

# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 17th June, 2011

## MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairman); and  
Aldermen Browne, M. Campbell, Crozier, R. Newton;  
Councillors Convery, Garrett, Haire, Hanna, Hendron,  
Jones, Lavery, Mallon, Maskey, McKee, Mac Giolla Mhín  
and Newton.

In attendance: Mr. P. McNaney, Chief Executive;  
Mr. C. Quigley, Assistant Chief Executive;  
Mrs. J. Thompson, Director of Finance and Resources;  
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Attwood and Ó Muilleoir.

### Recruitment of Head of Information Services Belfast

The Committee considered further the minute of the meeting of 15th April which, at the request of Alderman Browne, had been taken back to the Committee for further consideration. A copy of the minute in this regard is set out hereunder:

#### **“Recruitment of Head of Information Services Belfast**

*The Committee was advised that the current Head of Information Services Belfast, Rose Crozier, had been successful in her application for the post of Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure and would take up post with effect from Monday, 18th April, 2011. It was pointed out that the post of Head of Information Services Belfast was currently being filled on a temporary basis by the two IS Portfolio Managers who were jointly acting up to the position. Consequently, arrangements now needed to be put in place to recruit a replacement post holder on a permanent basis.*

*The Committee was advised that the appointment for the Head of Information Services Belfast would be made in accordance with the Council's normal recruitment selection procedure. In accordance with Local Government Staff Commission Guidance, the selection panel should comprise the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman (or their nominees) and another Member of the Committee from a Political Party not represented by the Chairman or the Deputy Chairman, together with the Director of Finance and Resources and another Chief Officer.*

*The entire panel needed to be representative of gender and community background, with all panel members having attended recent training on the Council's recruitment and selection procedures. An observer from the Local Government Staff Commission and a professional assessor might also be in attendance but would have no voting rights.*

*The Committee agreed that:*

- (i) the post of Head of Information Services Belfast be recruited on a permanent basis through external advertisement and public competition;*
- (ii) the selection panel be comprised following the Annual Meeting of the Council, which was scheduled to be held on 26th May, 2011, with the recruitment and selection schedule developed as soon as possible; and*
- (iii) the selection panel be given delegated authority to offer the post to the recommended candidate with the outcome being reported back to the Committee for noting only."*

The Committee agreed to affirm its decisions of 15th April and that the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman and Councillor Hendron (or their nominees) be appointed to the Selection Panel.

### **Performance Management and Corporate Plan**

#### **Corporate Plan 2011-12**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 3rd June, it had considered a report in relation to the role of the Corporate Plan in setting priorities and allocating resources in the Council and the role of the Committee in leading the Corporate Planning process. The Committee had been advised that the Council's previous Corporate Plan had covered the period 2008-2011 and that over the previous year the Committee had worked with all Members of the Council to prepare a draft update of the Plan for 2011/12. The update had been produced to ensure that there would be continuity in terms of the Council's overall direction, whilst the new Committee considered future priorities. The updated work had been integrated with the development of the Council's budget for 2011/12, which had been agreed by the Committee in February, 2011.

The Chief Executive reported that an interim Corporate Plan, which set out the current position and which had been circulated for the information of the Members, had built upon the information which had been presented to the Committee at its previous meeting. The document outlined:

- How the interim plan had emerged and the information which had informed its development;
- Information about the Council and the vital services which the Council provided on a day-to-day basis; and

- The Council's current key themes and indicative corporate level projects and performance indicators.

He pointed out that the Committee would be considering later in the meeting separate reports on the Departmental Plans of the Chief Executive's, Finance and Resources and Property and Projects Departments and also a report on the thematic plans and that the Corporate Plan would set the context for all those plans for the year ahead.

He explained that the key issue for Members now was to consider and shape the future Corporate Plan and begin that process as early as possible. Therefore, it was proposed that the review of the current Corporate Plan and the development of priorities and projects for the new Corporate Plan should commence in August/September through a series of party briefings and facilitated workshops for Members. The timetable for the development of the new Plan would then become intrinsically linked with the timetable for the development of the Council's medium-term financial plan and the setting of the rate for 2012/13.

The Chief Executive explained further that attendance at the workshops would allow Members to consider all of the issues which would be likely to impact upon the Council's future strategic direction and would identify the key priorities for the future in terms of the local economy, the environment and supporting local people and communities. Members would consider those key projects, both revenue and capital, which they wanted to make happen in the City. He pointed out that Members had already expressed a desire to "place-shape" and ensure more local investment and had expressed also the need for the Council to support job creation. In the months ahead, Members would be supported in taking an evidence-based approach to creating a strategy which delivered on those key issues, one which could be communicated clearly, was deliverable and for which officers could be held to account.

The Committee noted the contents of the draft interim Corporate Plan 2011/12 and agreed that party briefings and workshops be scheduled during June and August respectively in order to review the current Corporate Plan and establish priorities for the new Plan.

### **Departmental Plans**

The Committee approved the Departmental Plans for the Finance and Resources, Property and Projects and Chief Executive's Department. A copy of the key achievements for 2010/11 and the key actions and performance indicators for 2011/12 as detailed in the Plans for each of the Departments is set out hereunder:

### Finance and Resources

#### **“6.0 Key achievements 2010-11**

##### **6.1 Better Leadership**

###### **Key achievements**

- An additional £2.8m financing has been secured for the Capital Programme.
- A capacity building plan for elected Members, senior managers, managers and officers was developed.
- A Member Development Steering Group was established to ensure the development and implementation of the Member Development Strategy.
- Training sessions were delivered to Members on the role of the Council and elected Members, strategic planning, performance management, finance and rate setting.

##### **6.2 Better care for Belfast’s environment**

###### **Key achievements**

- Servers numbers have been reduced which has already led to a reduction in energy costs of £20000 in ISB.
- A print management strategy has been developed with targets to reduce the number of printers and the volume of colour printing.
- Colour printing has been reduced from 67% to 33%.

##### **6.3 Better opportunities for success across the city**

###### **Key achievements**

We have continued to work with Land and Property Service to implement the Memorandum of Understanding. A suite of performance measures has been developed and a performance reporting framework put in place including benchmarking arrangements.

##### **6.4 Better services - listening and delivering**

###### **Key achievements**

- 27 online forms have been added to the website to help improve access to our services for our customers. These include;

- A range of forms for Belfast Castle and Malone House
- Applications for various licences (e.g. Entertainment, Street Trading)
- Bin ordering Form
- Online burials records search
- Timeframe for creditor payments has improved from 28 days in April 2010 to an average of 22 days during 2010/11.

**6.5 Better value for money - an organisation fit to lead and serve**

**Key achievements**

**- Corporate Human Resource Management**

- A new attendance policy has been implemented with compliance reports reviewed on an ongoing basis by HR and the Council departments. The Council is on track to meet its sickness absence target.
- The corporate approach to personal development planning was agreed with roll-out planned from April 2011.
- The corporate IIP mock assessment was undertaken in October 2010 and a number of next steps were agreed around developing a People Improvement Framework and Plan. It is intended that the Council will work towards seeking corporate accreditation by April 2012.
- Monitoring and reporting on staff numbers, overtime and agency costs have taken place throughout the year. A new reporting framework is currently being developed with implementation planned from quarter one 2011/12.
- All outstanding single status issues have been completed including:
- Basic Grade Split Scale 2/3 removal, review of essential car users, a revised local arrangement for Tramp and Travel.

**- Corporate Financial Planning**

- Cash savings of £2.9m have been identified and captured for 2011/12 against an original target of £1.7m.
- The council agreed a 2.95% district rate increase despite the late notification from LPS of a £3.5m claw back in 2010/11 and a £2.5m fall in the EPP for 2011/12.
- A review of internal trading was completed resulting in new governance arrangements for a number of key services including Facilities Management and ISB.
- A new suite of budget reports have been developed and are reported quarterly to all Committees. The reports include year to date and forecast information on the revenue budget, and up to date figures on the capital programme, reserves, debtors and creditors.

- Financial training for Members was carried out.
- Improvements were made to help further integrate financial and corporate planning with draft revenue estimates presented to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee together with a summary of the priority actions from the Corporate and Departmental Plans for 2011/12.

**- Corporate Information Management**

- New IT governance arrangements have been put in place with a centralised ICT budget created. A first draft of the Information asset register has also been created to be made accessible by end of March 2011.
- Council telephony services have been improved and rationalised with the implementation of single bills for all major telephony suppliers.
- Implementation of mobile technology. Parks inspectors are using mobile devices to carry out risk assessments on a daily.
- Increased use of geo-spatial (GIS) information. H&ES are playing a key role in an Inter Agency project (Buchanan project) building up GIS information to provide analysis on hotspot areas of anti-social behaviour around the city.
- A VFM review of ISB services has been undertaken.

**- Corporate Policy, Planning & Performance**

- The cascade of our performance management process, known as the VCM, was successfully completed for the 2010-11 period with the development of 20 service or departmental level plans, with actions and indicators, all aligned to the delivery of the corporate objectives.
- Performance reports have been developed for all services and departments to support regular performance management and monitoring of key tasks and indicators.
- Training on the performance management system has been rolled out across the Council.

**- Corporate Governance and Risk**

- Quarterly risk reporting has been enhanced and Directors now complete signed assurance statements on a quarterly basis. These are incorporated into a quarterly risk report which is reported to COMT, the Assurance Board and Audit Panel.
- Fraud and Governance Awareness training in 2010/11 has been delivered to a range of services involving approximately 250 officers.

- A new process for monitoring audit recommendations was implemented during 2010/11 with the first report being issued to the Audit Panel in September 2010
- Business Continuity Management policy reviewed and updated and all critical services' plans and strategies were updated. Pandemic plans currently being updated by services.
- Each Council property was assigned a desk top rating by the H&S Unit (high, medium or low) based on occupancy numbers and activities carried out within them. The inspection/audit of high risk/ medium risk properties will be completed in 2010/11.

7.0 **Key actions for 2011-12**

7.1 **Better services - listening and delivering**

**Key Actions**

- Expand range of e-enabled customer services including on line booking for leisure facilities and purchase of dog licenses and on line live streaming of council meetings
- Commence the implementation of the Customer Focus Strategy including improving customer access and handling of customer information
- Develop and implement the corporate efficiency programme (including the contribution from the Finance and Resources Department) for 2012/13
- Develop and implement a value for money and performance framework including:
  - VfM performance indicators for all services
  - Review and revise the Council's approach to business transformation and service delivery.
- Assist in the implementation of the following VFM Reviews
  - Building Maintenance
  - Fleet Management
  - Procurement

7.2 **Better value for money - an organisation fit to lead and serve**

**Key Actions**

**Corporate Financial Planning**

- Develop and implement a resourcing strategy
- Enhance the rates base through tackling issues such as vacant office accommodation and business premises

- Manage and report on relevant PIs to ensure the implementation of Belfast Land and Property Services Memorandum of Understanding
- Establish a programme of work around the development of financial management information including improving the financial reporting process
- Develop a medium term financial plan including a Capital Financing Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy in line with the implementation of a Finance Bill
- Implement a financial improvement programme in relation to debtors, creditors, payroll and treasury management

#### **Corporate Information Management**

- Improve information management and governance including creating a catalogue of information held in electronic form
- Deploy Windows 7 and Office 2007 across the council

#### **Corporate Policy, Planning & Performance**

- Implement the Performance Management infrastructure including:
  - Reporting and analysis of key corporate performance information and;
  - Supporting departments in monitoring and reporting departmental performance information

#### **Corporate Governance and Risk**

- Implement a Council wide Health and Safety Assurance Framework including following up recommendations from inspections and expanding the reporting framework for staff and councillors
- Chief Officers to complete and sign off quarterly assurance statements to support quarterly reporting on the management of key risks to COMT, Assurance Board and Audit Panel.

#### **8.0 Key performance indicators 2011-12**

The Department has developed the following set indicators for collection, monitoring and reporting through the 2011-12 financial year. These indicators will be monitored frequently at departmental level and will be included in the departmental reports to committee.



8.1 Better services - listening and delivering

	Annual Target
Actual variance between actual efficiencies versus target for 2011/12	0
Number of transactional based activities which are e-enabled	TBA
Average time taken to resolve operational calls reported to the ISB Service Desk	2.25 Days
Customer Satisfaction with Service Desk response	90%

8.2 Better value for money - an organisation fit to lead and serve

Corporate Human Resources

	Annual Target
Average number of working days per employee lost due to absence (measured against agreed targets)	7.44
Variance between actual direct employee costs and budget	0
Variance between actual Staff Number and agreed establishment	0

Corporate Financial Planning

	Annual Target
% Variance between net expenditure and budget	+ 1 / -3%
% Variance between planned net expenditure and forecasted net expenditure	+ 1 / -3%
% Variance between planned capital expenditure and planned forecasted expenditure for the current year	+ 1 / -3%
% Variation between forecast outturn at period 6 and actual outturn at period 12	+ 1 / -1%
% Debt less than 90 days old	65%
% Creditors paid within 30 days	75%

**Corporate Information Management**

	Annual Target
% Time key systems are available uptime	99%

**Corporate Policy, Planning & Performance**

	Annual Target
% PIs with valid data collected and reported upon	85%
% PIs on target	TBA *

(\*Target to be confirmed at year end)

**Corporate Governance and Risk**

	Annual Target
% Agreed audit recommendations implemented	80%
% AGRS plan completed annually	70%
Reduce the number of workplace accidents	Reduce by 5%
Reduce the number of RIDDOR accidents	Reduce by 5%
% Agreed Health and Safety recommendations implemented	80%
% Health and Safety plan completed annually	70%
% Critical service business continuity plans tested annually	100%

9.0

**Financial Information**

	Net Expenditure 2010/11	Net Estimated Expenditure 2011/12
Human Resources *	2,061,612	--
Finance, Performance Management & Efficiency	2,786,965	2,712,478
ISB	5,181,365	5,040,714

	Net Expenditure 2010/11	Net Estimated Expenditure 2011/12
Audit	1,094,069	1,130,113
Governance and Risk Services and Health and Safety		
Project & Corporate Systems	348,639	294,899
Pensions	1,900,000	1,900,000
Directorate	426,585	289,261
Total	13,799,235	11,367,436

\* Please note that the Human Resources function moves from the Finance & Resources Department to the Chief Executive's Department in July 2011, resulting in a drop in the departmental net expenditure.

#### 10.0 Monitoring and review arrangements

The Council has introduced an integrated performance management system that enables regular, up to date reporting to be undertaken at corporate, departmental and service levels.

Key performance indicators (PIs) have been identified for all services within the Finance and Resources Department and are contained in sections 7.0 and 8.0 of this document. These actions and PIs will be reviewed by the Departmental Management Team along with progress on key tasks every quarter and a full update on progress will be reported to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee twice yearly.

A number of these PIs and projects have been identified as corporately significant and are contained in the Corporate Plan. They will be reported on a quarterly basis to COMT to ensure ongoing management of the key priorities.

#### Notes:

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee oversees the decisions taken at the other five committees. These decisions are then ratified at full council each month.

Chief Officers Management Team (COMT) meets on a weekly basis. The Director of Finance and Resources attends COMT to report on the work of the department in key areas such as budget monitoring and rate setting. The Finance and Resources Department underpins the work of the Council and provides a challenge for the organisation on key financial issues.

The Department Management Team (DMT) meets on a monthly basis to discuss work planning, performance, key projects, staffing issues, and workload.”

### Property and Projects Department

#### “7.0 Key Achievements 2010/2011

##### 7.1 City Leadership

#### Key achievements

#### City Investment Strategy

- Represented the Council in it’s commitment of £16million under the City Investment Fund (CIF), profiled up until 2012-2013, towards four iconic projects including the Connswater Community Greenway, Titanic Signature Project; The MAC; and the Lyric Theatre.
- Represented the Council in helping to leverage in excess of £160million investment into the city
- Initiated discussions with central government departments, the Strategic Investment Board and Derry City Council to explore both the potential scope to establish a City Investment Framework and alternative forms of funding models for capital investment in the City.
- Project managed £5,511,352 worth of capital spend across the Council
- 100% Capital projects undertaken using Programme, Portfolio & Project Management methodologies, an OGC standard methodology for managing projects

#### Local Government Modernisation

- Established necessary governance, accountability and project management arrangements to oversee; manage and monitor the effective implementation of the RPA process within the Council
- Secured £114k annual budget for 2010/ 11 (RPA transitional funding) from the DoE

- Co-ordinated the completion and submission of corporate responses to five RPA related draft legislative proposals
- Secured formal Council representation (both Member and officer) on and inputted into the work of established external RPA governance and implementation structures.

## 7.2 Better Care for Belfast's Environment

### Key achievements

- Delivery of Green Procurement Training across the Council, promoting environmentally sustainable purchasing
- Completion of the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC) registration process and the identification of a planned programme of energy work to reduce energy usage and CO2 emission across the council.

## 7.3 Better Services

### Key achievements

- Completion of a comprehensive programme of on-site condition surveys (assessing the maintenance requirements of Council properties) with the development of a comprehensive, prioritised planned maintenance schedule of work for all BCC sites
- Completion of relocation programme which involved 30 relocation exercises which affected approximately 1,200 staff
- The Making A Difference Awards was finalist in the Chartered Institute of Public Relations PRIDE awards in the Best Event Category
- Re-certification of ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 in Procurement and Fleet Management Units
- Re-certification of ISO 18000 in Fleet Management Unit
- Full implementation of Gate Review process on all capital expenditure projects.
- Setting up of Strategic Projects Oversight Board (SPOB) with clear governance roles and responsibilities for project teams.

## 7.4 Better Value for Money – An Organisation Fit to Lead and Serve

### Human Resources

- Implemented the Investors In People Framework

- Personal Development Plans for the majority of Property and Projects staff
- Implemented a local agreement with trade unions in respect of hours, shifts and overtime for cleaning staff in public conveniences

#### Finance

- Rental Income of £5,128,571 from the Councils estate (for example Balmoral and Duncrue Industrial Estate) which accounts for approximately 4.1% of the rates income of Belfast City Council. This income represents a 5.4% increase from the preceding year 2009/10
- E-Auction (a 'reverse' auction where sellers bid to provide goods or services and the price drops as sellers compete to meet the buyers requirements) for Employment Agency Service Framework with saving of £64,000
- Additional Savings of £83,895 for Stationery Framework participants – supplying of stationery to the Council.
- Introduction of E-Tendering, an online tendering process.
- Internal procurement review of tenders for catering supplies, window cleaning etc
- Managed the annual revaluation of 359 Council assets (valued at £570m) for capital accounting purposes.
- Net profit of £1.6 million from the sale of electricity at North Foreshore site
- Capital Receipts of £3.675 million from the sale of surplus Council land

#### Information Management

- Computerised project management system (P2 Net) implemented and developed to include GIS information.
- Developed a secure document management environment for Facilities Management.

#### Assets

- Rationalisation of temporary city centre office accommodation leases.
- Reduction in occupational costs for Adelaide Exchange and Lanyon Place by renegotiating lease agreements.
- Review of assets progressed to take forward disposal, redevelopment or re-use options for a number of Council land & property assets. Planning appraisals, site contamination reports & title reports obtained in respect of a number of assets.

- Disposals completed in respect of lands at Beechmount, Glen Road, Antrim Road, Crescent Open Space, Strathearn, Barnett's Demesne, Duncrue (adjacent to M2). Total capital receipt of £3.675m which will go towards reinvestment in the city (as outlined above).
- Marketing of sites at Clara Street, Primrose Street & Seapark Drive.
- Disposal of site at Templemore agreed to Habitat for Humanity.
- Ongoing negotiations in respect of lands at Loughside; Glen Road & Colin Glen.
- Ongoing lease management of circa 170 leases. Total income of approximately £5.13M per annum (as outlined above).
- Land acquisition of 50 sites for Connswater Community Greenway (CCG). Project on target for completion of all 50 sites.
- Collaborative working with external partners in respect of a number of projects including Glen 10, CCG, Beechmount, Strathearn etc.
- Phase 1 of the Asset Management Strategy completed.
- Review undertaken of all miscellaneous leased assets & leased property database put in place.
- New form of lease agreed for industrial estates with a view to sustaining longer term rental growth.
- New long term lease agreed in respect of land within Balmoral Industrial Estate.
- Ongoing management of the corporate landbank & the Council's investment properties at Balmoral, Duncrue and the Gasworks.
- Ongoing maintenance and updating of the Councils land & property ownership records.
- Implemented access control measures for Ormeau Avenue car park.

#### 8.0 Key actions for 2011/12

#### 8.1 Better Leadership

A key role for the Property & Projects Department will be to help to establish the Council's place shaping role through better use of the city's assets. The Department will also seek to ensure that the Council is prepared to respond to and take advantage of the out workings of the RPA.

### Key actions

- Lead on the corporate development of a comprehensive future city investment plan.
- Implement the City Investment Framework.
- Develop the North Foreshore.
- Represent Belfast City Council's interest in the project delivery of the Connswater Community Greenway.
- Deliver the agreed capital projects during 2011-12 in line with BCC project management standards and policies.
- Prioritise proposed new capital projects for consideration by SP&R
- Review the use and management of the City Hall.
- Deliver collaborative opportunities which maximises value for money through participation in the Local Government led 'Improvement, Collaboration and Efficiency' (ICE) programme.
- Develop and deliver area based pilots which integrates proposed new transferring functions to local government at a local level.

## 8.2 Better Environment

The Project Management, Estates and Facilities Management sections within the Department will help to protect the city's natural and built heritage by promoting environmentally friendly design, sustainable site usage and the preservation of old buildings.

### Key actions

- Develop a policy position on contaminated land within Belfast.
- Develop a 3D model of Belfast in conjunction with the University of Ulster
- Conduct energy audits of selected council properties and secure funding for related energy projects.
- Provide project and contract management for Environmental Improvement Scheme / Street Scape.

## 8.3 Better Value for Money – An Organisation Fit to Lead and Serve

### Human Resources

Undertake reviews of Business Support, Procurement Unit and the Property Maintenance Unit.



### Finance

- Efficiency Saving
- Develop Strategic Plan for Procurement Spend and Efficiency.
- Progress potential for income stream to the Council via utilisation of the Council's land and buildings for advertising.
- VFM review of the Council's Fleet Provision.
- Manage the capital programme in line with the capital financing strategy.
- Carry out effective capital programme forecasting and costing.
- Provide advice and support to departments in developing business cases, economic appraisals and whole life costings.
- Continue to manage the Council's property investment portfolio to ensure rental income maximised (£5.25M for 2011/2012).

### Planning and Performance

- Undertake the actions contained within the portfolio management framework, which will provide the structure, governance, functions and services required for ensuring consistent delivery of programmes and projects across the Council, including:
  - Support SP& R in managing the project portfolio through dashboard reporting.
  - Link the project portfolio framework with the performance management process.
  - Undertake a training needs analysis of chief officers, senior managers, project sponsors and project managers.
  - Programme and project awareness and training.
  - Provide guidance and support to enable the effective delivery of Council Projects.

### Assets

- Develop a long term strategy for the Council to ensure cost effective and adequate accommodation provision.
- Develop a security strategy across the Council.
- Implementation of planned maintenance approach for all Council facilities to:
- Compile schedule of planned maintenance activity and deliver on time

- Agree and implement criteria for prioritising reactive repairs.
- Implement the recommendations in the asset management strategy including:
  - Undertake a property challenge review on an ongoing basis.
  - Develop a corporate asset disposal strategy.
  - Agree and implement an integrated corporate asset management database system.
  - Develop and implement a suite of corporate asset performance indicators.
  - Develop a framework which provides clarity on the roles and responsibilities in respect of leased and corporately held assets
- Progress the Assets Realisation Programme:
  - Options Reports for all Phase 1 Assets; (based on the completed Planning Assessments, Contamination, and Title reports) will be developed to look at options for disposal or redevelopment and scheduled to be presented to SP&R Committee.
  - Proactively manage the Council's investment portfolio at the Gasworks, Balmoral and Duncrue Estates to include property and lease management, rent reviews, lease variations and policy issues.
  - Proactively manage all miscellaneous leased assets.
  - Provide property related advice to all client departments including acquisition, leasing, development, property management, strategic or policy related advice in respect of the holding, management, acquisition, disposal or redevelopment of the Councils land and property portfolio.

#### Information Technology

- Agree and implement an integrated corporate asset management database system.
- Further development of the P2 net project management system including GIS (geographical information) and Sap (financial systems) and reporting capabilities.

#### 9.0 Key performance indicators 2011/ 2012

The Department has developed the following set of indicators for collection, monitoring and reporting (via the performance management system) throughout the 2011/ 12 financial year. These indicators will be monitored frequently at departmental level and will be reported throughout the year to SP&R.

**Leadership**

	Annual Target
Amount of money leveraged through the City Investment Strategy	10:1
% Capital Programme Spend against forecasted spend	83%

**Environment**

	Annual Target
Number of BCC Vehicles emissions tested	480
Total tonnage of carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from Council premises	17550

**Economy**

	Annual Target
Number of City Hall tours	1490
Number of City Hall tours visitors	61650

**Better Services**

	Annual Target
Average telephone switchboard response time	10 seconds

**Human Resources**

	Annual Target
% LDPs completed	90%
Average number of working days per employee lost due to absence (managed against agreed targets)	9.08
Variance between actual direct employee costs and budget	0
Variance between actual Staff Number and agreed establishment	0

**Finance**

	Annual Target
Procurement process compliance and contracts let in accordance with Standing Orders and legal requirements	100%
% Savings from selected corporate contract – Stationery	10%

**Finance**

	<b>Annual Target</b>
Top 20 suppliers by spend value who have contracts and tendering process completed.	19
% Variance between net expenditure and budget	+1 / -3%
% Variance between planned net expenditure and forecasted net expenditure	+1 / -3%
% Variation between forecast outturn at period 6 and actual outturn at period 12	+1 / -1%

**Policy, Planning and Performance**

	<b>Annual Target</b>
Individual projects on time	80%
Individual projects on budget	80%
% Committed projects progressing in line with project milestones	80%
% gates performed in line with project milestones	80%

**Assets**

	<b>Annual Target</b>
Rental income	£5,248,137
Fleet management unit GVC pass rate	95%

**10.0 Financial Information**

	<b>Net Expenditure 2010/2011</b>	<b>Net Estimated Expenditure 2011/2012</b>
PPD	653,605.51	657,592.04
Directorate Estates, PMU, Procurement, NFS	-3,185,603.99	-3,451,854.92
Facilities Management	14,820,523.36	15,153,100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,288,524.88</b>	<b>12,358,837.12</b>

**11.0 Monitoring and review arrangements**

The Council has introduced an integrated performance management system that enables regular, up to date reporting to be undertaken at corporate, departmental and service level.

Key performance indicators have been identified for all services within the Property and Projects Department and are contained within section 8 of this plan.

A number of PIs and tasks have been identified as corporately significant and are contained in the corporate plan. They will be reported on a quarterly basis to COMT to ensure ongoing management of the key priorities.”

### Chief Executive's Department

#### “7.0 Key Achievements 2010/2011

##### 7.1 City Leadership

##### Key achievements

- Successfully delivered a number of good relations events throughout the city
- Oversaw the delivery of Phase 1 of Peace III, consisting of £6.3m
- Distributed 57 small grants under Phase 1 of Peace III (totalling almost £1 million)
- Continued to support the Migrants Forum
- Secured funding for and commenced a community planning pilot
- Established a cross party working group on community planning
- Prepared bids for Phase 2 of Peace III
- Supported and taken a lead on the RPA process, both in the Council and across the local government sector, and taken a leading role in the local government sector's Improvement, Collaboration & Efficiency (ICE) Programme
- Revised the Good Relations Plan
- Provided key legal support for the Connswater Community Greenway project
- Provided strategic advice and assistance to Arc 21 in respect of Organic Waste Treatment and Residual Waste Treatment contracts
- Put in place funding agreements to facilitate the development of the Lyric and MAC
- Advised on issues relating to the proposed local government and planning reform
- Conducted approximately 1000 prosecutions in a diverse range of issues affecting health and the environment
- Registered 4,367 births, 1,335 marriages and conducted 67 civil partnerships

7.2 **Better Value for Money – An Organisation Fit to Lead and Serve**

**Human Resource Management**

- Absence reduced to 10.3 days in 2010/11. This means that we surpassed our two year target in one year.
- Voluntary Redundancy (VR) exercises resulted in:
  - 53 staff released on VR
  - total cost of VR £4.7M
  - Year on year savings of nearly £2M
  - Supernumerary situation resolved after 10 years
- People in post down by 80 this year. Control mechanisms in place re vacancy control; reporting mechanisms continuously improving re employee spend.
- Out of the 36 young people placed in Belfast City Council as part of the Young Persons Employment initiative (YPEI) 17 (almost 50%) have found employment.
- Of the 19 placements provided for the Public Employment Partnership programme (PEP), 7 found employment (36.8%)
- Learning and Development Policy agreed with Trade Unions (including the learning agreement and a corporate approach to personal development planning)
- Ongoing development activity - 211 employees have attended Step up to Learn (Literacy and numeracy) and 292 employees have attended Frontline Development Programme. Ongoing mandatory training like Equal Opportunities etc.
- Reviewed the management development programme
- Implemented a departmental restructure
- Council achieved gold status in the Opportunity Now benchmark

***Elected member development***

- 4 Women's Leaders Programmes (32 officers and 9 elected members )
- Joint member / officer steering group
- Participation in NI Elected Member Development Charter project
- Currently revising the member induction programme for implementation following the elections

### Policy, Planning & Performance

- Undertook a review of markets policy
- Updated the disability action plan and held conference on disability
- Provided policy and project delivery support to Strategic Policy & Resources Committee, Chief Officers Management Team, Chief Executive's Department and Property & Projects Department
- Co-ordinated and facilitated the development of service, departmental and corporate plans across the organisation.
- Reviewed and improved the planning process of the Council, coordinating with the estimating and rate setting process
- Responded to a number of policy and legislation consultations in relation to local government reform, planning reform, and others.

### Assurance, Governance & Risk

- Prepared for the May 2011 elections
- Successfully regained Lexcel and ISO accreditation for Legal Services
- Defending employment and liability claims worth a potential £3.2m for a total outlay of £600,000, giving an approximate saving of almost £2.6m
- Providing advice on procurement matters and other issues of risk, and framing decision making in a legal context
- Provided legal services in house, enabling the Council to make significant savings compared to using external solicitors for these services

### Communication and Engagement

- Brought a number of advertising campaigns in-house, delivering approximately £550,000 worth of advertising for £300,000
- Undertook 80% of graphic design work in-house
- Developed the Council's website that is now attracting 2 million unique visitors per year
- Improved our website content to be placed in the top 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of local government websites in the independent SOCITM ranking
- Commenced the use of Twitter and Facebook as new channels for communicating to stakeholders
- Piloted video messaging to front line staff

- Carried out public, Councillor and employee consultations
- Issued over 500 press releases and dealt with over 500 media enquiries
- Issued approximately 130,000 copies of City Matters, five times a year to every household in Belfast.

**8.0 Key actions for 2011/2012**

**8.1 City Leadership**

- Within the Council's remit, prepare for and undertake the May 2011 elections
- Implementation of Phase 2 of the Peace III programme
- Develop and deliver area based pilots which integrates proposed transferring functions (e.g. planning and regeneration) at the local level
- Complete community planning pilot and develop a community planning model
- Implement the Good Relations Plan
- To support the civic dignitaries through the organisation and delivery of a programme of initiatives, events and engagements during their term of office
- Support the Memorabilia Working Group
- Support the Centenary Working Group
- Develop an external relations strategy

**8.2 Better Services**

- Expand range of e-enabled customer services including on line booking for leisure facilities and purchase of dog licenses
- Commence live web streaming of Council meetings
- Achieve efficiencies of £220,000 as set out in the efficiency programme for 2011/ 2012

**8.3 Better Value for Money – An Organisation Fit to Lead and Serve**

**Human Resources**

- Develop and implement the HR capacity building and organisation redesign aspects of the council's emerging organisational development strategy
- Implement a corporate framework for the effective management of employee costs associated with absence rates, agency workers, overtime and staff numbers



- Develop and implement an elected member development programme, including an induction programme and improved personal development planning processes
- Develop and implement a leadership development programme for senior and middle managers
- Continue to implement the chief officer/head of service and senior manager individual performance management and personal development planning scheme
- Implement a revised industrial relations framework to ensure effective consultation, negotiation and partnership working with the Council's trade unions
- Organise the annual staff recognition scheme - the Making A Difference (MAD) Awards - scheduled for November 2011 - and review the staff suggestion scheme.

#### Policy & Planning

- Participate in the local government led improvement programme and identify/ pursue potential collaborative opportunities for the Council which may improve service delivery and maximise value for money
- Revise the Council's Equality Scheme in line with the revised requirements from the Equality Commission
- Support the corporate planning process for 2012 – 13 by:
  - Providing strategic support to elected Members and Chief Officers
  - Integrating local area working and community planning into the corporate planning process
- Develop a debt management policy
- Support the development of a Council resourcing strategy
- Integrate financial and business planning

#### Communication

- Improve internal communications to front line staff, including:
  - rolling out the 'Getting People Connected' project and installing display screens in the remaining council sites
  - Developing and piloting an e-zine (a newsletter sent by email) to be sent to casual and part-time colleagues to improve communications to this hard to reach group of employees

- Widening the roll out of the video version of the team brief
- Review advertising policy and approach to secure efficiencies
- Prepare for upcoming events in 2012 and beyond – Titanic Centenary, Titanic Signature Project, London Olympics, Connswater Community Greenway
- Finalise and implement the corporate consultation and engagement strategy

**Asset Management**

- Develop a property disposal policy

**Assurance, Governance & Risk**

- Support the Committee system and ensure that Councillors have the information available to enable effective decisions to be made
- Effectively implement the Council’s new Scheme of Delegation and develop a Code of Governance
- Develop and implement a new Council constitution
- Review and update Council policy on Declaration and Register of Interests.

9.0 **Key performance indicators 2011/2012**

**City Leadership**

	Annual Target
Number of Council Departments delivering Good Relations Projects under Phase 2 of the Peace III programme	3
Reduction in the number of bonfire related incidents recorded against groups participating in the Council’s Bonfire Programme	10%
Number of new community groups availing of the Councils Good Relations Fund	10

**Better Services**

	Annual Target
Overall satisfaction with Council services	78%
Number of equality complaints	0
% complaints responded to within corporate target	100%

**HR Management**

	Annual Target
Average number of working days per employee lost due to absence (measured against agreed targets)	8.28
Variance between actual direct employee costs and budget	0
Variance between actual Staff Number and agreed establishment	0
% Councillors with PDPs	65%
% Chief Officers, who receive (at least) annual feedback on their performance	100%
% Heads of Service and Senior Managers who receive (at least) annual feedback on their performance	90%

**Finance**

	Annual Target
% Variance between net expenditure and budget	+ 1 / -3%
% Variance between planned net expenditure and forecasted net expenditure	+ 1 / -3%
% Variation between forecast outturn at period 6 and actual outturn at period 12	+ 1 / -1%

**Corporate Policy, Planning & Performance**

	Annual Target
% PIs with valid data collected and reported upon	85%
% PIs on target	TBA *

**Communication & Engagement**

	Annual Target
Visits to Council website	1,000,000
% media releases used	80%
Number of followers of Council's Twitter site	5,000
Number of fans of Council's Facebook site	5,000

(\*Target to be confirmed at year end)

**10.0 Financial Information**

For 2011/2012 department plans, the financial information focuses on the 2011/2012 estimates.

The estimated net expenditure for the Department for 2011/2012 is £5,741,665 plus an additional £2,043,104 coming to the Chief Executive's Department with the transfer of Human Resources to the department in July. A breakdown of the revenue estimates by the Department's main services is provided in the table below, showing the expenditure for each section approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee as part of the annual budget setting process.

	Net Expenditure 2010/2011	Net Estimated Expenditure 2011/2012
Democratic Services	2,693,677	2,427,317
Corporate Communications	1,054,205	1,068,222
Business Support	257,815	837,765
Good Relations	457,078	408,208
Legal Services	793,745	530,431
Strategic Policy and Planning	484,640	469,722
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,741,159</b>	<b>5,741,665</b>
Human Resources *		2,043,104
Town Planning Committee	27,000	26,500

\* Please note that the Human Resources function moves from the Finance & Resources Department to the Chief Executive's Department in July 2011, resulting in an increase in the departmental net expenditure.

**11.0 Monitoring and review arrangements**

The Council has introduced an integrated performance management system that enables regular, up to date reporting to be undertaken at corporate, departmental and service level.

Key performance indicators have been identified for all services within the Chief Executive's Department and are contained within section 8 of this plan.

A number of PIs and tasks have been identified as corporately significant and are contained in the corporate plan. They will be reported on a quarterly basis to COMT to ensure ongoing management of the key priorities."

### Democratic Services and Governance

#### Requests for the Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality

The Committee was informed that the undernoted requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality had been received:

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/ Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Association of British Professional Conference Organisers and Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau	Industry Summer Summit - Welcome Reception  6th July, 2011  Approximately 100 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500
Incorporated Association of Organists	Incorporated Association of Organists Congress Reception  21st July, 2011  Approximately 145 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	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 and together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits  Approximate cost £350
Queen's University Belfast Department of Physics	30th International Conference on Phenomena in Ionized Gases Reception  31st August, 2011  Approximately 400 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500

<b>Organis- ation/ Body</b>	<b>Event/Date - Number of Delegates/ Guests</b>	<b>Request</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Recomm- endation</b>
American Bar Association	Northern Ireland and the Changing Legal Landscape Conference Dinner  10th October, 2011  Approximately 100 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500
Land and Property Services	Eurogeographics 2011 General Assembly - Conference Dinner  18th October, 2011  Approximately 160 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a per-dinner drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500
Queen's University Belfast / British Society for Cardiovascular Research	British Society for Cardiovascular Research Autumn Conference Dinner  3rd September, 2012  Approximately 100 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500
Barnardo's - Tullycarnet Family Project	Barnardo's Celebrates Working with the Community in Tullycarnet 6th October, 2011 Approximately 100 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception	This event will celebrate the achievements of children, parents and members of the community who have gained new skills, obtained qualifications and participated in improving their parenting skills and community life. The event will also promote and recognise the value of sustained community development as well as the importance of schools to the local area. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'Better support for people and communities' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/ Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Dufferin Hospital	Celebration of the service provided by the Ava and Dufferin hospitals  27th October, 2011  Approximately 300 attending	The use of the City Hall	This event will seek to pay tribute and to recognise the people of the Dufferin Hospital who provided outstanding service to the whole community in Belfast.  Furthermore, the event aims to acknowledge the commitment given by so many to the unit over the years and to celebrate, along with past patients, the excellent standard for which it became synonymous.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	The use of the City Hall
Employers for Childcare Charitable Group	The Childcare Works Awards 2011  30th September, 2011  Approximately 50 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	This event will promote the adoption of family friendly working practices and will recognise and reward examples of excellence such excellence by businesses and other organisations.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits.  Approximate cost £125
Chartered Institute of Marketing	CIM Ireland Marketing Excellence Awards  3rd November, 2011  Approximately 150 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception	This Awards ceremony seeks to promote the marketing excellence throughout the business community by recognising industry, professional and personal success in marketing and sales.  This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.  Approximate cost £500

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/ Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Pubs of Ulster  (formerly Federation of Retail Licensed Trade NI)	Pubs of Ulster, Pub of the Year Awards 2011  16th November, 2011  Approximately 400 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception	<p>This awards ceremony seeks to recognise the best licensed trade establishments across Northern Ireland. Categories include 'Best Neighbourhood Pub' and 'Best Tourism/Visitor Pub'.</p> <p>The events aims to improve the industry by recognising best practice through the development and introduction of a robust set of retailing standards.</p> <p>Furthermore the organisation has a close working relationship with Belfast City Council as was demonstrated by their involvement in and support for both the 'Get Home Safe' campaign and 'Counter Measures' training programme.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of ' City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
Belfast Masonic Charity Fund	150th Anniversary of Belfast Masonic Charity Fund  9th March, 2012  Approximately 300 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception.	<p>This event seeks to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Belfast Masonic Charitable Fund and to acknowledge its contribution to the general life and well-being of the city.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks.</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>



Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/ Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Hunterhouse College	Hunterhouse College 5th Anniversary Gala Ball  15th June, 2012  Approximately 400 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 125 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Hunterhouse College 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 and together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks  Approximate cost £500
County Antrim and District Football Association	125th Anniversary Dinner  19th April, 2013  Approximately 250 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 125 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the County Antrim and District Football Association 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 and together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks  Approximate cost £500

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Provision of IT Equipment to Members**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 15th April, it had agreed, after considering a recommendation which promoted the standardisation of the IT equipment provided to Members, to defer the matter until after the election when a Working Group would be set up to consider the relevant issues.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that, after consideration of the report, the Working Group had agreed to recommend the following package to the Committee:

- Desktop PC
- Monitor
- or*
- Laptop
- Monitor

- Laptop docking station
- Laptop case
- Laptop lock
- and*
- All-in-one printer, scanner and fax machine
- 500GB External hard drive
- Blackberry (excluding line rental or cost of calls)
- Digital camera (for those Members who do not require a Blackberry)

Members would also be provided with cartridges and memory sticks when required.

The Democratic Services Manager pointed out that the proposed package not only acknowledged the benefits of the equipment which was currently provided to Members but also considered best practice research. As a result of that research and in considering how the Council's methods of communication had evolved and improved, the Working Group had included a Blackberry as part of its recommendation. The Blackberry would not only permit Members to communicate verbally, by text and e-mail, but it would also provide access to the internet as well as proving to be an effective tool in harnessing social media, a communication technique which was changing the way messages were relayed to many of the City's key stakeholders through interactive dialogue. Furthermore, in keeping with the initial report which had been considered by the Committee during April, the Working Group had agreed to recommend that the equipment should be provided on a rolling four year programme which meant that it would not be renewed until after the four year period.

The Democratic Services Manager explained that, in accordance with the decision of the former Policy and Resources (Members) Sub-Committee, at its meeting on 14th March, 2005, the Working Group had recommended also a continuation of the policy whereby, at the end of its life cycle, Members were given the option to purchase the IT equipment which had been loaned to them and that the cost would be based on the age and quality of the computer equipment. If IT equipment was purchased, all Council supplied licences, such as Microsoft Office, would be removed. He stated that, although significant savings could be made through the standardisation of the package being offered, all of those savings would not result in reduced IT support for Members. He assured the Members that the proposed package would not only allow for their roles and responsibilities as a locally elected representatives to be carried out effectively but that it would also permit Members to harness new, evolving and increasingly important methods of communication. The total cost to the Council to provide the aforementioned IT package would be approximately £13,000 per year which would result in an annual saving of £12,000 per annum.

Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee:

- (i) agree to the provision of the IT package as outlined to all Members on a rolling four year programme; and

- (ii) reaffirm the decision of the former Policy and Resources (Members) Sub-Committee of 14th March, 2005 and give the Members the option to purchase, at the end of its life cycle, the loaned equipment at a cost which would be based on its age and quality.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Special Responsibility Allowance**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 **The Local Government (Payments to Councillors) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 provide that the maximum amount which the Council is permitted to spend on Special Responsibility Allowance is £82,000 per annum.**
- 1.2 **Following the Local Government Elections in May and the recent changes agreed by the Council to the Standing Orders, which recognise Party Political Parties on the Council rather than Political Groupings, the time is considered to be right to review the distribution of these allowances.**
- 1.3 **A report making recommendations for the distribution of the Special Responsibility Allowance was deferred at the Committee’s meeting on 3rd June to allow additional information on an alternative distribution model to be presented to the Committee.**

#### **2 Key Issues**

- 2.1 **The division of the Special Responsibility Allowance between the Chairmen and the Deputy Chairmen of the Standing Committees and the Officers of the Political Parties on the Council, as presented to the Committee on 3rd June, is set out in Appendix 1. This model follows closely that which was established in 2007 following the Council’s Review of Governance, which abolished the Sub Committee structure.**
- 2.2 **At the meeting on 3rd June, a suggestion was made that the proposed allocation of the allowance did not sufficiently recognise the responsibility and workload undertaken by all the Party Leaders, irrespective of Party strength on the Council. The argument was that the basic allocation for Party Leaders needed to be enhanced whilst the amount**

allocated to the Party Leaders based upon the number of Members within their Party on the Council should be reduced. It was pointed out that the Parties with more than 5 Members were entitled to appoint a Deputy Leader and those with more than 11 Members were entitled to appoint also a Secretary and thereby the workload falling to the Party Leader was reduced. Whereas, the Leaders of the smaller Political Parties on the Council were required to undertake all of the duties without any assistance.

2.3 An alternative distribution model for the Special Responsibility Allowance to take account of these issues is attached at Appendix 2. The model reduces the payment for Committee Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen by £125 and £7 per annum respectively, reduces the basic allocation for Deputy Chairmen and Secretaries by £307 per annum, reduces the allocation to the Party Leader per Party Member by £90.48 per annum and increases the basic allocation to the Party Leaders by £1,500 per annum.

2.4 The total amount to be allocated under each model is £82,000.

### **3 Resource Implications**

3.1 The recommended levels of allowance are provided for within the current revenue budgets.

### **4 Equality and Good Relations Implications**

4.1 None. The division of the Special Responsibility Allowance is based upon the positions held by individual Members either as Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of Committees or as Officers within the Political Parties. The allocations are consistent with the Council's system of proportionality which seeks to allocate positions in accordance with the relative strength of the Parties within the Council.

### **5 Recommendations**

5.1 The Committee is requested to decide which of the two models, set out in Appendices 1 and 2, should be adopted for the allocation of the Special Responsibility Allowance.

5.2 It is also recommended that the allocation of the Special Responsibility Allowance be with effect from 20th May for the Party Officers and with effect from 26th May for the Chairmen and the Deputy Chairmen of the Committees.

6 Decision Tracking

Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager

20th June, 2011.

7 Documents Attached

Appendix 1 – Allocation of Special Responsibility Allowance  
– Model 1

Appendix 2 - Allocation of Special Responsibility Allowance  
– Model 2

Appendix 1

Allocation of Special Responsibility Allowance – May, 2011

Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen of Standing Committees

<u>Position</u>	<u>Allowance</u>	<u>Number of Posts</u>	<u>Total</u>
Chairmen	£5,125	6	£30,750
Deputy Chairmen	£2,307	6	£13,842
<b>Total</b>			<b>£44,592</b>

Political Party Officers

Party Officer Basic Allocation £2,307

Remainder allocated to Political Party leaders £194.48 per  
Member of the Party

<u>Position</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>	<u>Allocation per party Member</u>	<u>Allocation by Party Strength</u>	<u>Basic Allocation</u>	<u>Total</u>
SF Party Leader	16	£194.48	£3,111.68	£2,307	£5,418.68
SF Deputy Leader				£2,307	£2,307
SF Secretary				£2,307	£2,307
DUP Party Leader	15		£2,917.20	£2,307	£5,224.20
DUP Deputy Leader				£2,307	£2,307
DUP Secretary				£2,307	£2,307



<u>Position</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>	<u>Allocation per party Member</u>	<u>Allocation by Party Strength</u>	<u>Basic Allocation</u>	<u>Total</u>
DUP Party Leader	15	£104	£1,560	£3,500	£5,060
DUP Deputy Leader				£2,000	£2,000
DUP Secretary				£2,000	£2,000
SDLP Party Leader	8	£104	£832	£3,500	£4,332
SDLP Deputy Leader				£2,000	£2,000
Alliance Party Leader	6	£104	£624	£3,500	£4,124
Alliance Deputy Leader				£2,000	£2,000
UUP Party Leader	3	£104	£312	£3,500	£3,812
PUP Party Leader	2	£104	£208	£3,500	£3,708
	<b>50</b>		<b>£5,200</b>	<b>£33,000</b>	<b>£38,200"</b>

After discussion, it was

Moved by the Alderman Crozier,

Seconded by Councillor McKee,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the matter to enable a process to be undertaken with the Political Parties to enable a framework to be developed in respect of the roles and responsibilities for those posts, with the exception of the Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen, which were paid a Special Responsibility Allowance.

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

#### **Further Proposal**

Moved by Councillor McVeigh,  
Seconded by Councillor Maskey,

That the Committee agrees to adopt Model 1 for the allocation of the Special Responsibility Allowance as set out in Appendix 1.

On a vote by show of hands ten Members voted for the proposal and six against and it was accordingly declared carried.

**Allowances for the Lord Mayor,  
Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 3rd June, it had considered a report in relation to a review of the allowances paid to the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff. The Committee had referred consideration of the matter to the Budget and Transformation Panel in the first instance and agreed that a further report be submitted to the Committee on the outcome of the discussions.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that the matter had been considered by the Budget and Transformation Panel which had agreed to recommend to the Committee that there should be no increase in the allowances to be paid to the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff in 2011/12. Furthermore, the Panel had requested that the Committee be provided with the relevant information in relation to the use of a Lord Mayor's Entertainment Allowance by a Deputy Lord Mayor. In that regard, it was pointed out that the primary role of the Deputy Lord Mayor was to deputise for the Lord Mayor and, in respect of the application of strict protocol, the Deputy Lord Mayor enjoyed no civic precedence other than in deputising for the Lord Mayor. When the Deputy Lord Mayor or the High Sheriff was acting on behalf of the Lord Mayor and where that the Civic duty involved the provision of hospitality, then the cost was borne by the Lord Mayor's entertainment budget and not the Deputy Lord Mayor's or the High Sheriff's budget.

Moved by Councillor McVeigh,  
Seconded by Councillor Maskey,

That the Committee adopts the recommendation of the Budget and Transformation Panel and that there be no increase in the allowances to be paid to the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff for 2011/12.

On a vote by show of hands eleven Members voted for the proposal and none against and it was accordingly declared carried.

**Provision of Services to the High Sheriff**

The Democratic Services Manager reminded the Committee that the appointment of a person to undertake the duties of the High Sheriff for Belfast was a matter for the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the term of office ran for a calendar year. The Council was asked to nominate persons whom it considered to be suitable for such appointment and that normally took place in October or November each year. The current High Sheriff was former Councillor Ian Adamson. Mr. Adamson failed to be re-elected to the Council at the elections in May. However, he retained the position of High Sheriff until the end of 2011.

He explained that for many years the tradition in the Council had been that both the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff had deputised for the Lord Mayor in respect of Civic engagements. That had been necessary due to the high number of invitations which were received by the Civic Dignitaries each year. However, it would not be appropriate for the current High Sheriff to undertake any of those Civic duties given that he was not re-elected as a Councillor in May. The current High Sheriff would continue to undertake the duties of that office until the end of the year, including participation in Royal visits.



In addition, the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff were entitled to nominate up to four charitable events which they would support during their year in office and support for those events was provided by the staff in the Lord Mayor's office. The current High Sheriff had nominated events in connection with War on Want, the Somme Association, the George Best Foundation and the Old Belmont School Preservation Trust. The staff in the Lord Mayor's office had been working with the High Sheriff in the planning for those events and it would seem to be entirely reasonable to allow that support to continue for the remainder of the year, despite the fact that Mr. Adamson was not returned at the elections as a Councillor.

The Democratic Services Manager explained also that the High Sheriff position received a small personal allowance and entertainments allowance each year. For the current year the allowances were £6,250 and £735 respectively. It was deemed to be appropriate to continue to pay the personal allowance up to the end of the year and to continue to provide a small budget for the provision of hospitality.

The Committee agreed to:

- (i) the current High Sheriff not being used to cover Civic engagements for the remainder of the year in office but rather focus on the duties of the High Sheriff position;
- (ii) office support being continued to be provided for the current High Sheriff in relation to his charitable events for the remainder of the year; and
- (iii) the payment of the allowances to the High Sheriff for the remainder of his year in office.

### **Appointments to the Belfast Harbour Commissioners**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1     Relevant Background Information**

**1.1     The Belfast Harbour Order (Northern Ireland) 2002 provides that a maximum of four of the Harbour Commissioners shall be Members of Belfast City Council.**

**1.2     In past years, the nomination of the four members to fill these positions was determined as part of the overall pool of appointments to Outside Bodies, using the d'Hondt system of proportionality, at the Annual Council meeting immediately following the local elections.**

**1.3     The Council was informed on 27th April by the Department for Regional Development that concerns had been expressed by the Commissioner for Public Appointments in relation to the appointments process in that the Council was not providing a number of candidates from which four would be**

chosen to fill the positions following a public appointments process. Accordingly, the Department indicated that it would inform the Council of the process to be applied after the Assembly elections had been completed and the new Minister appointed.

- 1.4 Correspondence has been received from the Department dated 6th June (copy attached at Appendix 1) indicating that the Council should provide to it the names of eight Members who would be willing to serve as Commissioners from which four would be selected following an interview.
- 1.5 The Department has also pointed out that, in normal circumstances, a Councillor would not be permitted to serve more than two terms (normally of four years each) as a Commissioner and no more than ten years in total. Although there may be some flexibility in relation to the first condition, subject to Departmental permission, the ten year rule is absolute and Members are requested to bear this in mind.

## **2 Key Issues**

- 2.1 This matter was discussed at the meeting of Party Leaders on 25th May when the allocation of places on Outside Bodies was being determined and it was decided that, due to the uncertainty which existed at that time as to the Department for Regional Development's intentions, the nomination of Members to the Harbour Commissioners should be dealt with by the Committee as a separate matter.
- 2.2 The Committee is reminded that, in December, 2009, when it was considering the appointment of Members to the newly constituted Interim Belfast Education and Library Board, it was decided that a one-off selection process using the d'Hondt system was the proper way to proceed.
- 2.3 In keeping with this principle, a one-off d'Hondt exercise for eight names would provide the following result:  
  
Sinn Fein – choices 1, 3 and 7  
DUP – choices 2, 5 and 8  
SDLP – choice 4  
Alliance – choice 6
- 2.4 Alternatively, the Committee might decide that it should continue to run on the existing d'Hondt table of choices, which was used for the appointment of Members to Outside Bodies at the Annual Council meeting on 26th May, for the next available eight choices. Using this system the following results are achieved:

Sinn Fein – choices 38, 41 and 44  
DUP – choices 37, 40 and 43  
SDLP – choice 42  
Alliance – choice 39

- 2.5 The same results are achieved by using either methodology. That is, three Sinn Fein nominations, three DUP nominations and one nomination each from the SDLP and Alliance.

3 **Resource Implications**

None.

4 **Equality and Good Relations Implications**

None. The identification of those Parties entitled to nominate members for consideration for appointment is based upon the Council's accepted system of proportionality.

5 **Recommendations**

- 5.1 In order to ensure a consistency of approach, the Committee is recommended to employ a one-off d'Hondt process for these appointments which would provide for three Sinn Fein nominations, three DUP nominations and one nomination each from the SDLP and Alliance.

- 5.2 Similarly, in order to be consistent with the approach taken when considering appointments to the Interim Belfast Education and Library Board in 2009, the Committee is recommended to advise the Department for Regional Development that the application of the Council's system of proportionality would provide for the first four of those eight choices being two Sinn Fein representatives (choices 1 and 3), one DUP representative (choice 2) and one SDLP representative (choice 4).

6 **Decision Tracking**

Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager

5th July, 2012."

After discussion, during which the Democratic Services Manager explained the rationale for using the two different D'Hondt exercises and the outcomes which would result, it was

Moved by Councillor Jones,

Seconded by Councillor Hendron,

That the Committee agrees to continue to run the existing D'Hondt table of choices which had been used at the Annual Council Meeting on 6th May for the appointment of Members to Outside Bodies as outlined in paragraph 2.4 of the report.

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

#### **Further Proposal**

Moved by Councillor Maskey,  
Seconded by Councillor Mullan,

That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendations and use a one-off D'Hondt process for the appointments.

On a vote by show of hands fifteen Members voted for the proposal and three against and it was accordingly declared carried.

#### **Monthly Meetings of the Committee**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 26th October, 2010, it had considered a report which had informed the Members that the Department of the Environment had, due to the uncertainty as to a way forward for the Review of Public Administration, decided to suspend the funding which had been made available for the Council's Voluntary Transition Committee. The Democratic Services Manager reminded the Members also that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had acted as the Council's Voluntary Transition Committee and had set aside one of its two scheduled meetings each month to consider transitional matters. The Committee had decided to continue to schedule two meetings each month and agreed that one of the monthly meetings would concentrate on such issues as the development of the Corporate Plan, financial planning and efficiency, the Capital Programme, City investment and organisational development. The other monthly meeting was to deal with the more routine business which would come before the Committee on a regular basis.

At its meeting on 3rd June, the Committee had been of the view that for a number of reasons this separation of the business had not been strictly applied as of yet and again expressed the opinion that the two monthly meetings of the Committee should deal with different agendas, with one meeting being set aside for strategic matters and the other for routine business. The Democratic Services Manager

explained that, for logistical reasons, it would be much better if the second meeting each month was dedicated to the routine business. That would allow the minutes of the Working Groups which met early in the month, such as the Budget and Transformation Panel and the Good Relations Partnership, to be presented to the Committee in the same calendar month. It would allow also any matter amended at full Council or referred to the Committee by the Council to be given proper consideration before appearing on the agenda. However, it was accepted that, from time to time, it would be necessary to raise a routine matter of business at the first monthly meeting and, conversely, to raise a strategic matter at the second meeting.

Accordingly, it was recommended that the Committee agree that the first of its monthly meetings be dedicated to the more strategic matters which the Committee was responsible for, including the development of the Corporate Plan, financial planning and efficiency, the Capital Programme, City investment, development and resourcing, performance management and organisational development, with the second meeting dealing with routine business.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

### Finance

#### Financial Reporting - Quarter 4 2010-2011

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### “Relevant background information

**The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed on 18 June 2010 that:**

- **the council would produce financial reporting packs for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and each Standing Committee on a quarterly basis**
- **the Budget and Transformation Panel would also receive monthly financial updates if there were any significant issues to report.**

**The reporting pack contains a summary dashboard of the financial indicators and an executive summary explaining the financial performance (Appendix 1). It also provides a more detailed explanation of each of the relevant indicators covering the year to date and forecast financial position, progress in year on the capital programme, implications for reserves, payments to creditors and recovery of debt.**

**The style and layout reflect the discussion and feedback arising from the members’ financial training at the end of September 2010. As we previously advised the committee, we will continue to develop the style and contents of the reports in liaison with members.**

Central finance and departmental management teams have worked together to develop the information within the financial reporting packs.

### Key Issues

#### Current and Forecast Financial Position 2010/11 and Implications for Reserves

The year end financial position for the council is an under spend of £2.6m (2.2%).

As in quarter 3, the key elements of the under spend relate to the current unutilised pay rise budget, additional electricity generation income, fuel costs being lower than anticipated, the deferred roll out of food collection as part of waste management and delays in the filling of vacant posts.

The year end position reflects the claw back by LPS of some £3.1m, reduced from the previous forecast in January 2011 of £3.5m.

Members should note that efficiency savings of £2.9m have been included in the 2011/12 estimates and this will assist in addressing many of the areas where under-spends have occurred this year.

The financial reporting pack contains more detail on both the overall council position and the financial performance in each of the Committees.

#### Reserves Position

At 1 April 2010 the opening reserves were £4.6m and, as agreed as part of the 2010/11 rates setting exercise, Members planned to build the reserves up to £9.1m by 31 March 2011. The *actual reserves position as at 31 March 2011 is £12.5m*. This position is mainly explained by the 2010-11 in-year under spend of £2.6m; additional income from a VAT reclaim and rent reviews relating to previous years; and the rates finalisation adjustments for 2009/10.

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee has previously been advised that an acceptable level of general reserves for Belfast City Council would be £10m. This means that the council now has £2.5m of funds that can be used for other purposes. The April Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed that officers should consider the potential to establish a Capital Fund for investment in local capital projects, perhaps aligned to the Social Investment Fund and other external funding streams. A separate report on this matter is being considered by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee today.

If Members decide to establish a Capital Fund for investment in local capital projects then the £2.5m surplus reserves could be used to finance this in the first instance, leaving the district reserves of the council at an acceptable level of some £10m.

#### Other Financial Indicators

The average number of creditors paid within 30 days is 66%, up slightly from last year (63%). We have initiated closer working relationships with departments in order to bring the actual performance closer to the target of 75%.

The overall Council debt has fallen to £3.9m (quarter 3: £4.1m) and the percentage of debtors collected within 30 days has risen to 79% (quarter 3: 43%). The percentage of debt under 90 days old has increased to 54% (quarter 3: 45%), albeit down slightly from on last year (57%).

Work also continues on implementing the recommendations made in the report to committee on 22 October 2010, with a concerted effort in the last quarter of the financial year, and this has been reflected in the overall reduction in debt.

#### Recommendations

Members are recommended to note the above report and associated financial reporting pack.

#### Decision Tracking

N/A

#### Key to Abbreviations

LPS - Land and Property Services”

The Committee adopted the recommendation and noted that a full copy of the reporting pack was available on the Council's website.

#### Local Capital Investment Fund

The Director of Finance and Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

##### **“1.0 Relevant Background Information**

1.1 The Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 4 March and more recently on 15 April, discussed the need for the Council to *'work in partnership*

*and form strategic alliances to ensure continued investment in the City during this period of austerity and to secure the necessary resources to make things happen, with a greater focus on delivery'. The Committee recognised that this conversation needs to include a focus on projects that are significant both at a city and neighbourhood level and agreed that work should be undertaken to explore the potential scope or the Council to establish a Local Capital Investment Fund.*

- 1.2 Such a fund would enable the Council to support the delivery of key regenerative projects at a local level and would offer the potential for greater alignment with other emerging funding streams such as OFMDFM's £80m Social Investment Fund, DCAL's £130m investment in stadia within Belfast; DSD's capital investment monies; and other partnership funding sources.
- 1.3 It will be important that the Council seeks to engage and work with the relevant departments and stakeholders to secure the maximum level of potential investment into the city and to capitalise on the wider social, economic and environmental impacts of such investment.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to outline for Members consideration some initial thoughts on the potential need for a Local Investment Fund, the types of principles and objectives which may underpin it and to set out a process of Members engagement over the coming months to further develop and refine the thinking behind such a fund.

## 2.0 Key Issues

### Possible Objectives of Local Capital Investment Fund

- 2.1 The creation of a Local Capital Investment Fund would represent a further commitment by the Council to continue to invest in the City. It would enable the Council to support small scale local regeneration projects that would enable communities to see, touch and feel a difference within their neighbourhoods. Such a fund would enable the Council to become a partner of choice through its ability to commit resources to lever and/or complement other potential funding streams to address investment priorities in local neighbourhoods.



- 2.2 The objectives of such a fund may include the following:
- (i) To provide the Council with the ability to invest in smaller scale local/neighbourhood capital schemes if it wishes to do so.
  - (ii) To act as a catalyst for attracting or complementing resources from the public, private and voluntary sectors
  - (iii) To provide funding for initial development capital at the local level which enhances development economics; 'pump priming' development opportunities and acting as a demand stimulus
  - (iv) To enable the Council to have a more strategic conversation with key delivery bodies and communities about the investment priorities for the city

#### Financing the Local Capital Investment Fund

- 2.3 The 'Financial Reporting – Quarter 4 2010/11' report on the agenda for this meeting has identified some £2.5m of resources which could be used to kick start the Local Capital Investment Fund. Further funding could be set aside, if required and if assessed as affordable through the capital financing strategy, the medium term financial plan and the rates setting process.
- 2.4 Should the Council wish to fund local neighbourhood revenue projects, these would have to be financed separately from the above Local Investment Fund, for example through:
- Realigning existing BCC revenue budgets into a local neighbourhood revenue funding pot;
  - Setting aside a new local neighbourhood revenue budget as part of the rates setting exercise (as had originally been planned for 2011/12 before the revised LPS forecasts); or
  - Financing one off non recurrent local neighbourhood revenue projects through any in year underspends etc and establishing a specified reserve for such purpose in the District Fund.

## 2.5 Next Steps

If Members are supportive of the concept of establishing a local capital investment fund, there are a number of important components which need to be further worked up in liaison with elected Members over the coming months. These are set out below.

What	How	When
Further develop concept including objectives and principles underpinning local investment fund	Party Group briefings	June /August
Develop decision-making criteria for the allocation of funding under the fund.	Party Group briefings	June /August
Composite report on proposed establishment of a Local Investment Fund to be submitted for consideration and approval of SP&R.	Report to SP&R	September/October

## 3.0 Resource Implications

Some £2.5m have been identified from the financial resources for 2010/11 to finance the Local Capital Investment Fund.

## 4.0 Equality Implications

There are no equality implications contained within this report

## 5.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- i) note the contents of this report;
- ii) agree to hold a series of Party Group briefings over the coming months to enable Members to inform the development of the Local Capital Investment Fund including the proposed criteria and process for the allocation of funding

- iii) agree that £2.5m of the underspend for the 2010/2011 financial year be realigned into the Local Capital Investment Fund”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Efficiency Programme 2012/13**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 **Relevant Background Information**

1.1 Members will be aware that to date the corporate efficiency programme has delivered savings of some £12m across the Council. At the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the 15 April 2011, it was agreed that a further indicative efficiency target of £2m per year for 2012-13 and 2013-14 should be achieved with a further report to be brought back in June.

1.2 Based on further work and in liaison with the Trade Union Efficiency Sub Group a break down of the efficiency programme for 2012/13 has been developed for Members consideration.

2 **Key Issues**

2.1 In developing the programme, Members should be aware that we have used the same efficiency theme headings as previously agreed by SP&R Committee in May 2010. These cover the areas suggested by the HM Treasury as the fundamental key drivers for developing successful efficiency programmes.

2.2 These themes are:

- Assets and Land
- Procurement
- Budgetary Challenge
- ICT
- Service & Employee Costs Reviews
- Income Generation

2.3 The proposed split of the £2m efficiency target across these headings is set out in Figure One below.

**Figure One**

<b><u>Efficiency Theme</u></b>	<b><u>Estimated Savings</u></b> <b><u>£k</u></b>
<b>Assets &amp; Land</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Procurement</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>Budgetary Challenge</b>	<b>500</b>
<b>ICT</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>Service &amp; Employee Costs Review</b>	<b>550</b>
<b>Income Generation</b>	<b>450</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>2,000</b>

2.4 A summary of the types of projects included under each theme within the proposed 2012-13 programme has been included in Appendix 1.

### 2.5 Next Steps

Work will be ongoing with departments over the coming months to provide support and assistance in the delivery of the projects identified. The projected cash savings will then be removed from budgets as part of the 2012-13 estimates process.

2.6 Councillors will wish to keep the efficiency target for 2012/13 under review during the rates setting process in the autumn. Work will also continue with departments on the efficiency programme for 2013/14.

### 3 Recommendations

3.1 Members are requested to:

- Note the contents of the report.
- Agree that the efficiency programme for 2012/13 should achieve a minimum of £2m in the areas outlined within the report.
- Note that the final efficiency target and programme for 2012/13 will be agreed as part of the rates setting process in the autumn.

4 **Decision Tracker**

Responsible Officers:

Director of Finance & Resources and  
Head of Finance & Performance

5 **Documents Attached**

Appendix 1 – Efficiency programme 2012/13

**Appendix 1**

**Breakdown of Indicative Efficiency Target for 2012/13**

**Assets and Land**

The types of projects included under this theme include reviewing accommodation requirements, energy conservation type projects and cash savings from our Fleet in advance of the wider review into Fleet across the Council.

**Procurement**

Under this theme a review led by the Procurement Unit was conducted of the tenders that departments were putting out during 2011-12 to identify scope for realising further efficiencies and potential savings of approximately £159k have been identified as a result of this exercise. Savings are proposed within cleaning contracts, supplies and services, catering franchises and cash collection contracts.

**Budgetary Challenge**

Departments have completed a review of their budgets, taking into account the actual spend in 2010/11 in order to identify the scope for further efficiencies. Savings have been identified in a wide range of areas including reductions in consultancy expenditure, supplies and services, facility costs, training budgets, printing costs and utility costs.

**ICT**

A corporate ICT programme has now been agreed under the Council's ICT governance arrangements. Some of these ICT projects have identified potential efficiency savings, for example from reducing the number of printers, use of VOIP to reduce telephony costs, and a review of ICT licenses.

### **Service & Employee Costs Reviews**

Under this theme there has been a wide range of projects identified including reviews of overtime and agency usage, reducing employee costs from vacancies or unfilled posts and conducting service reviews leading to better staff utilisation. A corporate exercise is underway to consider the use of agency, overtime and any impact on/from vacant posts across the council and this will be an important workstream within this area. This will also include considering areas such as the use of freeze and catch-up arrangements in conjunction with the trade unions. Service and staffing implications, if any, will need to be politically acceptable.

### **Income Generation**

This theme has seen significant growth from the 2011-12 year as departments have been seeking more innovative ways to maximise their income which in turn will reduce the need for budget cuts. The types of projects include managing vacancy advertising for the NI local government sector, selling council professional services such as Legal Services to other organisations, rent reviews and increases in the use of fixed penalty notices for dog enforcement.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Minutes of Meeting of Audit Panel**

The Committee adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Panel of 9th June.

### **Belfast City Council Financial Accounts 2010-11**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

#### **“Relevant Background Information**

The purpose of this report is to present to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee the Financial Accounts of the council for 2010/11.

The Financial Accounts are an important element of the council’s overall corporate governance framework as they provide assurance to Members and ratepayers on the stewardship of the council’s finances and its financial position.

The Financial Report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011 have been prepared in line with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2010/11 based on International Financial Reporting Standards and the Department of the Environment Accounts Direction, Circular LG 10/11 dated 20 April 2011.

I can confirm that the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011 have been prepared in the form directed by the Department of the Environment and in my opinion the Statement of Accounts give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year and the financial position as at the end of the financial year.

### Key Issues

#### Council Net Expenditure

The year end financial position for the council is an under spend of £2.6m

#### Reserves

The impact of this financial position on the reserves is summarised in Table 1 below. It shows that the credit balance on the District Fund Reserves has increased to £10,426,040 (of which £366k relates to specified reserves).

*Table 1: Summary of Reserves Position*

Opening Balance	£4.6m
Prior Year Adjustments	<u>£0.6m</u>
Revised Opening Balance	<u>£5.2m</u>
Contribution to Reserves	£4.7m
In year movement on reserves	£2.6m
2009/10 Finalisation	£0.2m
VAT Reclaim re Leisure	£0.2m
Contribution to Local Capital Fund	(£2.5m)
Increase in Reserves	<u>£5.2m</u>
Closing Balance	£10.4m
Specified Reserves at year end	<u>£0.4m</u>
Balance Available	<u>£10.1m</u>

**District Fund      £10,426,040**

The District Fund Reserves can be used to supplement income and unexpected expenditure in future years. Of the £10,426,040, £366,147 relates to expenditure committed at year-end. Advice has previously been given to both the Audit Panel and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that £10m is an appropriate level of district fund reserve for Belfast City Council.

**Capital Fund      £15,439,745**

The capital fund is made up of the City Investment Fund (£12,939,745) which has been created to give a clear demonstration of the Council's wish to contribute to the vibrancy, prosperity, culture and attractiveness of the city through iconic projects and the Local Investment Fund (£2,500,000) to fund neighbourhood capital projects.

In relation to the latter, it was agreed at the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 15 April 2011 that officers could carry out preparatory work on the potential to establish a capital fund to finance local capital projects, in partnership with other funding streams such as the Social Investment Fund. The issue was also raised at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 3 June and the Budget and Transformation Panel on 10 June. This issue is covered in the Local Capital Investment Fund report on today's agenda.

**Capital Receipts Reserve      £943,065**

These are capital receipts which have originated primarily from the sale of assets and which have not yet been used to finance capital expenditure. This amount relates mainly to the sale of land & buildings at Loop River (£860,000) which has been ring-fenced for the development of the capital scheme 'Loop River – New Facilities'.

**Repairs and Renewals Fund      £7,753,190**

This fund was established under section 56 of the Local Government Act (NI) 1972 and has an approved limit of £22m and is to fund the closure of the landfill site.

**Other Fund Balances and Reserves      £5,044,520**

This relates to the Election Reserve (£758,608) which has been set up to smooth the cost of running council elections and a Sinking Fund (£4,285,912) which has been set up to repay the Council's interest only mortgages.



### Capital Programme

In 2010/11 the council committed to future additional capital contracts of £20.5m relating mainly to the Connswater Greenway Scheme (of which £1.248m relates to BCC).

During the year to 31 March 2011 the council incurred £6m of expenditure on capital schemes, of which the most significant spend being on Vehicles £1.2m, City Hall £800k, Grove Wellbeing Centre £741k and Information Technology £700k.

### Debt

The overall level of trade debtors has decreased steadily over the last 3-4 years, reducing from £10m at 31 March 2008, to £7.5m at 31 March 2009 to £5m at 31 March 2010 and now £4m at 31 March 2011. An analysis of trade debtors, inclusive of VAT, for the last two years is shown below:

	<i>31 March 2011</i>	<i>31 March 2010</i>
Less than three months	£2,111,911	£2,930,828
Three to six months	£142,744	£170,470
Six months to one year	£188,270	£336,984
More than one year	£1,519,553	£1,554,432
<i>Total</i>	<i>£3,962,478</i>	<i>£4,992,714</i>

### Creditors

The council has a target of paying invoices within 30 days. During the year the council paid 52,912 invoices totalling £88,316,153.

The average time taken to pay creditor invoices was 22 days for the year ended 31 March 2011.

Whilst the Minister at the Department of Finance and Personnel has reduced the target for the payment of invoice for central government departments to 10 days this target is not mandatory for local government. However, the council endeavours to process invoices as quickly as possible and monitors these figures on a regular basis.

### Resource Implications

#### Financial

None

**Human Resources**

None.

**Asset and Other Implications**

None.

**Recommendations**

**The committee is requested to approve the Council's financial accounts and report for the year ended 31 March 2011."**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Minutes of Meeting of Budget and Transformation Panel**

The Committee adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel of 10th June.

**Approval to Seek Tenders**

The Committee granted authority for the commencement of a tendering exercise and delegated authority to the appropriate Directors, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, to accept the most advantageous tenders received in respect of the following:

- (i) a new framework or leasing agreement for the supply of workstations and laptops at an approximate annual cost of £152,000 for a period of four years, with the option to extend for an additional year;
- (ii) the provision of competency based assessment centres to assist with the recruitment of senior Council posts. The Contract to be awarded for a period of two years, with an option to extend for a further two years. The Committee agreed also, given that the Council would be collaborating with other Councils and the value of the contract would require a lengthy European tendering process, to extend the current contract with AS Associates for a period of six months, until February, 2012, and then on a monthly basis thereafter until the procurement process had been completed and the new contract was in place;
- (iii) the supply of timber, at an estimated cost of £44,000. The period of the contract to be for one year, with an option to extend for a further two years;
- (iv) the supply of paint and oils in the sum of £19,000 per annum for a period of one year, with the option to extend for a further two years; and

- (v) the supply of paper refuse sacks and degradable plastic refuse sacks at a cost of £157,000 per annum. The contract would be for a period of one year, with an option to extend for a further two years.

### **Approval to Seek Tenders - Bobbin Coffee Shop**

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of a report in relation to the invitation of tenders for the Bobbin Coffee Shop to enable a further report in relation to the terms and conditions of contractors to be submitted to the Committee. The Committee agreed also that, given that the review of the management of the City Hall could have an impact on the operation of the Bobbin and the fact that the matter had been deferred, to extend the current contract for a maximum period of nine months to enable the procurement process to be completed and a new contract to be put in place.

### **Request for Funding - Common Purpose Belfast (Bursaries)**

The Committee was advised that a request for financial assistance in the sum of £6,000 had been received from Common Purpose Belfast in connection with its 2011 Navigator emerging leaders programme. The application sought support to part-fund three bursaries for non-profit organisations in Belfast. Last year the Council had funded participants from UnLtd Belfast (a charity supporting social entrepreneurs), the Northern Ireland Cancer Fund for Children and EXTERN. The Council had supported the organisation since its inception in 1996 and had approved similar funding in 2010.

Accordingly, it was

Resolved – That expenditure in the sum of £6,000 for the Common Purpose Navigator Programme be approved under Section 115 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972, it being the opinion of the Committee that the expenditure would be in the interest of, and bring direct benefit to, the District and inhabitants of the District, with the Committee being satisfied that the direct benefits so accruing would be commensurate with the payments to be made.

## **Human Resources**

### **Year-End Absence Rates 2010/11**

(Mrs. J. Minne, Head of Human Resources, attended in connection with this item.)

The Head of Human Resources reminded the Committee that, in June, 2010, it had agreed a new two-year Council target to reduce sickness absence to 11.00 days per full-time equivalent by March, 2011 and 10.75 days per full-time equivalent by March, 2012. She reported that the work in relation to absence management had resulted in a reduction in sickness absence of five-and-a-half days per full-time employee since 2005/2006 as shown below:

<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2008/09</b>	<b>2009/10</b>	<b>2010/11</b>
15.75 days	15.08 days	13.91 days	11.22 days	11.98 days	10.3 days

The Head of Human Resources then made the following points:

- at the end of the 2011 financial year, the average number of days of sickness absence per full-time employee had been 10.3 days;
- that meant that the Council had not only met this year's target but had exceeded the two-year target to reduce sickness absence to 10.7 days by the end of March, 2012;
- there had been a reduction in the number of staff absent during the year (58.5%) compared to the same period in 2009/10 which was 61.7%;
- 41.5% of staff had no absence for that year compared to 38.3% for the same time in 2009/10; and
- long-term absence had reduced this year with 58.6% (14,270 days) of absence classified as long-term compared to 63% (19,217 days) for the previous year.

The Head of Human Resources explained that, while the Council had more than achieved its two-year target in one year, considerable resources and significant work had been required to achieve that and would continue to be required to ensure that there was no upward movement. In addition, considerable corporate Human Resources were now being allocated to adopt a similar approach to reducing employee costs, through reducing agency staff and overtime. Therefore, it was proposed that the Council seeks to sustain that level in 2011/12 to reduce to ten days per full-time equivalent by March, 2013.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided, congratulated the Head of Human Resources on achieving a significant reduction in the overall absence rate and approved the target of ten absence days per person to be achieved by March, 2013.

### **Asset Management**

#### **Connswater Community Greenway Update**

The Committee was reminded that, as part of the City Investment Strategy, it had agreed to co-ordinate the acquisition of lands to allow the Connswater Community Greenway to proceed. It was reported that the following four areas of land had been identified as being required to help complete the Greenway route and associated landscaping which officers had agreed to purchase or sell, subject to the Committee's approval:

- an area of 0.029 acres of land off the Montgomery Road from the local branch of the Royal British Legion for £1,250;
- an area of land at the Belfast Metropolitan College on the Montgomery Road consisting of 0.491 acres by way of a Licence Agreement and reasonable legal fees;
- an area of land off of the Alexander Road has to be acquired by the Council from the Police Service for Northern Ireland. However, Northern Ireland Water require 0.041 acres of the land to construct an underground chamber as part of their flood alleviation scheme for the area. Those proposals could be accommodated without conflict with the Connswater Community Greenway. Council officers had agreed to sell that area of land to Northern Ireland Water by way of a 99-year lease for a one-off premium of £1,000 plus payment by Northern Ireland Water of the Council's reasonable legal fees; and
- an area of 0.180 acres of land off the Castlereagh Road to be purchased from Mr. and Mrs. F. Copeland in the sum of £5,000.

The Committee granted the approvals for the purchase and disposal of the lands as outlined.

### **Lagan Gateway Project**

The Committee agreed to defer until its next scheduled meeting consideration of a report in relation to restoration at the Lagan Gateway Project.

### **Land at Dunville Park and Whiterock Close**

#### **Dunville Park**

In accordance with Standing Order 60, the Committee was advised that the Parks and Leisure Committee, at its meeting on 10th February, had approved the purchase of a small portion of land at Dunville Park from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive in order to facilitate the proposed refurbishment of the Park. In addition, that Committee, at its meeting on 9th June, had approved the surrender of a lease by the Council to the Springfield Charitable Association in respect of an area of land within Dunville Park.

The Committee approved the purchase and lease surrender as outlined.

#### **Whiterock Close**

The Committee was advised that the Parks and Leisure Committee, at its meeting on 14th April, had agreed that the Trustees of the Black Mountain Irish Medium School should be liable for rent in respect of land previously leased to them at Whiterock Close up to the date that the school had vacated the site for their new premises, that is, 31st January, 2005, subject to the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

The Committee granted the approval sought.

**PEACE III Capital Bids - Update**

(Ms. C. Wilson, Project Officer, Chief Executive's Department, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**"1.0 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 The overall aim of the Peace III Programme is: *to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation*. Under this priority, entitled 'Creating Shared Public Spaces', Belfast City Council has been lead partner for 8 bids:

Belfast Urban Skatepark	2007	Successful - £300k
North Foreshore bridge	2007	Rejected – no appeal
Community Hub at Girdwood	Nov 09	Deferred – additional information to be submitted by 13 June 11
Crusaders and Newington Sports Village at the North Foreshore	Nov 09	Rejected – no appeal
North Belfast Cultural Corridor (Donegall St., Clifton St., Crumlin Rd.)	Nov 09	Rejected – no appeal. Intention to re-submit elements under priority 1.1 in September 11
Gasworks Bridge to Ormeau Park.	Nov 09	Rejected – no appeal
Community Sports Facility at North Foreshore	Jan 11	Rejected – no appeal
St. Comgall's Shared Space (in association with Falls Community Council)	Jan 11	Rejected – appeal to be led by Falls Community Council

- 1.2 In addition to the £300k awarded to the Urban Skatepark, the following awards have been made by SEUPB, under this priority to projects in Belfast:

Skainos Shared Public Realm	£6.1m
Glen Community Complex, Lenadoon	£3.9m
SS Nomadic Peace Exhibition	£2.3m
Shankill Women's Centre	£700k
Groundwork NI ( <i>agreed in principle</i> )	£2.8m
Grand Orange Lodge( <i>agreed in principle</i> )	£3.9m

## 2.0 Key Issues

### 2.1 Girdwood Community Hub – supplementary evidence for SEUPB

In its correspondence (03 June 10) notifying the Council of the deferral of the Girdwood Community Hub, SEUPB asked for further evidence of the following:

- An implementation timetable for the Community Hub and the wider site (including housing and infrastructure) within an agreed masterplan
- Programming of the facility by strategic partners as part of the Shared Space Action Plan
- Further evidence that there is full political and local PUL community support for the project
- SLAs on the relationship between the Council and strategic partners
- Resource costs to inform the assessment of costs
- An Equality Impact Assessment

A series of papers have been submitted (13 June 11 – subject to ratification by Council), to SEUPB as documentary evidence of the above – attached in appendix. SEUPB's decision-making committee will consider the application at its meeting in early autumn.

There is still the opportunity to submit further information up until mid-August, in light of recently elected Council and newly appointed Ministers.

### 2.2 Girdwood Community Hub – process to date

Over the last 6 months, there has been a series of meetings with community and statutory partners, both on a bi-lateral basis and joint meetings. All agree there is significant merit in securing the resources available from SEUPB for the Community Hub, to benefit local neighbourhoods as well as create a new integrated services centre for the city. Through this process, a number of issues have been negotiated:

- A wider community and political engagement process has been designed for implementation (attached). This includes 3 stages:

- Local media and public information newsheet: Summer 11
  - Engagement process to include design workshops: Sep 11 – Dec 11
  - Engagement process to jointly design and facilitate shared space programming: Jan 12 – Dec 17 onwards.
- 
- The partners are keen that a news sheet is distributed to houses in the local neighbourhoods outlining the proposal and the community engagement process. This will build local confidence. There would be costs associated with this, and independent facilitation for meetings, which would not be recoupable from SEUPB.
  - The location of the Hub has been shifted onto the front of Cliftonpark Avenue for easier access and to reduce infrastructural costs. Negotiations are ongoing regarding the transfer of land from both DSD and NIHE for the revised footprint. It is also critical for all partners that the final location is safe and welcoming for all.
  - A community opportunities and benefits plan will be drafted. This will include social impact clauses including the use of apprentices during the construction phase and the potential for a community trust to operate the hub, in the longer term.
  - Formal discussion on strategic partnerships with Belfast Metropolitan College, Police Service NI and Prince's Trust have all been initiated and agreed in principle.
  - Following feedback from Council Members, it is also recommended that a regular political forum be established, similar to the Connswater Community Greenway political breakfasts, drawing together all of the political representatives for North Belfast.

In order to satisfy the requirements of SEUPB in terms of public engagement and to sustain the momentum which has been created on the hub concept, it is recommended that a sum be made available (up to £25,000) for costs in advance of a formal decision from SEUPB. If a grant award is confirmed by SEUPB, future engagement costs would be recoupable from them.



**2.3 Community Sports Facility at North Foreshore – rejected**

SEUPB has informed the Council that the application was considered by its Steering Committee. It agreed that the application did not meet the necessary threshold (scoring 50%; threshold 65%) and did not proceed to full economic appraisal.

Council officers considered the feedback from SEUPB and decided it was not feasible to appeal the decision within the timeframe given. This was on the basis that this was a significantly re-worked bid building from the original application by Crusaders and Newington Football Clubs and it is very unlikely that an appeal would be successful. It is also worth noting that aspects of this bid have been integrated into a bigger expression of interest for a major commercial sport /recreation use development at the North Foreshore, which will be considered by Committee in the coming months.

**2.4 St. Comgall's Shared Space – decision to appeal**

This bid was led by Falls Community Council, with the agreement that the Council would become lead partner following Committee approval. SEUPB has written to inform FCC that the application did not meet the necessary threshold and did not proceed to full economic appraisal. FCC has requested a de-brief meeting and it is likely that they will appeal the SEUPB Steering Committee's decision.

The SP&R Committee's previous decision (21 Jan 11) was that the Council would become lead partner for delivery, subject to the appropriate legal agreements being drafted by the Town Solicitor. Should the appeal be successful, this agreement will be drawn up and presented to Committee for their consideration.

**2.5 Next steps**

Given the strategic importance of the North Belfast Cultural Corridor, the Director of Property and Projects is proceeding to re-package the concept, in order to identify potential funding streams and partners for its delivery.

Discussions relating to community and political support are ongoing in relation to the Girdwood Community Hub and an update on this will be submitted to SEUPB in mid-August. They anticipate that the project will be presented to their Steering Committee in September/October for a final decision.

Officers will support Falls Community Council in their appeal of SEUPB's decision and the Director will update Committee in due course.

**3.0 Resource implications**

**3.1 Financial**

*Facilitation costs* = up to £12,000 (£300 per day x 20 days x 2 independent facilitators)

*Public engagement event costs* = £5,000 (to cover hospitality, room hire, events, etc.)

*Newsletter costs* = up to £8,000 (inc. printing and distribution costs)

*Total: £25,000* – available from existing revenue budgets. Future engagement costs would be recoupable from SEUPB.

**Assets:** None at present

**Human:** Officer time

**4.0 Equality considerations**

4.1 An equality strategy has been drafted for the Girdwood Community Hub and is attached.

**5.0 Recommendations**

5.1 The Committee is asked:

- For any feedback on the process, including the engagement strategy, in relation to the Girdwood Community Hub;
- To agree the budget for delivery of the Girdwood Hub community engagement process; and
- To note the status of the St. Comgall's and North Foreshore Sports Facility bids.

**6.0 Officers to contact for further information**

6.1 Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects (Ext. 6217)  
Caroline Wilson, Chief Executive's Department (Ext. 3399)  
Sinead Grimes, Chief Executive's Department (Ext. 6203)

## **8.0 Abbreviations**

- 8.1 DSD – Department for Social Development**  
**FCC – Falls Community Council**  
**SEUPB – Special European Union Programmes Body”**

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and approved the budget for the delivery of the Girdwood Hub community engagement process.

### **Capital Programme - Alleygating Project (Phase 3)**

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at a special meeting on 9th February, had agreed to include £700,000 of capital financing for alleygating interventions throughout Belfast. In addition, at its meeting on 8th June, the Health and Environmental Services Committee had agreed to progress the implementation of Phase 3, 2012/14 Alleygate Project. However, that required the approval of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. Accordingly, it was recommended that the Committee agree, from a corporate capital finance perspective, to the implementation of Phase 3 of the Alleygating Project, with a full commitment to invest, including the invitation of tenders and to the award of the contract to the firm submitting the most economically advantageous tender.

### **Good Relations and Equality**

(Mrs. H. Francey, Good Relations Manager, attended in connection with these items.)

#### **Minutes of Meeting of Good Relations Partnership**

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting of the Good Relations Partnership of 6th June and adopted the recommendation in relation to the award of the Summer Intervention Funding.

#### **Memorabilia Working Group**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 3rd June, it had deferred consideration of the re-constitution of the Memorabilia Working Group to enable a report setting out information on the background of its establishment, its achievements to date, likely future workload, difficulties encountered and possible options for the Committee to oversee future work in that area. Accordingly, the Good Relations Manager submitted a report in that regard.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that the Memorabilia Working Group be dissolved and that any business normally considered by that Group be submitted directly to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

### **EQIA Report - Memorabilia and Flag Flying**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1     Relevant Background Information**

Members will recall that at its meeting on 15 April the Committee deferred consideration of the attached report until after the Local Government Elections of May 2011.

Since a newly elected Council is now in place it is appropriate that the new Committee should now consider this issue.

**2     Key Issues**

As noted in the original report, it is proposed that the existing Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) of the Council’s flag flying policy should be refreshed and up-dated. This should be accompanied by a new EQIA on the memorabilia within the City Hall, done in parallel.

It is recommended that the up-dating of the factual information on the flag flying policy be done by the same independent consultant who carried out the original EQIA (Denise Wheatley of the Equality Company) and that this information be fed into a separate but linked EQIA on City Hall memorabilia, to be done by another independent consultant (Dr John Kremer of Kremer Consultancy). Both EQIAs would be developed under the theme of ‘Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment’ – the title of the appropriate guidance issued by the Equality Commission for NI.

This theme would allow both issues to be considered together in a broader context.

**3     Proposed procedure**

It is proposed that Dr John Kremer meet with the Members of the Committee at an early stage, either jointly or in political party groups, to discuss how to best progress this matter. When a process has been agreed, the consultants will begin work with a full report being submitted to Committee in October which will also deal with the issue of what resources are required to implement the recommendations of the process.

**4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

This work will be carried out to comply with all relevant equality guidance.

**5 Resource Implications**

It is anticipated that both EQIAs could be completed for around £12,000; the costs of these can be accommodated within the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee's revenue budget.

**6 Decision required**

The Strategic Policy & Resources Committee is therefore requested to grant approval to:

- the carrying out of a formal Equality Impact Assessment on the City Hall memorabilia by an independent external consultant
- the refreshing/up-dating of the Equality Impact Assessment on the Council's policy of Flying the Union flag by an independent external consultant
- the up-dating of both legal advice and of advice from the Equality Commission on the matter by the Town Solicitor
- the combining of both EQIAs under the theme of 'Promoting a Good and Harmonious Working Environment'
- meeting the recommended consultant at an early date, either as a Committee or by political party groups.

The Town Solicitor will bring a composite report to a future meeting of the Memorabilia Working Group and the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee for consideration in due course.

**7 Officers to contact for further information**

Ciaran Quigley, Town Solicitor and  
Assistant Chief Executive, ext. 6038  
Hazel Francey, Good Relations Manager, ext. 6020

**8 Abbreviations used**

EQIA = Equality Impact Assessment"

After a lengthy discussion, it was

Moved by Alderman Crozier,  
Seconded by Alderman M. Campbell,

That the Committee does not grant approval to the carrying out of a formal Equality Impact Assessment on the Council's policy of Flying the Union Flag by an independent external consultant but undertakes only the Equality Impact Assessment on the City Hall memorabilia.

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

#### **Further Proposal**

Moved by Councillor McVeigh,  
Seconded by Councillor Mallon,

That the Committee agrees to grant the approvals sought in relation to the carrying out of a formal Equality Impact Assessment on the City Hall memorabilia and the up-dating of the Equality Impact Assessment on the Council's policy of Flying the Union Flag as outlined in the report.

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

#### **Homecoming Parade**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

##### **“1.0 Relevant Background Information**

##### **1.1 The Council at its meeting on 4 April 2011, agreed the following notice of motion:**

**‘The City of Belfast extends a warm invitation to the military authorities to hold a ‘Homecoming Parade’ here in to order to welcome home members of the Royal Irish Regiment and Irish Guards on their safe return from their deployment in Afghanistan.’**

**In addition, the Council agreed to host a reception in the City Hall to mark the event.**

**Subsequent to the issue of the invitation, Commander Field Army responded on 21 April to the Chief Executive stating that due to ‘both the Royal Irish Regiment and the Irish Guards ...embarking on a very busy period of post operational duties...(and being) geographically dislocated**

with differing programmes of events (which could not) be disrupted, without infringing on the soldiers and officers taking their full complement of rest and recuperation...it is therefore with regret that...we will be unable to accept the kind and gracious offer made by Belfast City Council, but...offer our sincere thanks for your continued support'. This correspondence was followed up by Headquarters 38 (Irish) Brigade offering support to the Council to further progress discussions on the issue.

- 1.2 At the special meeting of the Council on 3 May 2011, it was noted that further correspondence had been received from Headquarters 38 (Irish) Brigade indicating that the military were willing to meet with Council representatives to discuss how the commitment of the Royal Irish Regiment and the Irish Guards on their return from Afghanistan could be honoured publicly by the Council.

The matter was therefore deferred to enable discussions to be held between the military and Council officers and a report was to be submitted to the next meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

## 2.0 Key Issues

- 2.1 Consequent to that decision, officers have been in discussion with military representatives to discuss options for the homecoming event. At the outset, the military re-affirmed their position that circumstances could not permit them to accept an invitation for a parade for the reasons previously articulated but were happy to explore a number of other options.

The military's preference is for a 'relatively static ceremonial event' that is memorable for both spectators and participants. The regiments can offer a number of event types: an inspection; a review; a mini-tattoo; or an event described by its musical title, e.g. Beating Retreat. Planning for any of these options would include a musical element, the event tailored to any chosen venue/location.

Their representatives are anxious that the event demonstrates the Council's aspirations for an appropriate civic recognition, whilst at the same time acknowledging that this remains a sensitive issue within the city.

2.2 Based on these discussions, a number of issues have emerged in determining the optimum venue/location for the event:

- Appropriate stature for the event
- Sufficient scope for military event
- Accommodation for families and public to view the spectacle
- Sufficient facilities for civic reception
- Meets security requirements.

Any venue/location would require a detailed assessment by the Police Service NI in regard to security and public safety.

2.3 A number of options for the Council-owned venue/location have been discussed with military representatives. A brief appraisal is below:

<u>Venue</u>	<u>Static display area/ parading area</u>	<u>Wider audience</u>
Malone House	Hard standing within the perimeter fence at front of building for static display. Garden to south of building also available for static display. The sloping nature of lawn would be less satisfactory for an inspection or review.	Available viewing for general public would be severely restricted. Limited numbers (up to 350) for reception.
Belfast Castle	Parade limited to car park. Static area for musical displays in ornamental gardens. Castle as an attractive back-drop.	Available viewing for general public would be restricted. Little space to accommodate staged seating. Limited numbers (up to 350) for reception. There is a concern about entrance and egress for a large number of spectators.



Both locations provide satisfactory facilities to host a civic reception. Neither venue will be able to support a large-scale parade, inspection or review; the extensive grass areas would not be easily utilised for parading during autumn/winter months. Both offer hard standing which could facilitate some carefully planned pageantry.

It is the opinion of the military representatives that both of these options require significant compromise on the type/scope of the event, due to size and positioning of buildings/garden areas at the venues. This may fall short of public expectations.

- 2.4 Given the limitations presented by Council-owned facilities, discussion also included non-Council owned venues, specifically the King's Hall and the Mary Peters grounds. It was suggested that both of these options provided more flexibility and scope in terms of pageantry for an event, as well as provide a much larger capacity for the general public:

<u>Venue</u>	<u>Static display area/ parading area</u>	<u>Wider audience</u>
RUAS Kings Hall	Yes – internal and external	Larger venue to accommodate dignitaries, invited guests and the general public with accommodation for civic reception
Mary Peters grounds	Yes	Larger venue which will accommodate greater numbers of dignitaries, invited guests and the general public. However there is no immediate provision for on-site catering which would require the transfer of invited guests to an alternative venue for a reception; this would either be Malone House or City Hall. Such a transfer would require additional logistical support in the form of coaches/buses which will incur additional cost and challenges regarding arrivals at the venue.

Further assessment is required but the military consider the King's Hall as a potential viable alternative should the Council-owned facilities fail to sufficiently meet all the criteria in regard to public spectacle, offering both appropriate internal and external accommodation to facilitate a military pageant event and civic reception. It also provides the opportunity to maximise the impact for the general public within available resources.

**3.0 Resource implications**

**3.1 Financial: Will be determined by final choice of venue/location.**

**Assets: To be determined**

**Human: Officer time**

**4.0 Equality considerations**

**4.1** There will be a differential impact in terms of Section 75 groups, particularly on the grounds of religious and political background. However, this event should be seen within the context of a programme of civic events which confer recognition on a diverse range of groups and organisations, reflecting the spectrum of Section 75 groups.

**5.0 Recommendations**

**5.1** The Committee is requested to advise officers on their preferred location for the hosting of an event and civic reception, in order to welcome home members of the Royal Irish Regiment and Irish Guards on their safe return from their deployment in Afghanistan, which will allow for further scoping with military representatives and allow an approach to the PSNI in respect of a security and public safety assessment."

After a lengthy discussion, it was

Moved by Alderman Crozier,  
Seconded by Alderman Browne,

That the Committee agrees to:

- (i) support the holding of the event at the King's Hall and that appropriate arrangements be put in place to ensure it takes place in the short-term; and

- (ii) that the Council continue to work with the Military and other civil authorities to ensure that a Homecoming Parade takes place in Belfast.

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

#### **Further Proposal**

Moved by Councillor McVeigh,  
Seconded by Councillor Maskey,

That the Council does not proceed with any further discussion with Military representatives in relation to the hosting of a Homecoming event and civic reception as outlined.

On a vote by show of hands nine Members voted for the proposal and eight against and it was accordingly declared carried.

#### **Cross-Cutting Issues**

##### **Thematic Plans 2011/12**

(Ms. S. Wylie, Director of Health and Environmental Services, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

##### **“1 Relevant Background Information**

**1.1 In 2009/10 the Council’s Corporate Plan was restructured to set out a number of key themes on which the Council would focus to ensure that it delivered on its main purpose of improving the quality of life. This approach has been carried through into future corporate plans, including the current draft plan. The main outward facing themes are leadership, environment, economy and support for people and communities. This new approach also meant that Council Departments had to work in a more integrated way to deliver across themes.**

**1.2 To support work on some of priority objectives within these themes, which did not fall neatly within the remit of one department, separate integrated plans were developed for the following work:**

- Older People
- Health and Well Being
- Safer City
- Sustainable Development
- Children and Young People

- 1.3 This approach was developed to move the Council towards a community planning framework, focusing on key themes. With each of the priorities mentioned above there is considerable partnership working with other organisations and engagement with communities / stakeholders.
- 1.4 This paper focuses on the following 3 'thematic working' plans for 11/12 and beyond which are now complete. (Note that the older people's theme has now been incorporated into the Healthier City Plan and that the Children and Young Peoples plan will be reported to Committee at a later date).
- (i) Belfast City Council Sustainable Development Action Plan 2011 – 14
  - (ii) Belfast City Council Safer City Plan 2011 – 12
  - (iii) Belfast City Council Healthier City Plan 2011 - 12
- 1.5 [Due to the volume of pages associated with the reports the full plans are not contained within committee reports but may be accessed on [mod.gov/council.min](http://mod.gov/council.min)]. However a flavour of the priorities is provided in this report.
- 1.6 It should be noted that these plans do not sit in isolation and are related closely to emerging areas of work such as community planning, neighbourhood approaches and community development.

## 2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Each of the plans listed above is managed by cross departmental teams with the direct involvement of a lead Chief Officer. Outputs are reported through the Departmental project management process. A brief summary of each of the plans is outlined below.
- 2.2 (i) Sustainable Development Action Plan 2011-14

The Council's SD Action Plan seeks to meet corporate objectives to:

- Reduce the Council's energy use
- Reduce the Council's carbon footprint
- Reduce the amount of waste we produce and to
- Promote the development of renewable energy and 'green industries'.

It lists a series of over 40 actions within a framework of 6 themes

- (i) Environmental Management systems
- (ii) Environmental Purchasing
- (iii) Energy and Carbon Management
- (iv) Waste Management
- (v) Sustainable Transport
- (vi) Environmental Protection and Enhancement

Energy conservation projects receive a high priority within the plan. Proposals will be evaluated using business planning principles specifying whole life costs, payback periods and potential avoidance of future costs arising from government's new Carbon Reduction Commitment - Energy Efficiency Scheme. (CRCEES).

Implementation of the plan aims to realise cost savings particularly through improved energy management, procurement and internal waste controls. In addition, projects and proposals developed as part of the plan will seek external funding from EU and other sources.

2.3 (ii) Safer City Plan 2011-12

The Belfast City Council internal Safer City Plan for 2011/12 intends to build upon the achievements of the previous two business plans but also reflect the changing environment impacting upon the Council's resources and role. The plan outlines the Council's contribution to the Belfast Community Safety Partnership – a multi agency body comprising representatives from the statutory, private, community and voluntary sectors as well as elected representatives. The Partnership is coordinated and Chaired by Belfast City Council on behalf of all the partners and ultimately reports into the Department of Justice; as well as other relevant funding bodies. The partnership continues to prioritise interventions to tackle

- Antisocial Behaviour
- Alcohol and Substance Misuse
- Hate Crime and Cohesion; and
- Fear of Crime

Specifically in 2011-12, Council Departments will continue to improve and co-ordinate activities to

- address anti social behaviour
- respond to and manage interface issues

- plan and manage bonfire issues
- support Council efforts to reduce on-street and under age drinking
- strengthen internal links between Departments to optimise Council contributions to Safer City aims

2.4 (iii) Healthier City Plan 2011-12

The Council has developed a healthier city framework and action plan for 2011 / 2012. This will drive and coordinate the work of the Council in improving the health and wellbeing of the people of Belfast and in tackling the main health inequalities that exist across the city. The delivery of the Council's Healthier City Plan will be closely aligned with the work of the recently established city wide health and wellbeing partnership and this is achieved through strong connections with the Belfast Health Development Unit (BHDU), a multi agency team established to support the partnership.

The main priorities in the Healthier City Plan are based on those of the city wide partnership and BHDU. They include:

- A reduction in alcohol misuse
- Improving services to older people and reducing social isolation
- Improving the level of physical activity through the Active Belfast programme
- Improving mental health

The action plan for improving services for older people has been incorporated into the Healthier City Plan. Much of the delivery of the Healthier City Plan will be achieved through the BHDU.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 The total cost of £400,000 for implementation of the plans was agreed as part of the 2011/12 revenue estimates.

4 Equality Considerations

4.1 Activities listed within the Safer and Healthier City plans contribute directly to the realisation of Council Equality and Good Relations policies. There are no direct implications associated with the Sustainable Development Action plan.

**5 Recommendations**

**5.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the priorities contained within each of the thematic plans presented, i.e:**

- **Belfast City Council Sustainable Development Action Plan 2011-14**
- **Belfast City Council Safer City Plan 2011-12**
- **Belfast City Council Healthier City Plan 2011-12**

**Decision Tracking**

**Progress on each plan will be monitored within existing performance management systems in the Health and Environmental Services Department”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Community Development Model and Corporate Strategy**

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

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Relevant Background Information**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to present Members with a draft community development model for the city and a council strategy to support it. It also includes proposals for public consultation.**

**1.2 Our corporate plan places great importance on the relationship between the council and the communities we serve. Community development (CD) activity is one of the core drivers of this work. Where it is successful community development work makes it much easier for the council, and our partners, to engage with communities to determine local priorities; to make better use out of local assets; to deliver our services more effectively; and to measure our impact more easily. It also complements and enhances our wider civic leadership role in contributing to quality of life in the city. It will also be a fundamental element of the Council’s emerging community planning role.**

- 1.3 Recognising this underpinning role of community development activity, the Development Committee agreed in May 2010 to design a CD strategy that would help the whole council to contribute more effectively to shared community development goals.
- 1.4 Work on the strategy to date has been in three stages:
- 1.5 Stage 1. Drawing together CD best practice; discussions with council officers; preparing a draft CD statement; and designing an approach to engagement with stakeholders.
- 1.6 Stage 2. Initial engagement with stakeholders (including a series of workshops with council officers and representatives from over 50 external organisations including the community, voluntary and statutory sectors). An All-Party workshop in February 2011 considered the results of preparatory work. While attendance at the workshop was low, Members who attended were enthusiastic about the content.
- 1.7 Stage 3. The formation of a draft community development 'model' to share with our partners; and a community development strategy that would allow the council to contribute to the wider model.
- 2.0 Key Issues
- 2.0 The current draft text is attached as Appendix 1. It does two things:
  - 2.1 1. Establishes a *simple model of community development* that could be shared both within the council, and with our partners across the city; and
  - 2.2 2. Creates a *community development strategy* specifically for the council that would allow us, within the context of our corporate objectives, to contribute to the outcomes described in the model.
- 2.3 The *model* focuses on a broad definition of community development and the strands of work that contribute to it. It also considers the likely outcomes. Over time we would wish to get support from our external partners for the model and eventually agree on how (either individually or jointly) we could contribute to shared outcomes.



- 2.4 The second element, the *strategy*, is for the council and its departments. It considers where the community development model fits with our own corporate objectives, both as a supporting process that enhances the organisation's existing and potential contributions to CD, and as a means for shaping and measuring our impact.
- 2.5 The model and strategy are the result of many months of discussion and workshops with senior officers; with staff from right across council; with external partners; and with Members at a special all-party workshop.
- 2.6 It is now proposed that the next stage in the strategy's development is to widen the consultation to encourage communities, the community and voluntary sector; our statutory partners and others to consider the current draft model and strategy in more detail and work with us to refine its contents.
- 2.7 The role of Members is obviously key to the successful design and delivery of a successful community development strategy. While Members contributed earlier in year to the current draft, an important strand of the final consultation stage will be for officers to work with Members to ensure that the implications of the strategy are more fully explored. The strategy does not sit in isolation but will complement and support many other cross-cutting approaches such as emerging work on Community Planning, the Organisational Development strategy, thematic working and the approach to Neighbourhood working and Neighbourhood Assets which Members may wish to explore.
- 2.8 An agreed strategy will quickly generate a series of implementation activities. These are likely to not only enhance our existing work on community development (particularly within the Community Services section) but also offer ideas for new approaches across the council. For example, closely linked to the development of the strategy has been the development of the council's Community Support Plan 2011 to 2014. The CD strategy has informed the outcomes and focus of the new plan (which will also be ready for public consultation in the autumn) and which will clearly demonstrate the positive contribution that the CD strategy can make.

2.9 Given the strategic nature of the emerging strategy, the fact that it will underpin our work with communities and in neighbourhoods, and its likely implications for departments across the council, the draft strategy is now being presented to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee for consideration.

3.0 Resource Implications

3.1 There are no additional resource implications. The budget for the public consultation is already contained within Community Services agreed budget for 2011/12.

3.2 The main focus of any emerging actions in the initial years of the strategy are likely to be about enhancing or adapting existing activities.

4.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 As part of the pre-consultation work an equality screening process has been undertaken with the support of the Equality Officer.

4.2 The content of the strategy has already been greatly influenced by substantial pre-consultation work and the proposed public consultation exercise will be designed to explore any additional equality issues.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to:

1. Consider and endorse the draft community development strategy.
2. Agree to a full twelve week public consultation programme to begin in late summer (in joint consultation with the draft Community Support Plan) to include briefings with each of the Parties.

6.0 Decision Tracking

Cate Taggart will implement committee decision.

7.0 Key to Abbreviations

CD – Community development  
CSP – Community Support Plan  
DSD – Department for Social Development”

During discussion, the Committee made a number of comments in relation to the inclusion of a strand of work which would empower individuals and encourage active citizenship and the need for more communication in order to cascade the information down into the community. The Director indicated that those issues had been included within building blocks 1 and 2 but that these would be expanded to include the comments made by the Members.

The Committee agreed to that course of action and adopted the recommendations.

Chairman