/09 Source: BSO)
 - ii) Suicides (1999 to 2008 Source: GRO)
 - iii) Mental health inpatient stays (2003 to 2008 Source: DHSSPS)
- People registered as having cancer (excluding non-melanoma skin cancers) (2003 to 2007 Source: Northern Ireland Cancer Registry)
- Emergency Admission Rate (2007/08 Source: DHSSPS)
- Low Birth Weight (2003 to 2007 Source: Child Health System)
- Children's Dental Extractions (2006/07 to 2008/09 Source: BSO and DHSSPS)

Appendix One – Proposed Changes to Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures Domains

Education, Skills and Training Domain

In the 2005 Domain, two sub-domains were introduced (children/young people and working age adults). However due to the heavy reliance on the 2001 Census results to measure deprivation affecting the working age population, alongside the improvements in the availability of primary school level pupil data, three equally weighted sub-domains have been proposed.

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>Sub-Domain: Children/Young People</i> | To be renamed Sub-Domain: Primary School |
| Proportions of Years 11 and 12 pupils not in grammar school | To be removed |
| Key Stage 2 Teacher Assessments for English and Maths (and Irish in Irish medium schools) | Proposed new addition |
| Proportions of pupils attending Special Education Needs Schools or who are attending primary school with Special Education Needs | Proposed new addition |
| Absenteeism at Primary Schools (all absences) | Proposed new addition |

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| <i>Sub-Domain: Post Primary</i> | |
| Key Stage 3 data | To be removed |
| Key Stage 3 Teacher Assessments for English and Maths (and Irish in Irish medium schools/units) | Proposed new addition |
| GCSE/GNVQ points score | To be removed |
| GCSE or equivalent points score | Proposed new addition |
| Proportion of those leaving school not entering FE | To be removed |
| Proportions of those leaving school aged 16, 17 and 18 and not entering FE or Training | Proposed new addition |
| Proportions of 17-20 year olds who have not successfully applied for Higher Education | To be removed |
| Proportions of 18-21 year olds who have enrolled in Higher Education Courses at HE or FE establishments | Proposed new addition |
| Absenteeism at Secondary Schools (all absences) | Remaining |
| Proportions of post primary pupils with SEN in mainstream schools | To be removed |
| Proportions of pupils attending SEN Schools or who are attending post primary school with SEN | Proposed new addition |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| <i>Sub-Domain: Working Age Adults</i> | |
| Proportions of working age adults | Remaining |

Appendix One – Proposed Changes to Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures Domains

| | |
|---|--|
| (aged 25-59) in the area with no or low levels of qualification | |
|---|--|

Proposed updated Education, Skills and Training domain is as follows:**Purpose of the domain**

The purpose of the domain is to measure the extent of deprivation in education, skills and training at the small area level for both children and working age adults.

Sub-Domain: Primary School

- Key Stage 2 Teacher Assessments for English and Maths (and Irish in Irish medium schools) (2006/07 to 2007/08 Source: DE)
- Proportions of pupils attending Special Education Needs Schools or who are attending primary school with Special Education Needs (2006/07 to 2007/08 Source: School Census, DE)
- Absenteeism at Primary Schools (all absences) (2006/07 to 2007/08 Source: DE)

Sub-Domain: Post Primary

- Key Stage 3 Teacher Assessments for English and Maths (and Irish in Irish medium schools/units) (2006/07 to 2007/08 Source: DE)
- GCSE or equivalent qualifications points score (2005/06 to 2007/08 Source: School Leavers Survey, DE)
- Proportions of those leaving school aged 16, 17 and 18 and not entering Further Education or Training (2003/04 to 2007/08 Source: School Leavers Survey, DE)
- Proportions of 18-21 year olds who have enrolled in Higher Education Courses at Higher Education or Further Education establishments (2004/05 to 2007/08 Source: HESA and FESR, DEL)
- Proportions of pupils attending Special Education Needs Schools or who are attending post primary school with Special Education Needs ,(2006/07 to 2007/08 Source: School Census, DE)
- Absenteeism at Secondary Schools (all absences) (2006/07 to 2007/08 Source: DE)

Sub-Domain: Working Age Adults

- Proportion of working age adults (25-59) with no or low levels of qualification (2001 Census Source: NISRA)

Appendix One – Proposed Changes to Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures Domains

Proximity to Services Domain

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| GP premises | Remaining |
| Accident and Emergency hospital | Remaining |
| Dentist | Proposed these three are combined into one to be named Other Primary Health Care Services |
| Optician | |
| Pharmacist | |
| Jobs Centre or Jobs & Benefits Office | Remaining |
| Post Office | Remaining |
| Food Store | To be removed |
| Supermarket/Food Store | Proposes new addition |
| Settlement of 10,000 or more people | To be removed |
| Large Service Centre | Proposed new addition |
| Council Leisure Centre | Proposed new addition |
| Financial Services | Proposed new addition |
| Other general services | Proposed new addition |

Proposed updated Proximity to Services domain is as follows:**Purpose of the Domain**

The purpose of this domain is to measure the extent to which people have poor geographical access to key services, including statutory and general services.

- GP premises (2009 Source: BSO)
- Accident and Emergency hospital (2009 Source: DHSSPS)
- Other Primary Health Care Services (2009 Source: BSO)
- Job Centre or Jobs and Benefits Office (2008 Source: DEL)
- Post Office (2008 Source: Post Office Ltd)
- Supermarket / Food Store (2007 Source: Experian)
- Large Service Centre (Source: DSD)
- Council Leisure Centre (2009 Source: DCAL)
- Financial Services (2007 Source: Experian, Credit Union Register)
- Other general services (2007 Source: Experian)

Appendix One – Proposed Changes to Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures Domains

Living Environment Domain

| | |
|---|------------------------------|
| <i>Sub-domain: Housing quality</i> | |
| SOA level housing stress | To be removed |
| Houses without central heating | To be removed |
| SOA level Decent Homes Standard | Proposed new addition |
| SOA level Housing Health and Safety Rating System | Proposed new addition |
| | |
| <i>Sub-domain: Housing Access</i> | |
| Household overcrowding | To be removed |
| LGD level homelessness acceptances | To be removed |
| SOA level homelessness acceptances | Proposed new addition |
| | |
| <i>Sub-domain: Outdoor physical environment</i> | |
| SOA level local area problem score | Remaining |
| | |

Proposed updated Proximity to Services domain is as follows:**Purpose of the Domain**

The aim of the Living Environment Domain is to identify small areas experiencing deprivation in terms of the quality of housing, access to suitable housing, and the outdoor physical environment. As such the Living Environment Domain comprises three sub-domains.

Sub-Domain: Housing quality

- SOA level Decent Homes Standard (2006 Source: NIHE, modelled NI House Conditions Survey)
- SOA level Housing Health and Safety Rating System (2006 Source: NIHE, modelled NI House Conditions Survey)

Sub-Domain: Housing Access

- Homelessness Acceptances under the homelessness provisions of the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1988 and the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 2003(2005/06 to 2007/08 Source: NIHE)

Sub-Domain: Outdoor physical environment

- SOA Local Area Problem Score (2006 Source: NIHE, modelled NIHCS)

Appendix One – Proposed Changes to Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures Domains

Crime and Disorder Domain

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| <i>Sub-domain: Crime</i> | |
| Violence, robbery and public order | Remaining |
| Burglary | Remaining |
| Vehicle Theft | Remaining |
| Criminal Damage | Remaining |
| <i>Sub-domain: Disorder</i> | |
| Malicious and deliberate Primary Fires | To be removed |
| Disturbances | To be removed |
| Deliberate Primary Fires | Proposed new addition |
| Anti Social Behaviour Incidents | Proposed new addition |

Proposed updated Crime and Disorder domain is as follows:

The Crime and Disorder Domain measures the rate of crime and disorder at the small area level. This includes recorded crime, deliberate fires and incidents of anti-social behaviour.

Sub-Domain: Crime

- Violence, robbery and public order (2004/05 to 2008/09 Source PSNI)
- Burglary (2004/05 to 2008/09 Source PSNI)
- Vehicle Theft (2004/05 to 2008/09 Source PSNI)
- Criminal Damage (2004/05 to 2008/09 Source PSNI)

Sub-Domain: Disorder

- Deliberate Primary Fires (2004/05 to 2008/09 Source: NIFRS)
- Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents (2006/07 to 2008/09 Source: PSNI)

Appendix Two

Northern Ireland
Multiple Deprivation Measure 2009:

Consultation Document

Belfast City Council Response

Appendix Two

1. Introduction

Belfast City Council welcomes the intention to update the Multiple Deprivation Measures 2005; it is important that the most current information possible is used to inform policy development. This paper outlines Belfast City Council's response to the update of **Multiple Deprivation Measures for 2009**. The Council's central premise is that areas of deprivation must be effectively and efficiently identified across Northern Ireland.

Multiple Deprivation Measures are used to identify those deprived areas most in need and, accordingly, will heavily influence regeneration spending and intervention activity. As such it is crucial that MDM accurately measures real deprivation.

The Council recognises that this is a timely review of the data given the changes in the economic climate of Northern Ireland since the last review. People across Northern Ireland are feeling the effects of the economic downturn and it is likely that this will continue for the foreseeable future and may be exacerbated by proposed cuts in government spending.

We would concur that a fuller methodological review of the measures is needed post RPA and the 2011 Census.

Belfast City Council acknowledges that using 2003 data and prior for the purposes of planning and intervention is limited and believes that every attempt should be made to use 2008/09 data where available.

The Council notes that the consultation document, does not detail the impact that the proposed changes to the domains is likely to have on the indices and would welcome further clarification with respect to this.

The Council would highlight Belfast's unique position in Northern Ireland as the capital city and regional driver. The resident population of Belfast is approximately 16% of the total Northern Ireland population. Belfast has been disproportionately impacted by the years of conflict which affected the region. Large concentrations of multiple deprivation exist in the north and west of the city and there are pockets all across Belfast including 8 of the 10 most deprived wards in Northern Ireland in terms of Multiple Deprivation. In light of this the Council would propose that consideration should be given to representation by Belfast City Council on the Steering Group for the next review of the measures.

Impact of RPA

The Review of Public Administration is gathering momentum with key decisions to be taken in the coming months; including decisions on the boundaries of local government. The Council seeks clarification on what mechanisms will be put in place to take account of the future proposed changes to boundaries brought about by the Review of Public

Appendix Two

Administration. We would also seek clarification that the data can be aggregated up to the new proposed District Council Areas

The Council would stress that it is important that the SOA and OAs can be aggregated to align with the new Belfast boundaries and the local, ward and district geographical area as this will be critical in ensuring that appropriate statistical intelligence can be captured to inform both service planning and delivery at the local level. This is also important in relation to the community planning process and ensuring that future delivery of public services meets local needs.

Funding allocation

In response to the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures 2004 Belfast City Council highlighted the potential impact on funding streams following the update of the measures. It was stressed that where a commitment had been made to support projects or activities under the measures this should continue without prejudice to potential funding allocations resulting from the output of the measures. The Council would again highlight that consideration should be given to the impact on current funding streams of any adjustments to the measures at this time.

Concluding remarks

Belfast City Council's comments are intended to be constructive and positive and the Council looks forward to working with NISRA to ensure that the update of the measures will effectively identify those people in Belfast living with deprivation.

Although social and cultural divisions are prevalent throughout Northern Ireland they are most evident in Belfast. The segregated patterns of life in the city are marked at all levels. In many areas there is little cross-community contact or interaction between Catholic/Nationalist and Protestant/Unionist communities, with neighbourhoods side by side in geographical terms but often living parallel lives with little in common. Of the 52 built interface barriers throughout Northern Ireland, 42 of these are in Belfast. The Council would again highlight comments made in the 2004 response that a measure of distance to a service is not necessarily a measure of accessibility of that service given the community geography of the city. Measuring access to services on a geographical basis only will not provide a true reflection and distort the index. The domain for proximity to services should also take into account other barriers to access to services including segregation and perceptions of territory and safety.

Comments concerning each domain are included at **Appendix 1** in the question template.

Appendix Two

Appendix 1**Consultees are invited to comment on the following:****Income Deprivation Domain**

Whether the proposed changes from the 2005 domain are acceptable?

Specifically

1 Whether Adults and Children in Households in receipt of Housing Benefit should be included in the domain?

1. Belfast City Council notes that Tax Credit data from HRMC is no longer available to NISRA for the purposes of this domain and we would be concerned that this would have a detrimental effect on the overall measure. We acknowledge that administratively this data is not currently available to NISRA however we would welcome the inclusion of this data should it become available.

The Council would note that the Income Deprivation measure relies heavily on benefit data which is somewhat limited in that it cannot accommodate a number of groups specifically pensioners in low-income households, low income families (working) and poverty due to debt. We would draw attention to the recent report published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation '*Monitoring poverty and social exclusion in Northern Ireland 2009*' which highlights these issues.

We support the inclusion of adults and children in receipt of housing benefit. The link between income and health inequalities is well established. We feel that it is beneficial to include data on both rent and rates elements of Housing Benefit as proposed.

The Council would also highlight that, given the restrictions imposed on migrant workers in terms of accessing out-of-work benefits, this domain may fail to take account of the income deprivation experienced by those in that group.

The Council notes that the Equality Directorate, OFMDFM has considered the final proposal to create a child specific multiple deprivation measure and considered it outside the remit of the current update. Given the levels of child poverty in Northern Ireland and the current political focus on child poverty-related issues we would strongly recommend that this measure is given full consideration when the review of the measures take place post the 2011 census.

The Council highlighted in the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2004 response that an income deprivation affecting older people measure could be created. With the increasing importance of this issue Belfast City Council again recommends that a measure be fully incorporated in the next review of the measures.

Whilst acknowledging that the domains are weighted in line with previous NIMDM, this domain is critical and the weighting given to Income Deprivation needs to reflect that all other domains are directly or indirectly related to available incomes.

Appendix Two

Employment Deprivation Domain

1 Whether, given the recommendations and changes to data availability, the proposed updated domain is acceptable?

1. Belfast City Council acknowledges that this domain seeks to identify all those of working age involuntarily out of the labour market. It is unfortunate that a specific indicator relating to hidden unemployment as recommended in the previous report will not be included. It is appreciated that the possible sources of information for this indicator namely the Labour Force Survey and the Family Resources Survey have too small a sample size to produce robust results at the small area level. However The Council would propose that further consideration is given to the inclusion of these surveys in the future possibly with a larger sample size that would lend itself to the small area level given the increased number of migrant workers in Northern Ireland.

Because of restrictions placed on some migrant workers in accessing out-of-work benefits, this section of the population may be disproportionately impacted by not including a measure on hidden unemployment.

The Council notes that the Steps to Work programme subsumes the main New Deal programmes and as yet has not been operating across Northern Ireland and will not be included in this domain. The Council is concerned that this may have a negative impact upon the robustness and completeness of determining employment deprivation. The Council would emphasise the need to include this data as soon as it becomes available across Northern Ireland in order to ensure that this domain is more robust.

Appendix Two

Health Deprivation and Disability Domain

Whether the proposed changes from the 2005 domain are acceptable?

Specifically

- 1 Whether an Emergency Hospital Admission indicator should be included in the domain?
- 2 Whether Mental Health Hospital Admissions should be included in the Mental Health Indicator?
- 3 Whether a Children’s Dental Health indicator should be included in the domain?
- 4 Whether a Low Birth Weight Indicator should be included in the domain?

1. The Council supports the inclusion of the Emergency Hospital Admission indicator as a welcome addition to the Health Deprivation and Disability domain.

2. Mental disorders and problems have a direct major impact on health and wellbeing, as they typically affect all areas of life, including social relationships. The Council welcomes the inclusion of Mental Health Hospital Admissions in the Mental Health Indicator as there currently is limited information available on mental health issues in Northern Ireland. The Council supports the proposal that this information is gathered alongside mood and anxiety prescription information and suicide data to form a mental health indicator which will in turn provide a more robust domain.

3. Good dental health is important in its own right, and also contributes to general health and wellbeing; therefore the inclusion of a Children’s Dental Health indicator is considered a welcome addition to this domain.

4. It has been reported that smoking and poor nutrition during pregnancy are known to increase the likelihood of a mother giving birth to a baby of low birth weight. It is believed that there is a link between social disadvantage and higher risk of low birth weight. In light of this the Council supports the inclusion of this indicator in the domain.

Overall the Council welcomes the above additions to the Health Deprivation and Disability Domain and considers that the combination of these additions will enhance and strengthen the domain.

Additional Comments

When considering future revision of the domain, the Council would welcome consideration of other data, such as:

- GP referrals to mental health services e.g. psychiatric nurse;
- Alcohol/ drug misuse and smoking statistics;
- The length of waiting times for outpatient appointments.

Appendix Two

Education, Skills and Training Domain

Whether the proposed changes from the 2005 domain are acceptable?

Specifically

1 Whether Key Stage 2 performance data should replace the 'proportions of children aged 11 and 12 not attending a grammar school'?

2 Whether primary level absenteeism rates should be included in the domain?

3 Whether the proportion of primary school age pupils with Special Education Needs should be included in the domain?

4 Whether the destination of school leavers indicator should include those not entering Further Education or training?

5 Whether three sub-domains should be introduced, decreasing the importance of 2001 Census data in the overall domain?

1. In line with the Council's response to the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures 2004, Belfast City Council welcomes the replacement of the 'proportions of children aged 11 and 12 not attending a grammar school' with Key Stage 2 performance data. In line with the previous response, the Council would also recommend that data from Key Stage 1 is also included as an indicator in this domain as actions to address educational deprivation can prove more effective if identified at an early stage.

2, 3, 4 and 5. The Council is supportive of any enhancements which mean a more robust understanding of the extent of education, skills and training related deprivation. Alleviating the reliance on 2001 Census data is welcomed. Development towards a more spatially and temporally dynamic deprivation measure should be the aim.

Appendix Two

Proximity to Services Domain

Whether the proposed changes from the 2005 domain are acceptable?

Specifically

- 1 Whether cross border service centres and accident and emergency hospitals should be included?
- 2 Whether a general service indicator should be included?
- 3 Whether the food shop indicator should be broadened to include convenience stores?
- 4 Whether dentists, opticians and pharmacists should be combined into a single indicator?
- 5 Whether council leisure centres should be included?
- 6 Whether the service centres should be based on service provision rather than having a population of at least 10,000?
- 7 Whether the calculation of proximity be based on time rather than distance?

In preface to the specific comments below, the Council would highlight as mentioned earlier, that although social and cultural divisions are prevalent throughout Northern Ireland they are most evident in Belfast. Therefore, Belfast City Council would highlight that proximity to a service be it based on time or distance is not necessarily a measure of accessibility of that service given the community geography of the city and Northern Ireland generally. As outlined in our Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2004 response, the domain should take into account other barriers to access to services including segregation and perceptions of territory and safety.

The Council would also highlight that whilst a measure of travel by public transport cannot be included at this stage, we would strongly recommend that the Department of Regional Development works with Translink to allow this information to be gathered, in advance of the post 2011 Census.

In Belfast, there is a heavy reliance on public transport and this has a direct impact on access to services in the city. In research commissioned by the Council, the significance of transport and connectivity was stressed in terms of promoting access to shared spaces in the city. In particular, deprived communities tend to lack mobility and the diseconomies of segregation are borne disproportionately by the most disadvantaged communities in the city.

Poor access to job opportunities is exacerbated by low car ownership, low travel horizons, poor public transport connections across the city and perceptions of risk to personal security. There is a heavy reliance on public transport or local taxi services within these communities and therefore there are restrictions on the areas to which they can freely travel.

Appendix Two

It is therefore critical that a domain is developed before 2011 in order to measure the linkages between mobility, access to public transport and deprivation.

1. The Council would welcome further information as to whether the proposed change will have any impact in the Belfast context.

2, 3 The Council agrees in general with expansion of the indices where this will give a fuller understanding of deprivation, but would refer you to our earlier comments about proximity not equalling access in the Belfast context.

4. The Council would recommend that pharmacies should be considered exclusively due to the development of the Building the Community-Pharmacy Partnership

5. The Council would wish to point out that to focus purely on leisure centres is to take a narrow view of the definition of "access to leisure" and this will need to be addressed in any future review.

An important issue with respect to accessing leisure centres in Belfast is that geographical proximity to a centre does not necessarily make the facility "accessible", since there are barriers to access which are economic, social, physical and cultural. In developing its new leisure strategy the Council is examining the issues impacting upon access to leisure across the city and would hope that this can inform a future review of the statistics. The Council would therefore like further clarification around the definitions that would underpin any proximity indicator and the gradation that would apply.

It is an accepted industry standard that "proximity" to a leisure "facility" (not specifically a leisure centre) would be rated as good if a resident was based within 20 minutes travel time (i.e. 1 mile walking or 3 miles driving) of that facility. In the Belfast context however, it should be noted that, historically, the purpose of the 1986 Recreation and Youth Service order was to develop a number of leisure centres, many of which were located in areas "of need" and which are not particularly geographically dispersed from one another or the areas of significant deprivation.

6. The Council would support the recommendation to revert to service provision as opposed to population scale in relation to service centres.

7. In terms of proximity calculated on time rather than distance, neither necessarily gives an accurate picture of accessibility of services. In a city as divided as Belfast, there is evidence to suggest that many residents, particularly those in the most segregated areas of our city, make decisions to access services on the basis of safety and the location of interfaces. While it may be difficult to factor in some of the perceived 'boundaries' in the city, it is possible to quantify the interfaces as identified by

Appendix Two

the Northern Ireland Office and the NI Housing Executive. This overlay would give a more accurate picture of the complex access patterns in the city.

Living Environment Domain

Whether the proposed changes from the 2005 domain are acceptable?

Specifically

- 1 Whether Central Heating information from the 2001 Census and SOA level housing stress should be replaced by the Decent Home Standard?
- 2 Whether the Housing Health and Safety Rating System should be included?
- 3 Whether Household Overcrowding information from the Census should be excluded?

1, 2 and 3 Belfast City Council would highlight that whilst probably less robust than the Census data, the Decent Home Standard will aid the dynamism of the measure.

The Council acknowledges that the Household Overcrowding information is now somewhat out of date given that the only data available is the data from the 2001 census and because of this it is proposed to be excluded. Given the considerable migration into Northern Ireland as mentioned earlier, the Council would recommend that the household overcrowding indicator is considered for inclusion in the full review of the measure when new data is available.

Additional Comments

The council would be interested to learn how the presence of litter is measured and subsequently categorised as a score. In order to give an accurate and consistent assessment, the approach would need to be objective, structured and with relatively detailed criteria guidance for scoring, such as the Tidy NI methodology for scoring the presence of litter. This may be something for consideration as part of the methodological review, which the consultation indicates will be carried out in the future.

Other suggestions for inclusion in the domain in the future include:

- Including Energy scoring ratings for households in the future.
- Considering the number and length of time void properties are present in local SOA.
- Number of registered private landlords or buy to let mortgages for properties in SOA are potential indicators that may be developed.

Appendix Two

Crime and Disorder Domain

1 Whether, given the recommendations and changes to data availability, the proposed updated domain is acceptable?

1. Belfast City Council supports the extension of the number of years data included is a welcome development. The new measures will be very useful, particularly in developing the Vulnerable Localities Index as a third of the index is based on deprivation statistics (employment and income) which will inform the work of the Belfast Community Safety Partnership.

It is recommended that incidents of hate crime across the 5 groupings as recorded by PSNI are included as a measure, alongside monitoring anti-social behaviour.

The Council would suggest that it may be more beneficial to weight neighbourhood crime/ disorder with greater priority – for example Anti-social Behaviour.

Any other comments

Another issue we would like to raise relates to access to the data. While we appreciate that much of the data is already available from the NISRA site, we would appreciate as much access as possible to as many of the data sets as NISRA can allow, while maintaining the confidentiality restriction place upon them. Ideally these data would be available in standard formats such as .csv, xls, etc. It would also be useful if geo-coded datasets could be made readily available in a format that makes them easy to add as layers to mapping software such as MapInfo

We would strongly recommend that a domain is developed before 2011 in order to measure the linkages between mobility, access to public transport and deprivation. Separation and lack of safety will continue to produce nodes of hyper-growth and ongoing areas of concentrated deprivation and disillusion; it is therefore critical that the complex and interwoven relationship between deprivation and segregation in Belfast and appropriate resources can be appropriately targeted.

Appendix Two

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Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Swine Flu – Update and Proposals for Distribution of Antiviral Medicines |
| Date: | 23 rd October 2009 |
| Reporting Officer: | Suzanne Wylie, Head of Environmental Health, Ext 3281 |
| Contact Officer: | Suzanne Wylie, Head of Environmental Health, Ext 3281 |

Relevant Background Information

The Committee has over the last 6 months received a number of reports regarding Pandemic Flu, detailing the Council's planning processes for ensuring continuity of critical services, implications for staff absence procedures and information to be issued to all staff and managers.

The number of new cases of Swine Flu in Northern Ireland has been generally showing an increase over the last few months, although the levels are not as high as predicted earlier in the year and there is not yet a sustained week on week increase. It must also be noted that clinical diagnosis is now being used to confirm swine flu in most cases, as opposed to laboratory testing and so the figures reported are considered as estimates. .

Since 2007 the council has had in place a specific corporate contingency plan (Strategic Pandemic Plan) to cope with a pandemic situation. It is supported by individual pandemic contingency plans for critical services such as refuse collection, burials and cremations and some environmental health functions. All Services also have more general business continuity plans. All of these plans have recently been reviewed and subjected to appropriate desk-top testing.

Information has also been issued to all staff and managers on swine flu, detailing how to minimise the spread of infection, sickness procedures, special leave arrangements, etc. Improved cleaning procedures have also been put in place.

Key Issues

The Department of Health is still planning for further more severe waves of this illness in the very near future and the Government has issued revised planning assumptions based on the estimated worst case situation, to enable authorities to plan for this eventuality. It is expected that there will be a peak period sometime in the next two months which will have an impact not only on the health service, but also on the business continuity of public services.

Antiviral drugs such as Tamiflu are being offered to those who have contracted the illness, but it is a matter of clinical discretion as to whether they are being prescribed in individual cases, although a number of high risk groups have been identified for early priority access to antiviral medicines.

In Northern Ireland, the responsibility for ensuring effective supplies of antiviral medicines rests with the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB). At present the drug is being dispensed via community pharmacists in the normal way. However, as part of the Board's contingency arrangements for a major second or third wave of the virus, it has asked district councils for support with the distribution of antiviral medicines during the peak period (likely to last for 2 – 3 weeks), should the normal methods of distribution be overwhelmed. In periods of higher demand, large scale access to antivirals may be required. When this critical stage is reached the Board may be required to quickly mobilise a number of additional Antiviral Collection Points (ACPs).

The Board has been working through the Local Government Emergency Management Group (LGEMG) to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between it and district councils to agree the support which might be called upon from councils in respect of ACPs. A copy of this MOU is provided in the Appendix, along with a covering letter. The MOU envisages that, where pharmacies are overwhelmed during a peak period, temporary ACPs will be set up in Council premises with the support of Council staff. A workshop has also been held for some key members of staff and a number of community and leisure centres have been identified as possible locations.

The Principal Solicitor in Legal Services has had sight of the MOU and is satisfied with the legal framework to enable the Council to perform this role and also the level of risk to the Council in terms of its role and the level of indemnity stated.

The MOU outlines the Council role as being to identify and provide appropriate facilities for the provision of ACPs. The Council will, where possible, identify staff to support the service and as their employer, manage any human resource elements. All costs to the Council associated with this work can be reclaimed from the Board.

One concern regarding this arrangement for Belfast will be the ability of the Council to provide the required numbers of staff for this purpose should there be high absence levels and a focus on the delivery of its own critical services. However the MOU allows for this, in that it states:

Councils will endeavour to provide agreed levels of service to HSCB in support of the distribution of anti-virals, but any support provided will be conditional upon the ability of the individual council to make staff available having regard to prevailing circumstances:

Council Officers will be meeting with the Board officials in the next few weeks to discuss in detail the arrangements for Belfast and the expectations in terms of buildings and staff.

Resource Implications

Human

Further training of staff will be needed. Communication is also ongoing with the Unions.

Financial

All costs will be recoverable from the HSCB. Additional funding has now been agreed by the Assembly for dealing with swine flu.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to authorise the Chief Executive to sign the MOU with the Health and Social Care Board.

Key to Abbreviations

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
HSCB: Health and Social care Board
LGEMG: Local Government Emergency Management Group
ACP: Antiviral Collection Point

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 - MOU and covering letter

Decision Tracking

The Head of Environmental Health will report back on any further developments with the MOU and will provide updates to Committee as required.

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Appendix 1

LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GROUP

7th October 2009

Dear Chief Executive

SWINE FLU – DISTRICT COUNCIL SUPPORT FOR ANTI-VIRAL DISTRIBUTION

A request was received in July 2009 from the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB), asking whether District Councils would consider providing assistance with the distribution of anti-virals to the public should the influenza pandemic grow to proportions that overwhelmed the capacity of community pharmacies.

Following communication with LGEMG and with agreement in principle from SOLACE, a planning process was initiated to establish the likely demand levels for such distribution and to then scope the needs in terms of facilities and staff to support the task.

Given the possible need for this support to be provided at an early date, a number of procedures were commenced in parallel. Provisional criteria for the selection and arrangement of suitable premises and for the staffing requirements of this activity were developed into planning documents for councils; and a draft Memorandum of Understanding was circulated via SOLACE to allow Chief executives to comment upon the proposals.

These planning assumptions were examined and tested in a training event held on the 9th September and following that event some changes have been introduced that provide for increased efficiency, economy and greater control of any risk factors.

To place the proposals for assistance into context and to provide a brief overview of the proposals as currently developed, the following paragraphs present a summary of current considerations and proposals:

- 1) Context.
 - a. Typically influenza epidemics/pandemics occur in 15 week waves during which numbers of cases increase to a peak in weeks 6, 7 and 8 and then fall away. HSCB will not request assistance from District Councils unless and until the numbers of new cases of influenza reach such proportions that community pharmacists are unable to cope. This is most likely to occur if sickness absence becomes a major factor in those businesses. It should

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be noted that such failures of capacity (and therefore requests for assistance) are most likely to be local in nature and transient, however planning for local government assistance is based upon an assumption of widespread failure within a council area so that the worst case scenario could be accommodated.

- b. The first response of HSCB will be to form clusters of community pharmacies so that staff can be re-allocated between pharmacies to cover sickness absence. Only when the capacity of such a cluster of pharmacies to maintain services is compromised would district councils be requested to provide assistance. This is likely to be only in the three peak weeks of the wave of influenza. At that point it is likely that the numbers of new cases of influenza in a typical District council area (population c. 50,000) could be in the order of 3500 per week and the need for district councils to provide community support and leadership, whilst coping with internal staff absences of between 8 and 12% at the peak, might drive consideration of re-allocation of staff to priority services.
- 2) Scale of Demand. Planning assumptions for the scale and extent of the pandemic have been revised downwards in recent weeks and the new figures, suggesting that 30% of the population may be infected and 1% admitted to hospital, are used to estimate numbers of cases and the resulting demand for anti-virals. The attached Excel spreadsheet provides details of the numbers of cases per week and per day expected in a district council area (population 54,000) over the fifteen week cycle and shows the consequent demand for anti-virals and the necessary capacity of any distribution regime. It is clear that at current planning levels most of the council areas in Northern Ireland could theoretically meet the distribution demand for their population with a single distribution centre providing a single queue. The geographical spread of population might however drive the provision of additional distribution points to reduce journey times for “flu friends”, although total case numbers suggests that community pharmacy clusters may continue to provide dispensing services in smaller population centres, leaving only major centres to be supported by local government.
 - 3) Staffing. On the assumption that a single full time distribution centre might be augmented by two part-time centres, the total staffing requirement (in a council of population 54,000) would be approximately 20 staff from local government and 8 staff from health professions. If the population is more concentrated and a single centre will suffice, the numbers would be halved. Discussions with HSCB have reached provisional agreement that health professionals will be provided to all distribution centres to undertake the dispensing and advice roles. This decision reduces concerns that local government staff may dispense the wrong dosage of anti-virals and also removes some of the concerns about the adequacy of indemnification and insurance.
 - 4) Memorandum of Understanding. The MOU previously circulated for comment has undergone some minor amendment in the light of the changed planning assumptions and due to developing knowledge from the training and test exercise. Additional matters under active discussion are the issues of:
 - i) Indemnification. The relevant section has been referred to Belfast Legal

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Services for advice on adequacy; In particular, it is clear that legislation has been amended to allow anti-virals to be dispensed by non-pharmacists, however the general view that health staff should be present to undertake the core dispensing function has gained wide acceptance.

- ii) Insurance. Advice is being sought from Council's insurers that cover will be provided for staff re-allocated to duties proposed. Initial feedback in other similar circumstances suggests this should not be a problem, but may be conditional upon adequate indemnification by HSCB.
 - iii) Trades Union views. Consultation with NIJC awaits final confirmation. Concerns would centre around training and health & safety issues which have been carefully considered in implementation plans.
 - iv) Cost recovery. HSCB have undertaken to reimburse councils for all costs incurred in the operation of centres. Templates will be developed to allow consistent recording of costs. A business case has been prepared and submitted by the HSCB Programme Board and LGEMG will keep councils informed on this important issue.
- 5) Planning and Preparation. To minimise nugatory activity, it is intended that initial planning, preparation and training should be aimed at reaching a stage of preparedness from which full capability to provide anti-viral distribution centres can be reached in a further period of 2 to 3 weeks. This will mean that prior-preparation can be limited to identification of demand, decisions on numbers and locations of distribution centres and some preliminary work to ensure suitability. At the same time staff volunteers may be identified, with some additions (to allow for sickness) and preliminary briefing sessions undertaken. Only when the number
- 6) of new influenza cases reach a level that suggests Northern Ireland is around week 3 of a pandemic wave will more detailed preparation commence.

Preparation for distribution centre operation and design has been undertaken and work to complete action cards and training materials is at an advanced stage.

At this point, to enable further planning to take place, it would be greatly appreciated if you would indicate whether, given satisfactory resolution of the key issues of indemnification, costs, insurance and trades union acceptance, you would be prepared to commit council resources to this provision of assistance to the community in the event of severe stress on health resources.

I will keep you fully informed of developments.

Anne Donaghy
Chair of LGEMG

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**Memorandum of Understanding between the Health and Social Care (HSC) Board
and Local Government District Councils in Northern Ireland**

September 2009

Draft

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- 2 Background
- 3 Circumstances of initiation
- 4 Role and Responsibility of HSC Board
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- 6 Communication
- 7 Resource Implications

Signatures of authorising officers

Annex

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1 Purpose

In times of national emergency such as Pandemic Flu there may be exceptional demands on health and social care services which may require co-operation and support from other public service organisations to deliver vital services to the community. This document describes the circumstances under which such support may be sought by the HSC Board from District Councils and addresses the management of such arrangements, the risks for both parties and the need for resources.

2 Background

There is a legislative provision which permits local government to offer support in to other organisations in emergencies. Section 105 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 allows for arrangements to be entered into for the supply of goods and services or the interchange of staff. A district council may make arrangements with another council, public body or government department, inter alia, for the provision by one party of support to another for any for administrative, professional or technical services.

There are pre-existing relationships between District Councils and Health and Social Care in the field of emergency planning including agreements for the provision of rest centres. This is helpful in building arrangements in preparation for a flu pandemic.

A flu pandemic (level 6) was declared by the World Health Organisation in June 2009 and countries throughout the world are activating plans to manage outbreaks as they emerge. The Health Service in Northern Ireland must gear up to ensure that all appropriate elements of care are in place in anticipation of the first and subsequent waves of pandemic flu cases. It is expected that with each wave, there will be strain placed upon all elements of the service. It is important therefore to consider contingencies and to have planned and appropriate resources identified in order to ensure continuity of service alongside the management of flu. The strategic context for the development of antiviral distribution arrangements is set out in the Annex.

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3 Circumstances of initiation

It is anticipated that there may be a large surge of demand on the health system in response to Pandemic Flu in Northern Ireland in November 2009. An important component of the health service response will be to ensure there is ready access to antiviral medicines. In periods of higher demand, large scale access to antivirals may be required. When this critical stage is reached the Board may be required to quickly mobilise a number of Antiviral Collection Points (ACPs).

It is a fundamental intent within this large scale mitigation strategy that the person with flu should stay at home and that antivirals are collected on their behalf from a designated local Antiviral Collection Point (ACP) by a 'Flu Friend'.

Antivirals will be issued from the ACP to Flu Friends, following assessment of the patient by the National Flu Service or a GP, on submission of an authorisation number which has been provided by the flu line or an authorisation form issued by a GP.

This stage of initiation will be introduced in a situation where normal supply mechanisms via community pharmacies can no longer meet the demand. The extent of this need will vary in each locality and will be informed by flu status reporting in each locality.

4 Role and Responsibility of HSC Board

The Board is responsible for ensuring the appropriate availability of antiviral medicines for the population of Northern Ireland. It will provide guidance on the development of ACPs, deliver training, ensure access to a stock management system, provide daily professional support in the management of ACPs. It will ensure appropriate delivery of stock. It will provide advice and training on infection control and the necessary equipment required for personal protection as appropriate. All public information including centre signage will be provided by the HSC Board.

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The Board will liaise closely with Councils in the initial set-up of ACPs and in standing down these venues. Communication is set out in section below.

The Board will indemnify the Councils against any claim made by a Third Party for damages for any damage, loss, injury (including death) arising out of any act or omission in relation to any activities or obligations covered by this agreement, subject to the Councils accepting liability for any acts or omissions of their employees, servants or agents, which may give rise to such claims.

5 Role and Responsibility of Councils

The Council will identify and provide appropriate facilities for the provision of the service. It will, where possible, identify council staff to support the service and as their employer manage any human resource elements including liabilities.

Councils will endeavour to provide agreed levels of service to HSCB in support of the distribution of anti-virals, but any support provided will be conditional upon the ability of the individual council to make staff available having regard to prevailing circumstances.

6 Communication

District councils and the HSCB local offices will nominate lead officers so that communication can be initiated promptly to:

- Implement the antiviral distribution plan locally
- Ensure there is day to day supervision and management
- Manage any operational aspects
- Take decision to stand down

7 Resource Implications

It is anticipated that there will be resource implications should District Council facilities and staff be required to support the implementation of any emergency response

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situation. Resources are currently being sought and the HSCB is awaiting interdepartmental approval. Until the Executive approves funding for Pandemic Flu, the HSCB cannot yet stand over the resource envelope required.

The HSCB will reimburse Councils in respect of the costs of any staff deployed to provide support to the Antiviral Collection Points and any ancillary costs associated with the provision of this service. Both parties will ensure that their respective payments and receipts are recorded and accounted for under agreed relevant organisational procedures.

8 Effective Date

This Agreement will come into effect on ----- and will be subject to review as appropriate on 31st March 2010 and thereafter annually.

Signed and Dated

_____ Chief Executive _____ Council

_____ Mr John Compton, Chief Executive, HSCB

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Strategic Context

The DHSSPS Guidance “***Northern Ireland Contingency Plan For Health Response For An Influenza Pandemic November 2008***” provides a policy steer for the organisation of the Health and Social Care services.

Within this policy it notes that a ‘single wave’ pandemic profile with a sharp peak provides the most prudent basis for planning as that would put a greater strain on services than a lower level but more sustained wave or the ‘first wave’ of a multi-wave pandemic. However, second or subsequent waves have occurred in some previous pandemics, weeks or months after the first. While the first priority at the end of the first wave will be to further develop recovery plans and gradually restore supplies, services and activities depleted or curtailed during the pandemic, plans must assume that some regrouping may be necessary in anticipation of a future wave.

Health plans should assume that heightened monitoring and surveillance will be required for some time beyond the first wave and that all plans require review and revision in the light of lessons learnt.

In particular, the likelihood of ongoing constraints on supplies and services and continuing pressures on health and social care services, combined with the loss of key staff, should be taken into account.

Principles underlying planning and response

The DHSSPS Guidance “***Northern Ireland Contingency Plan For Health Response For An Influenza Pandemic November 2008***” states that health and social care organisations should apply the following general principles to their planning and response:

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- Response arrangements should be based on strengthening and supplementing normal delivery mechanisms as far as practicable
- Interventions will be applied where they achieve maximum health benefit, but may also be required to help maintain essential services - political decisions will be necessary if there is a conflict of interest
- Plans should be developed on an integrated multi-agency basis with risk pooling and cross cover between all organisations
- Plans should encourage pan organisational working, seeking to mobilise the capacity and skills of all public and private sector health care staff (including students and those who are retired), contractors and volunteers
- Although visiting all cases may not be possible, primary care plans should be based on avoiding influenza patients leaving home as far as possible
- Initial telephone based assessment is likely to be necessary to meet demand
- Primary care response strategies should focus the capacity and clinical skills available primarily on treating those suffering with the complications of influenza or requiring other essential clinical care and assessing young children or patients in groups identified as being at particular risk.
- Antiviral medicines should initially be available to all patients who have been symptomatic for less than 48 hours within 12-24 hours of reporting symptoms
- Response measures should maintain public confidence and 'feel fair'
- Treatment and admission criteria should remain clinically based and hospital admission criteria should be applied in a transparent, consistent and equitable way that utilises the capacity available for the seriously ill most likely to benefit.
- Plans should recognise the need to respond to psychosocial issues and concerns such as anxiety, grief and distress and for sympathetic arrangements to manage additional fatalities.



Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Consultation response to the DETI Bioenergy Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2009 - 2014. |
| Date: | 23 rd October 2009 |
| Reporting Officer: | Mr. William Francey, Director Health and Environmental Services (ext. 3260). |
| Contact Officer: | Alastair Curran, Sustainable Development Manager (ext. 3309) |

Relevant Background Information

Within Northern Ireland, the government Department with principal responsibility for energy generation is the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI). Commensurate with its renewable energy policies, DETI has established a range of generating targets including 12% of Northern Ireland electricity to be generated from indigenous renewable sources by 2012. DETI has indicated that this target can be met by Northern Ireland's developing onshore wind sector but has recommended also that other forms of renewable energy should be encouraged to develop in parallel. Consequently, DETI has published a Bioenergy Action Plan for Northern Ireland covering the period 2009-2014 for consultation, which draws upon contributions from a range of government Departments. The Bioenergy Action Plan is also underpinned by findings and recommendations of an AEA Energy and Environment study into the current and future potential of bioenergy within Northern Ireland.

Key Issues.

DETI has indicated that the overall aim of the five-year action plan is to increase the deployment of bioenergy, with particular emphasis on heat and electricity, which will help to secure Northern Ireland's energy supply, deliver carbon emission reductions, generate economic and environmental benefits and contribute to our renewable energy targets. Accordingly, the plan proposes four strategic objectives:-

- to raise awareness and understanding of the benefits and opportunities of bioenergy.
- to create a policy and regulatory framework to support bioenergy development
- to encourage investment in the bioenergy supply chain, and
- to continue to undertake research into bioenergy.

Air Quality.

DETI's recognition that biomass fuels can have a detrimental impact upon air quality and in particular, ambient concentrations of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀, PM_{2.5}) in urban locations is an important issue for Council. DETI has suggested that since much of Northern Ireland can be regarded as rural or semi-rural, this will not be a significant problem. Nonetheless, DETI has indicated that it will take account of DEFRA research, which shows that impacts of biomass on air quality can be reduced to a manageable level to avoid breaches of European and national air quality legislation. DETI has also indicated that in collaboration with DoENI, it may seek to amend the Clean Air Order to provide greater consistency between current air quality objectives and biomass combustion in order to move towards an approvals system, which removes the need for individual testing of boilers.

It is considered that DETI comments regarding the potential impact of biomass installations do not adequately differentiate between the potential cumulative impact of numerous small-scale biomass installations and larger plants that may be subject to control under the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003, and whose air quality emissions are consequently easier to control. It is suggested therefore, that larger and cleaner installations should represent the preferred approach to biomass energy in urban locations or where Air Quality Management Areas have been declared.

In relation to Air Quality Management Areas, Part III of the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 places a statutory duty upon local authorities to assess periodically air quality within their districts against a series of national and European health-based standards. Where a local authority determines that an air quality standard is likely to be exceeded in the compliance year, then the authority must designate an Air Quality Management Area and develop an action plan in collaboration with other relevant authorities.

Key Issues Contd.

In 2006, Belfast City Council designated four regions of the city as Air Quality Management Areas for a combination of NO₂ and PM₁₀, principally associated with road transport. The Council subsequently developed an Air Quality Action Plan in collaboration with the Department for Regional Development Roads Service and Translink. It is considered that an increase in particulate or nitrogen dioxide emissions from biomass installations could materially impact upon implementation of this Action Plan and the city's ability to achieve the nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter air quality standards. Moreover, the wide scale deployment of biomass, as proposed via the DETI Bioenergy Action Plan, would have to be carefully managed within Belfast to avoid the need to declare further Air Quality Management Areas.

Resource ImplicationsFinancial

N/A

Human Resources

N/A

Asset and Other Implications

N/A

Recommendations

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is invited to endorse the attached consultation response in respect of the draft DETI Bioenergy Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2009 – 2014 and to recommend that it be submitted to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment by 30th October 2009. At the time of submission, DETI will be advised that comments are subject to Council ratification at its meeting of 2nd November 2009.

Key to Abbreviations

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| DEFRA - | Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. |
| DETI - | Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment. |
| DoENI - | Department of Environment. |
| PM ₁₀ - | particles with an aerodynamic diameter smaller than or equal to 10 micrometers. |
| PM _{2.5} - | particles with an aerodynamic diameter smaller than or equal to 2.5 micrometers |

Documents Attached

Appendix A - Belfast City Council response to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment consultation on the Bioenergy Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2009 - 2014.

Belfast City Council response to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment consultation on the Bioenergy Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2009 - 2014.

Having reviewed the draft Bioenergy Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2009 – 2014, Belfast Council submits the following comments in response.

Air Quality Considerations.

Strategic objective 2 (page 18) of the draft Bioenergy Action Plan states that there is an intention “to create a supportive and encouraging policy and regulatory framework within which the bioenergy sector can develop and thrive”.

In addition, paragraph 16 of this section refers to air quality issues stating, “It is important to ensure that increased use of biofuels to generate energy does not have a detrimental impact on air quality.” Belfast City Council would concur fully with this statement.

In the same paragraph however, the text states “Given that much of Northern Ireland could be described as rural or semi-rural, it is not considered that this issue would be of a similar scale as potentially in other parts of the UK”. Belfast City Council considers this statement to be a generalisation and that the installation of biomass appliances in urban locations of Northern Ireland, of which Belfast would be the largest, should be carefully controlled.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has commissioned a UK-wide study of the potential air quality impacts of a major expansion of biomass heating. There are numerous ‘Key Messages’ from this research, which are pertinent to the development of a Bioenergy Action Plan for Northern Ireland. These are summarised as follows:-

- To meet its 2020 renewable energy targets, the United Kingdom needs to increase substantially the amount of heat generated and biomass heat is one of the key technologies.
- The potential conflicts between these goals and air quality can be avoided through the use of high quality low emission plant. The replacement of old coal and oil fired plant with high quality wood-fired plant, located off the gas grid and away from densely populated urban areas may actually benefit air quality.
- In urban areas or where an Air Quality Management Area has been declared, Defra would expect biomass heat deployment to be less common and larger (and therefore cleaner) biomass plant to be more prevalent.
- Encouraging the use of larger plant, for example in conjunction with the development of heat networks, will result in a system where air quality emissions are easier to control than from a larger number of small plant.

Defra, whilst supportive of the need to employ biomass heating techniques, has raised concerns regarding the possibility of making air quality worse in certain areas. Indeed, Defra has accepted that implementation of the abovementioned ‘Key Messages’ will not be entirely straightforward.

Specific air quality issues of concern.

Emission levels.

In common with other combustion plant, the combustion of biomass can impact upon air quality in a variety of ways. Emission levels of pollutants such as particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), carbon monoxide (CO) and sulphur dioxide (SO₂) depend upon the completeness of the combustion process. The temperature in conventional biomass combustion is generally insufficient to oxidise atmospheric nitrogen and therefore, nitrogen oxides (NO_x) are almost exclusively formed from the fuel. Accordingly, emission levels of nitrogen oxides are heavily dependent on the chemical composition of individual fuels, as are emissions of oxides of sulphur. Consequently, overall emissions are determined by the design of the combustion plant, the chemical and physical qualities of the fuel and the presence of emissions abatement equipment.

Approvals and consent.

In addition to meeting regulatory requirements, all but the smallest biomass installations will require planning consent. From an air quality management perspective, it is considered that a key component of the planning assessment process should involve an appropriate air quality impact assessment.

Planning applications containing a biomass boiler should follow a risk-based approach and it is recommended that the assessment should consider:

- Geography – what is the planned location of the biomass boiler, and could it potentially negatively affect any areas of poor air quality?
- Fuel substitution / alternatives – will the biomass boiler be displacing a boiler running on a different fuel, and if so what fuel? If the development containing the boiler is on a new site, what other fuels might be available and what would be their comparative effect on air quality?
- The likely emissions performance of the boiler.
- The type of biomass fuel that the boiler will be using.

If the assessment suggests that the biomass boiler may pose a risk to air quality, then detailed information about the biomass boiler will be required which may include the need for an atmospheric dispersion modelling study to quantify the spatial extent of any air quality impacts. Atmospheric dispersion modelling studies typically require significant technical air quality skills.

Boilers, fuel standards and certification.

The emissions performance of a biomass boiler depends substantially on its design and the nature of the fuel used. Most boilers are designed to use fuels of a specific type and quality, and deviation from this fuel type generally leads to poor combustion efficiency and increased emissions of ambient air pollutants.

It is considered that current European Union and United Kingdom emission standards for biomass boilers are largely inadequate as tools for setting demanding air quality conditions, as they typically do not prescribe directly NO_x, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} emission levels. Emission standards and eco labels have been developed by other European countries however, these are difficult to transpose to the United Kingdom owing to the wide range of approaches to testing and emissions measurement.

Wood fuels are available in a variety of different forms and qualities and the performance of a biomass system is strongly dependent upon on the use of properly specified fuels. To aid the matching of biomass systems with the correct fuel supply, fuel standards have been introduced by several European countries. In the absence of United Kingdom specific standards, European standards are being adopted by some UK suppliers. In order to harmonise United Kingdom biomass fuels, it is recommended that UK specific standards should be developed.

Cumulative impacts.

Assessments of potential cumulative air quality impacts of multiple biomass installations will become increasingly important as the number of biomass installations increases over coming years. Whilst a single biomass boiler is unlikely to affect air quality outside its immediate vicinity, the cumulative impact of a number of biomass installations could potentially lead to localised air quality standards exceedences and also raise background pollutant levels. Steps should be taken therefore to ensure that biomass deployment is monitored and that screening assessments flag developing air quality issues. This is considered particularly important in urban locations where smaller biomass systems including stoves, room heaters and boilers may be installed in domestic premises. It is recommended therefore, that DETI considers working with local authority Building Control Services to monitor the prevalence of biomass appliances with a view to establishing installation trends.

Maintenance.

Biomass boilers, flue stacks and emission abatement equipment need regular maintenance to ensure that combustion efficiency is kept to a maximum and emissions are minimised. Many countries have already introduced a requirement for regular compulsory maintenance checks and it is recommended that similar provisions be considered for the Northern Ireland.