

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 24th August, 2012

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairman);
the High Sheriff (Alderman M. Campbell);
Alderman R. Newton; and
Councillors Attwood, Convery, Corr, Haire,
Hanna, Hendron, Jones, Lavery, Maskey,
McCarthy, Mac Giolla Mhín, Ó Muilleoir,
A. Newton and Reynolds.

Also attended: Alderman Stoker.

In attendance: Mr. P. McNaney, Chief Executive;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mr. M. McBride, Head of Financial Services;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported from Alderman Browne and Councillors McKee and McVeigh.

Declaration of Interest

In respect of item 3a., viz., 'Requests for the Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality', Councillor Ó Muilleoir declared that he was the Managing Director of the Belfast Media Group.

Investment Programme

Local Investment Fund

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The Local Investment Fund (LIF) has been developed to support the delivery of key regeneration projects in neighbourhoods and also as a means for Members to connect with local communities, in preparation for their formal role in community planning under RPA.**

- 1.2 At its meeting on 22 June 2012, Committee agreed to support in principle 6 preliminary recommendations from the Area Working Groups (AWGs) up to a total value of £790,852:

Area Working Group	Total LIF amount allocated	Amount agreed in principle at 22 June	Amount remaining
East	£1,127,500	£280,852	£846,645
South	£1,127,500	£60,000	£1,067,500
West	£1,127,500	£250,000	£877,500
North	£1,127,500	£100,000	£1,027,500
Greater Shankill	£490,000	£100,000	£390,000

This was subject to confirmation of detailed costings and sustainability as well as seeking authority from the relevant Committees on leasing arrangements.

SP&R Committee also agreed to a cut-off for phase 1 of the LIF, in order to manage the proposals that had already been received by 22 June.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 Area Working Groups

Each AWG has now met to be briefed on their respective long-list of projects. These meetings were well-attended and Members are actively considering a range of issues, including anticipated outcomes, links to partner organisation investments and connectivity between the 5 areas. There has also been preliminary discussion on how the AWGs connect with the work of the service Committees, for example, in relation to tourism development.

Two groups (West; South) have indicated that they would like to convene an inter-agency meeting to develop and, where appropriate, implement collaborative interventions in specific localities within their area. All groups are also exploring how they might engage with the OFMDFM Social Investment Fund Zone Steering Groups, due to convene in September.

2.2 Risk workshop

The Director has recently facilitated an inter-departmental workshop to examine the implications of the next phase of the LIF. With officers from Legal Services, Estates Management, Finance and other relevant disciplines, a number of key issues have emerged. In summary, these issues are:

- **Match funding**

Many of the match funding offers are time-bound and the Council needs to be responsive to those opportunities. Likewise, SP&R needs assurance that its funding will be allocated within the 3 year timeframe of the LIF.

- **Procurement**

A number of AWGs recognise the potential for collective procurement. A flexible mechanism needs to be developed to ensure that opportunities for this to happen are maximised e.g. the purchase of modular buildings. Likewise, there is a need to ensure that procurement processes are compliant with the Council's obligations in relation to EU frameworks

- **Financial monitoring**

There will be a resource implication in relation to ensuring that the proper procedures are applied in relation to accounting for public monies, also in relation to 'claw-back' clauses if the work is not completed. Officers are also developing reporting mechanisms which will provide sufficient audit assurance to SP&R Committee, while ensuring that the requirements on local groups are proportionate to the amount of investment.

- **Quality monitoring**

In order to give assurance to Committee on completed projects, consideration is needed on the quality of the physical investment and outcomes.

- **Monitoring outcomes**

A key consideration by all AWGs, is the potential of the proposals to deliver positive outcomes for the local area. It is critical that the Council is able to demonstrate the benefits of its investment, with evidence that the LIF has had a positive impact on the quality of life for its residents. As part of the work on the contractual arrangements, consideration is also being given to the performance mechanisms which need to be in place. This will be particularly important in relation to the forthcoming Member workshops (see below) to determine local outcomes.

Officers are now working on detailed proposals to present to Committee in relation to the contractual arrangements e.g. terms and conditions, and resources required to administer the implementation phase of the LIF.

An internal mid-year review of the AWGs and LIF will also be undertaken in October, to report to SP&R Committee.

2.3 AWG Recommendations

At the most recent round of AWG meetings, officers updated Members on the external meetings they have facilitated on these proposals. This included ascertaining the stage of development of a wide range of projects. In accordance with Council procedures, individual Members declared any conflicts of interest and this was noted in the minutes of the AWG.

On the basis of the information presented, the AWGs have made the following recommendations for the consideration of the Committee:

Proposal	Reference Number	Up to £ Value	AWG Comments
NORTH			
Gray's Lane play park	NLIF016	£85,000	In principle, subject to further work with group on sustainability and delivery issues.
Ballysillan Community Forum	NLIF041	£44,000	
Benview Community Centre	NLIF043	£35,000	
Upper Ardoyne Youth Centre	NLIF039	£27,000	
North Belfast WISP	NLIF007	£50,000	Subject to match funding obtained within 12 months.
Antrim Road Regeneration CIC – ARC	NLIF049	£100,000	
St Mary's Star of the Sea	NLIF052	£47,000	Subject to confirmation of eligibility
St. Mary's Nursery School	NLIF051	£29,000	Subject to confirmation of eligibility
Salisbury Bowling Club	NLIF050	£27,000	
Rosemount House	NLIF029	£46,000	
Connect Project Ligonell	NLIF036	£50,000	
PIPS	NLIF022	£60,000	

Carrick Hill Community Centre	NLIF020	£15,000	In principle. Subject to match funding obtained within 12 months.
North sub-total		£615,000	

SOUTH			
A number of schemes were identified requiring further information or considered for feasibility			
South sub-total			

WEST			
Falls Women's Centre	WLIF001	£80,000	Subject to match funding obtained within 18 months
Riverdale Residents' Association	WLIF028	£60,000	In principle. Subject to the necessary legal agreements in principle
Community Restorative Justice, Andersonstown Road	WLIF030	£17,000	
Glor Na Mona	WLIF025	£112,000	Subject to match funding obtained within 18 months
An Cumann Chluain Ard	WLIF029	£75,000	Subject to match funding obtained within 18 months
Sarsfields GAC	WLIF036	£80,000	Subject to match funding obtained within 18 months
Rossa Park	WLIF051	£80,000	Subject to match funding obtained within 18 months
Hannahstown Environmental Improvement Works	WLIF004	£20,000	
Community Restorative Justice, Springfield Road	WLIF055	£27,000	

Cultural Heritage Trail/ Cultural Mural Trail for West Belfast	WLIF011 + WLIF040	£50,000	In principle. Subject to match funding obtained within 18 months in principle
Tullymore Community Centre	WLIF016	£41,000	
Frank Gillen Centre	WLIF020	£60,000	
Feile Office Renovation	WLIF022	£50,000	
Relatives for Justice, Glen Road	WLIF023	£34,000	
Turf Lodge Residents' Association	WLIF032	£30,000	
West sub-total		£816,000	

GREATER SHANKILL			
Conway Youth Centre	ShLIF016	£58,000	Subject to match funding obtained within 18 months.
LOCA Children's Development Centre	ShLIF017	£50,000	In principle, subject to further work with group on sustainability and delivery issues. Subject to match funding obtained within 18 months.
Greater Shankill sub-total		£108,000	

It is recommended that Committee approves these recommendations subject to confirmation of costs, clarification of legal issues, sustainability and eligibility where elements of non capital items are included.

2.4 Conditions of offer

The AWGs have identified projects that have significant potential to deliver positive outcomes for the local area. Where projects are agreed in principle if further enquiries address the outstanding issues we would suggest Committee approval stands. Where difficulties arise we will go back to AWGs with outstanding issues.

Further support may be needed from the Council in order to enable groups to maximise the benefits. This will form part of the contract with the group. This is a broader issue, linked to the revenue capacity of the Council. The Community

Development Strategy outlines a role for the Council in supporting the community development infrastructure in the city and there are clear linkages with the LIF and the broader, emerging 'community planning' role of the AWGs. Committee may wish to consider in the future how these linkages can be formalised.

2.5 Workshops

At its meeting on 22 June, SP&R Committee agreed to a series of workshops examining the role of Members in place-shaping and community engagement, in the context of the LIF, as well as the wider context of community planning.

2.6 Feasibility Fund

All of the AWGs have flagged projects for the Feasibility Fund – approximately 22 in total – as agreed previously by SP&R. The Feasibility Fund is also to include City Investment Fund projects. The AWGs recognise that there is a need to manage public expectations and pursue only those projects which are a priority for their area. Further work is needed on a process to determine the priorities across the Local and City Investment Funds.

3.0 Other Area Issues

- 3.1** Most of the AWGs discussed other non LIF issues concerning their areas. The approach in East remains focused on substantial tourism projects. South is also interested in tourism and invited tourism officers to the meeting to explore potential integrated activity particularly in regard to the Lagan Corridor. West have been concerned with integration of community based projects on an area basis. North discussed outcomes in some depth and have a number of projects which they wish to test in feasibility. Shankill raised issues about connectivity particularly in regard to the Belfast Hills. The primary responsibility for directing the priority of the work of officers in the Tourism Unit lies with the Development Committee and Council. At present there is sufficient capacity to deal with the feasibility issues being raised by AWGs but eventually an overall report on the resourcing and prioritisation implications will have to be discussed at the Development Committee.
- 3.2** Specifically West proposed the need for a mutli agency intervention in the Lower Falls/ Divis area and this has been followed up by a letter to the Chief Executive from the Sinn Féin group.

3.3 Similarly South raised a multi faceted issue in respect of Lower Crescent which may have ASB problems but also potential for an artist market within the Council's open space.

3.4 It is positive that the AWGs are identifying difficult problems that will need a co-ordinated response from various organisations and it is suggested that one of the key challenges facing the Council in facilitating community planning will be ensuring effective public services integration at a local area level. It is therefore suggested that each area group should consider one integrated intervention as a pilot.

4.0 Equality Implications

The overall programme of LIF investments will be screened at regular intervals to ensure that the Council is fulfilling its obligations as part of the Equality Scheme, as well as ensuring that it is in line with the Investment Programme's underpinning principles related to good relations and balanced investment.

At the risk workshop, it was agreed that an Equality Strategy for LIF would be prepared for consideration by SP&R Committee in due course. This work is underway.

5.0 Resource Implications

Human: None at present

Financial:

Area Working Group	Total LIF amount available	Previously approved in principle	Additional proposals in para 2.3	Amount remaining
East	£1,127,500	£280,852	£0	£846,648
South	£1,127,500	£60,000	£0	£1,067,500
West	£1,127,500	£250,000	£816,000	£61,500
North	£1,127,500	£100,000	£615,000	£412,500
Greater Shankill	£490,000	£100,000	£108,000	£282,000

Assets: Further work to be completed. Will be presented to Committee for agreement in due course.

6.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee agree to:

1. **Endorse the AWG recommendations in paragraph 2.3 in accordance to the caveats in paragraph 2.4**
2. **Note the current remaining levels of LIF allocation as set in paragraph 5**
3. **To ask CMT to consider how the Council might best address area interventions, encourage each area group to consider a pilot integration intervention and authorise officers to bring suggestions back to Committee on how this might be facilitated.**
4. **To note the workshops and appendices.”**

With the permission of the Chairman, Alderman Stoker referred to the list of projects which had been agreed by the West Belfast Area Working Group and which had been recommended to the Committee for its endorsement. He referred specifically to an application which had been submitted by Suffolk Football Club seeking funding to develop changing and meeting room facilities at the Suffolk Playing Fields. He expressed his view that the Club's proposals had met the criteria for assistance as set out within the prioritisation matrix, given that match-funding had been secured and planning permission obtained for the project. He further stated his view that preference had been given by the Working Group to projects which were not as advanced as the Football Club's proposal. Accordingly, he requested that the issue be re-examined by the Committee.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations within the report, noted Alderman Stoker's comments and requested the West Belfast Area Working Group to report back to the Committee on its consideration of the proposal by Suffolk Football Club. The Committee agreed also to defer the approval of the Gray's Lane Play Park proposal in North Belfast and noted that any allocation of funding to the 'ARC' project in North Belfast was time-bound and subject to match-funding.

Economic Impact of Council Expenditure - Proposed Study Visits

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 **On 22 June 2012, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee approved project briefs aimed at delivering the local spend and social clause targets outlined within the Investment Programme. This is in recognition to the fact that Belfast is predominantly a micro-business economy with 96% of our businesses employing 50 people or less. Consequently through the Investment Programme, the Council has committed to increasing the amount that the Council procures locally from 50% to 60%.**

- 1.2 In recognition of the fact that many councils have tried a range of approaches to achieve similar targets, some research was undertaken to identify best practice. This research pointed to the work of CLES (Centre for Local Economic Strategies) who are based in Manchester. They have carried out a range of action research projects on behalf of a number of local authorities. One of their key clients has been Manchester City Council and they have presented reports outlining the procurement approaches; how these changed over time and the outcomes of this development.
- 1.3 Following an overview of the process presented by CLES at a seminar in the Council offices in late May 2012, a follow-up visit to Manchester City Council (MCC) was arranged for June 2012. Meetings took place with the Heads of Procurement and Economic Development and these presented an opportunity for exchange and discussion as to what worked well; what they would change; what drove them to undertake this work; what the achievements have been and what the next steps are likely to be.
- 1.4 As part of the £150 million capital investment within the Investment Programme, members have also requested that consideration be given to introducing, where appropriate, social and community benefits clauses into council tenders. On 4 July, the Minister of Environment Alex Attwood MLA presented to the Assembly legislation to enable Councils to incorporate social clauses in their contracts.
- Consideration is currently being given to the outworking of this legislation and the Department of Environment (DoE) is working on accompanying guidance.
- 1.5 The Committee will be aware that one of the key projects in the Council's Investment Programme is the investment of a sum of £20M to extend the Belfast Waterfront Hall to provide dedicated conference and exhibition facilities.
- 1.6 The Committee, at the meeting held on 18th May, in considering a report in this regard, agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting which would outline a range of options for the undertaking of study visits to similar-type developments in the British Isles.

2.0 Key Issues

Increasing Local Economic Spend Update

- 2.1 The project brief identifies a series of actions to be taken which will deliver on the objectives around increased access to procurement opportunities for local companies.

- 2.2 Fifty local construction companies are being supported through the Construction Sales Growth Programme (CSGP) to access sub contracting opportunities arising from regeneration initiatives across the city, including council capital build schemes. To date meetings have been held with contractors appointed for the Woodvale and Dunville Park development schemes to promote companies on the programme and to encourage the main contractors to involve them in supply chain opportunities.
- 2.3 In addition to the Council projects, companies have been looking at a range of additional procurement opportunities. Some of the key programme achievements to date include:
- Companies being 'matched' are being helped to tender for over £15million worth of contracts (outcomes of tenders pending)
 - 6 companies have had visits to potential clients in Scotland and England and are following up on potential leads
 - One company has won a contract for a new shop fitting job valued at £400,000
 - Three companies have become Invest NI client businesses
- 2.4 Thirty three local companies have been supported through the Smarter procurement programme to help them to identify procurement opportunities and equip them with the skills to tender effectively. The most recent wave of this programme has identified contracts wins to the value of approximately £1.1 million. This programme is scheduled to open for recruitment in October 2012 with ten places available for local companies.
- 2.5 As outlined above, in order to learn from best practice, a cross departmental group of council officers undertook a visit to MCC in June 2012. The purpose of this visit was to learn firsthand what the key drivers behind the Manchester experience were and how the council has maintained momentum in its efforts to improve its procurement practices.
- 2.6 Critically for MCC a key driver was a research project undertaken on their behalf by CLES. The project tasked CLES to measure the economic impact of the council's spend and to recommend how MCC could move towards more progressive procurement practices.

- 2.7** The CLES research measured MCC's spend with local suppliers, the number of jobs supported locally through council spend and the re-spend in the local economy by suppliers. This data informed the development of MCC's procurement practices and allowed for a more targeted approach to improving local spend targets, resulting in an increase of supplier re-spend in the local economy from 23p to 43p in every £1 over a three year period.
- 2.8** Facilitating linkages between suppliers and the local Job Centre Plus offices was a key task as part of the MCC improvement project. One example of the practical application of this linkage was that the security contractor appointed by the Council has committed to working with the Job Centre Plus and other local employment and training organisations in order to ensure that long-term unemployed people are given an opportunity to apply for these jobs. The Council has committed to providing additional pre-employment support for these individuals in order to ensure that they are prepared for the recruitment process.
- 2.9** Overall the visit reassured officers that the approach we are taking will lead to an increase in the local economic impact of council expenditure. Council already have in place many of the fundamentals evidenced in Manchester such as the electronic tender portal, and have been exploring other support initiatives such as targeted information events; business support programmes to improve tendering skills and changes to our communication with businesses e.g. improving our website; making information on tenders more accessible.
- 2.10** Further opportunity for learning exists through the Manchester experience. It is proposed to undertake a further visit to Manchester focusing upon the Manchester into Construction Scheme and the work undertaken to engage with existing suppliers such as G4S. It is further proposed to invite the Chairperson of the SP&R and Development Committees and all Party Group Leaders or their nominees to participate on a future visit.
- 2.11** The Manchester experience outlined the importance of baseline data to inform the development of progressive procurement practices. It is therefore recommended to seek approval from council to develop an economic impact model to measure the impact of council spend in Belfast, Greater Belfast and the wider region. It is proposed this should be delivered in partnership with the Local Government Procurement Officers' Working Group and follow a similar model to MCC, with some modification for local needs.

- 2.12 At a recent Local Government procurement officer group at which Minister Attwood attended he declared his interest in the Local Multiplier Model. Subsequently his officers have been in touch with a view to developing a Northern Ireland based model.
- 2.13 A report outlining the key findings from the MCC visit is available on Modern.gov.

Local Government Best Value

(Exclusion of Non-commercial Considerations) Order NI) 2012

- 2.14 On the 4th of July the Assembly passed the Local Government Best Value (Exclusion of Non-commercial Considerations) Order (NI) 2012. This legislation seeks to relax the restrictions on councils to consider certain non-commercial matters as part of its procurement processes.
- 2.15 Of the most direct relevant to the Council is the removal of the restriction on considering the terms of employment of individuals, as this restriction prevented the use of clauses providing opportunities to the unemployed.
- 2.16 The legislation enables councils to consider the use of social clauses as contractual conditions, for instance, requiring contractors to provide employment opportunities to the unemployed. Such conditions must not infringe the general principles of EU law and provided that such clauses are introduced in such a way that they do not discriminate.
- 2.17 Furthermore, the Council can only use social clauses insofar as they relate to the functions of the Council and given the Councils powers in relation to economic development, could consider inclusion of social clauses which aim to provide job opportunities for the unemployed.
- 2.18 This legislation comes at a time when the Council has been actively reviewing the measures which it can put in place by way of 'social clauses' in its procurement contracts for the purpose of stimulating local employment and skills opportunities, and promoting better opportunities for local small businesses by way of better procurement support initiatives.
- 2.19 Through the Local Government procurement officer group Belfast Council Officers will continue to work with the DoE in order to develop guidance on how best to implement the opportunities created by the new legislation.

Convention Centre and Exhibition Centre – Study Visit

2.20 As highlighted, members suggested that study visits be undertaken to understand how national conference and exhibition facilities are operated. As part of the study trip to Manchester there is an opportunity to combine the visit to Manchester City Council, CLES and a prestige convention and exhibition centre.

2.21 Initial contact has been made with a number of organisations

Birmingham International Convention Centre

2.22 This centre was opened in 1991 and is considered to be one of the most prestigious conference venues in England. The facility has helped to rejuvenate the canals area of Birmingham and is operated by an organisation known as Marketing Birmingham.

2.23 Mr. Tim Mason Director of Marketing Birmingham has indicated that his organisation would be pleased to host a deputation from the council on Wednesday 12th September, where a working lunch would be provided. Mr. Mason has agreed to provide an overview of the experience in establishing successfully establishing convention and conference facilities provide a tour of the site.

2.24 Within the correspondence Mr. Mason has indicated that the Lord Mayor of Birmingham Cllr. John Lines has expressed an interest in visiting Belfast and specifically Titanic Belfast. This request will be passed to the Lord Mayor's Unit and arrangements can be made to facilitate such a visit.

The Convention Centre Dublin/ Digital Hub/ Waterways Ireland

2.25 The Convention Centre in Dublin was opened in 2010 and is Ireland's first purpose built convention centre. It is located at the Spencer Dock close to the city centre and was funded through a public – private finance initiative. The Centre has become a landmark building in Dublin and offers a full – range of facilities to suit the modern conference and exhibition market. A request to receive a Council deputation on a date in late – September has been forwarded to the Centre and is hoped that the Committee will be updated in this regard at its meeting on the 24th August.

- 2.26 At the meeting of the Committee on 18th May, Members expressed also an interest in undertaking study visits to Dublin's Digital Hub and to the headquarters of Waterways Ireland, which oversaw the re- development of the Royal and Grand canals. Accordingly, requests have been forwarded to these organisations with a view to undertaking a collective study visit in one day. Again, an update will be provided to the Committee at the meeting.

Other venues identified for a potential visit

- 2.27 These include Edinburgh International Convention Centre & Liverpool Convention Centre. A request has been forwarded to Edinburgh Council and the operators of the Liverpool venue asking that it host a Council deputation. Should we get a positive response from the Liverpool operators it may be possible to combine this study trip with that in Manchester.

3.0 Resource Implications

Financial

The costs associated with the study visits and the use of CLES can be met from within existing budgets.

Human Resources

Resources to deliver the proposed actions will be made available from cross departmental units including Democratic Services, Economic Initiatives and Procurement Units.

4.0 Equality Implications

None.

5.0 Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

1. Note the contents of this report.
2. Authorise the attendance at study visits of the Party Group Leaders, together with the Chairmen of the Strategic Policy and Resources and Development Committees (or their nominees). These include combined visit to Manchester and Liverpool and a subsequent visit to Edinburgh.
3. Authorise the attendance at the study visits of the appropriate officers.

4. Approve the Council's approach to adopt a Belfast Economic Multiplier Model and if required appoint appropriate contractor to complete this work.
5. Approve, if tender required that delegated authority be given to the Director to award any contract."

The Committee adopted recommendations 1, 4 and 5 within the report. The Committee agreed further that a series of study visits to various locations should take place and that Members attending the visits be agreed between the political parties and the Chief Executive. Such attendees to be drawn from the Party Leaders, the Chairmen of the Strategic Policy and Resources and Development Committees and other Members of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (or their nominees). The Committee agreed also that appropriate officers would be authorised to accompany Members on the study visits.

Job Opportunities and Employability

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

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on progress with the job opportunities and employability targets set out in the Investment Programme, to seek agreement on delivery methods and to seek approval to create a number of new 'permanent peripatetic' Business Support Clerk jobs.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 As part of the Investment Programme, Members have committed to 400 placement, apprenticeship and internship opportunities in the council and the creation of 200 job opportunities at no additional cost to the ratepayer. Work is ongoing to progress these initiatives and ensure targets are met. Job opportunities have already been advertised and significant work is ongoing to create as many job opportunities as possible in the first year of the Investment Programme. Job opportunity targets for each year of the Investment Programme were agreed with Members in June and progress against these targets is set out in the next section of this report.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 23 March 2012, Strategic Policy And Resources Committee agreed that the council should work in partnership with the Department of Employment and Learning and provide work placements for government led employability initiatives. This report also sets out our plans to ensure that our employability targets are met.

3.0 Key Issues

Job opportunities

3.1 Progress against job creation targets previously agreed with members is set out below:

Year	Target	Actual to date
1	110	65 permanent 23 temporary
2	60	
3	30	

Thirty-seven of these have been newly created permanent posts, 28 of these have been permanent posts arising from staff turnover, 16 of these have been newly created temporary posts and 7 have been temporary posts resulting from staff turnover.

- 3.2 Members will be aware that one of the main ways to deliver the 200 job opportunities is to reduce long-term, perpetual dependency on agency usage and create directly employed council posts.**
- 3.3 On average there are at least 40 agency Business Support Clerks (BSC) assigned to the council in any given month. These agency assignments are mainly required to cover the duties of directly-employed council BSCs who have temporarily vacated their posts for reasons such as maternity leave, career break, temporary promotion etc. Given the continual requirement for cover of this type it recommended that the resources currently used to pay for BSC agency assignees is used to create a number of 'permanent peripatetic' BSC council posts which will be temporarily assigned to any council service or department, based on business need, in the same way as agency resources.**
- 3.4 To ensure a reduction in the use of BSC agency assignees (and the council BSCs employed on a temporary basis) these new permanent council posts will be monitored and managed on a regular basis by the corporate HR Section.**
- 3.5 Another area of work that has had sustained significant and consistent use of agency staff is the post of Cleansing Operative. Any decision to replace agency workers with permanent Cleansing operatives will however depend on the outcome of an ongoing review of Waste Collection. More information on the potential for creating job opportunities in Cleansing will be provided to Committee at a later date.**

Work placements

- 3.6 We want to ensure that placement opportunities are aligned as far as possible to job opportunities, by ensuring that the job opportunities created are advertised at a time that allows effective pre employment support for the long term unemployed, enabling them to get “job ready”. HR has been working with departments and LEMIS providers across the city to provide this pre employment support in a number of ways ranging from reducing eligibility criteria for posts being advertised to assisting with mock interviews for those invited to interview.
- 3.7 As part of its existing community outreach programme ten young people are currently participating in the second year of the Young Person’s Employment Initiative (YEPI). Of the 10 participants who completed a placement in year one of the YEPI programme, 7 have moved into employment; a success rate of 70%. Also, since April of this year we have provided 41 work placements for schools, colleges and universities and 10 disability placements. Please see Appendix 2 for further detail.
- 3.8 From October 2012 we will be providing work placements for the following government led programmes:
- Steps to Work
 - Programme Led Apprenticeships (a programme for 16/17 year olds)
 - Graduate Acceleration Programme
 - Youth Employment Initiative

The Youth Employment Initiative is a new initiative aimed at 18 – 24 year olds. It will be launched by DEL in September and we are already providing work placements for 2 young people to help DEL pilot the scheme before it is finalised.

- 3.9 While these training programmes will attract a training allowance on top of the relevant benefits and participants do not receive a wage as such, it is important to remember that the council’s investment in terms of support and supervision is significant and that participants’ input will not be expected to be that of a paid employee. The placements will provide them with the opportunity to develop the skills and acquire the experience that they need to be able to compete for jobs. Additional information on these proposed programmes and a work placement plan are provided on Modern.gov.

Future opportunities

- 3.10 The possibility of further work placement opportunities is currently being explored with the Cleansing Section. The section currently uses agency workers to cover its temporary seasonal requirements and there may be potential to provide valuable work experience for the long term unemployed on a seasonal basis. More detail on this will be presented to Committee at a later date. The Council will continue to work with DEL to explore existing and potential funding to support the Council's employability targets.

Definition of 'long term unemployed'

- 3.11 Other than initiatives aimed at targeting unemployed young people (24 and under) it is proposed that 'long-term unemployed' is defined as those who have been unemployed for at least one year. The intention being to support those who are furthest removed from the labour market. It should be noted that the application of this requirement may prevent a number of people from being eligible to participate in some of the work placement programmes or applying for posts which are 'ring fenced' ^[1] to the long term unemployed, i.e. current or recent agency staff.

Next Steps

- 3.12 The creation of job opportunities in front line services continues to be a priority and while there is potential to create some front line jobs from reducing reliance on agency workers and from structural reviews, the focus will have to be on reducing overtime to create more of these types of jobs. This will be a complex piece of work and may have far reaching implications for some existing staff. Therefore, the potential job opportunities in front line services expected from a reduction in overtime will take longer to achieve.

4.0 Resource Implications

4.1 Financial

The monies currently paid to the council's current employment agency contractor for Business Support Clerks will be used to fund the additional 'permanent peripatetic' posts.

4.2 Human Resources

Engagement in these employability initiatives requires increased support and supervision within departments.

5.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

5.1 The Employment Services Board (ESB) will develop a monitoring framework for the delivery of the Investment Programme and we will work closely with them to ensure the consideration of the city wide equality implications and targeted need.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 Members are asked to:

- note progress to date with the employability and job creation targets
- approve the creation of up to 40 'permanent peripatetic' basic-entry Business Support Clerk (BSC) Scale 3 posts
- agree the definition of 'long-term unemployed' as one year for potential participants older than 24."

After discussion, during which the Head of Human Resources answered a number of Members' questions in respect of the report, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Waterfront Hall Exhibition and Conference Facilities
Legal and Human Resources Issues

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

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"Relevant Background Information

One of the key projects highlighted in the Council's Investment Programme is a proposal to invest £20M to extend Belfast Waterfront Hall (WFH) to provide dedicated conference and exhibition facilities which will help strengthen Belfast's offer to the market.

At its meeting on 6 February 2012, the Development Committee considered the various options for the extension, as set out in the Economic Appraisal commissioned by the Committee in 2011. The Committee agreed that the option of a two storey extension of the WFH over the service yard to the rear of the venue represented the most suitable model for the Council to endorse. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee considered the funding and human resource elements of the project at its meeting on 18th May 2012 and was advised that the Economic Appraisal prepared for the

ERDT funding bid indicated that the most cost effective operating model for this new facility was for the Council to enter into a management contract with an external, established conference operator, rather than for the Council to run the new facility itself.

It was agreed that in order to satisfy its Best Value legal obligations and potential funders for the project, the Council will have to demonstrate that both operating models have been fully examined and a clear business justification set out for any decision taken by the Council in relation to the running of the facility.

Consequently, it was agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that officers should examine the potential human resources, legal and financial implications of both operating models.

Key Issues

1.0 Human Resources & Legal

There are a number of HR and legal issues to be managed regardless of which operating model is adopted.

Should the Council adopt the operating model of a management contract with an external provider the HR and legal issues would mainly relate to the transfer of BCC staff to the new facility.

For those staff who are identified as part of an organised grouping which carries out activities principally in connection with the operation of the WFH, it is anticipated that the provisions of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) and the Service Provision Change (Protection of Employment) Regulations (NI) 2006 will apply. That is, affected staff will be transferred to the employment of the chosen external operator of the facility on the basis of their existing terms and conditions of employment.

Many of the potentially affected staff however, are employed to work at both the Waterfront Hall and the Ulster Hall. Consequently, a robust, fair and transparent mechanism for accurately determining the distribution of workers and organised groupings of staff will have to be developed, (i.e. to establish which staff would be covered by the relevant legislation and therefore transfer to the new facility).

Further, the Council will have to effectively manage those staff who would not automatically transfer.

Should the Council retain and operate the new WFH Exhibition and Conference Facilities in-house the main issues relates to the fact that current staffing structures and working practices and conditions of employment at the WFH are not sufficiently aligned with the commercial requirements of the WFH operation.

Staffing structures; working practices; job descriptions; and conditions of employment for affected staff would therefore need to be reviewed.

There may be potential redundancy implications with each model but this will not be clear until the operating model/structure of the new WFH conference facility is known. Any potential redundancy would be managed in accordance with the Council Redundancy processes (this includes the facility for voluntary redundancy payments and the obligation to seek suitable alternative employment for redundant staff).

The implementation of either operating model will require full and meaningful consultation and negotiation with the TUs and affected staff. Initial discussions between management and the TUs have taken place but detailed consultation with the TUs will be undertaken once further market testing work has been done and the Council has a clear view of its future operating model at the WFH.

2.0 Financial

The Economic Appraisal which has been submitted to NITB in support of the application for funding indicates that the most cost effective operating model for the new facility is for the Council to enter into a contract with an established conference centre operator.

This is based on a number of assumptions including likely staffing structures and associated labour costs. These costs are indicative at this point and based upon the staffing structures of similar facilities elsewhere.

It will only be possible to make a true cost comparison of the two operating models when potential operators have been identified and potential contractual arrangements have been considered. Only at that point can a fully informed analysis be undertaken to ensure the Council is in a position to select the most cost effective option. It is important that as a matter of urgency the Council now begins to identify potential operators to allow Council officers to fully analyse the two operating options, establish the extent of the staffing issues set out above, the costs associated with these options and thus make a clear recommendation to Council on how to proceed.

In the interim period the Council will also undertake a robust assessment of the cost assumptions of the internal operating model taking into account the work undertaken in relation to human resource and legal issues.

Other Issues

The delivery of this project is dependent upon the Council successfully securing and drawing down ERDF grant of circa £10.5m and a further £2m from NITB's Tourism Development Scheme. In order to achieve this, all construction contracts must be entered into by 31st December 2013 and all construction work and payments must be complete by 30 June 2015. These timescales for delivery are extremely challenging.

Final approval for the funding is not expected until December 2012 however to meet the June 2015 deadline it is important that the Council begins the process of procuring the construction of the building as soon as possible. Officers therefore require approval to proceed 'at risk' to Design Stage D in accordance with the RIBA design process so that an application for full planning permission can be made.

Resource Implications

The cost of proceeding to RIBA Stage D is estimated to be £600k. It is anticipated that should the funding application be successful this will be subject to a grant of £360k.

Equality Implications

None

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note the content of the report. In order to allow a true cost comparison to be made between different operating models, the council approve market testing of the conference facility to potential operators. During the time that this market testing is taking place, Members will explore operating models at other conference centres in the UK and Ireland and a final decision will be taken when full information on cost and the different operating models is considered.

It is further recommended that in order to meet the tight timescales for delivery of the project permission is given to proceed to Design Stage D."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Democratic Services and Governance

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

(Councillor Ó Muilleoir left the meeting whilst this item was under consideration.)

The Committee considered the undernoted requests which had been received for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality:

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Queen's University of Belfast	Concrete Solutions – 5th International Conference Reception 2nd September, 2014 Approximately 200 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 event will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's key theme of 'City Leadership – strong, fair, together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500
Society of Editors	Society of Editors Conference Reception 11th November, 2012 Approximately 200 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 event will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's key theme of 'City Leadership – strong, fair, together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500
Army Cadet Force Association	Army Cadet Force Awards Ceremony 30th September, 2012 Approximately 500 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	The Army Cadet Force Association aims to develop young people physically and mentally, improving self-confidence, teamwork, friendship and leadership. The Awards Ceremony seeks to recognise the vocational qualifications, which are equal to four GCSEs, achieved by its senior cadets. This event would contribute to the Council's key themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Support for People and Communities' and in	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits Approximate cost £1,250

			addition would contribute to the Council's thematic area of Children and Young People.	
Duke of Edinburgh's Award	Silver Award Presentation 23rd November, 2012 Approximately 500 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	These awards aim to recognise the development of citizenship amongst young people and to acknowledge the newly found skills and talents which will enable them to develop and mature as individuals. This event meets the Council's key themes of 'Better support for people and communities' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city' and in addition would contribute to the Council's thematic area of Children and Young People.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits Approximate cost £1,250
Volunteer Now	Volunteer Awards 5th December, 2012 Approximately 150 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	This event seeks to recognise those volunteers who have demonstrated a commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society, their community, the environment or individuals. The event also seeks to promote the positive effect which volunteering has in combating poverty, helping those who are disadvantaged and promoting social inclusion. This event would contribute to the Council's key themes of 'Better opportunities for success across the City', 'Better support for people and communities' and 'Better Services – Listening and Delivering'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits Approximate cost £375
Chartered Institute of Housing	2013 Annual Chartered Institute of Housing Awards	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in	This event seeks to recognise the achievements and contribution made by	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the

	<p>Ceremony 28th February, 2013 Approximately 200 attending</p>	<p>the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception</p>	<p>individuals who have contributed to providing affordable housing in a thriving and safe community. This event would contribute to the Council's key themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together', Better opportunities for success across the City' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>form of a pre-dinner drinks reception Approximate Cost £500</p>
<p>Belfast Media Group</p>	<p>Belfast Sports Volunteer Awards 2012 21st March, 2013 Approximately 150 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception</p>	<p>This event seeks to recognise the achievements and contribution made by individuals who have given their time voluntarily to help support sport in order to ensure that young people can enjoy their games and fulfil their ambition. 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 wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500</p>
<p>The Boys' Brigade Northern Ireland District</p>	<p>Queen's Badge Celebration 17th May, 2013 Approximately 500 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event aims to celebrate the achievement of young people who, through their volunteering and support work, have achieved the highest award within The Boys' Brigade. 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 tea, coffee and biscuits Approximate cost £1,250</p>
<p>The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association</p>	<p>Walk A Mile In My Shoes 1st November, 2012 Approximately 50 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event aims to give sighted people the opportunity to experience the everyday obstacles which blind people face in the City and to make the Council area a more welcoming environment</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks</p>

			<p>for all of its citizens.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's key themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together', 'Better Support for People and Communities' and 'Better services – listening and delivering'.</p>	<p>Approximate cost £225</p>
<p>Suicide Awareness and Support Group</p>	<p>Walk out of the Darkness into the Light</p> <p>10th September, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 400 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event will highlight Suicide Awareness and Prevention Day and will provide an opportunity for families to obtain support and promote awareness around health and suicide related issues.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's key themes of 'Better Support for People and Communities' and 'Better services – listening and delivering'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £900</p>
<p>Shared History Interpretive Project</p>	<p>Belfast's Merchant Seamen and Dockers – Comrades at the Somme</p> <p>26th September, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 60 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception</p>	<p>This event will seek to highlight the significance and changes to the city in the period around the Somme. It will also provide the opportunity for citizens to tell their family stories and share with those present.</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 wine and soft drinks</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
<p>Translink</p>	<p>Recognition of the contribution by the Translink Safety Bus</p> <p>1st October, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 75 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event will seek to celebrate the support the Translink Safety Bus has provided to the communities in Belfast. The purpose of the Safety Bus is to ensure the safety of drivers and enhance travel for all passengers by promoting a simple message of respect and consideration for drivers and fellow</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £190</p>

			<p>travellers.</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>Reminiscence Network Northern Ireland</p>	<p>Reminiscence Network Showcase</p> <p>18th October, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 80 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event aims to highlight the work carried out by the Reminiscence Network. The RNNI aims to promote well-being through recall therapy and reminiscence. The organisation is made up of members from a variety of backgrounds and will give an opportunity for all members to contribute by way of their memories.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's key theme 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 tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £200</p>
<p>Action on Hearing Loss</p>	<p>Launch of 'Employ Your rights'</p> <p>22nd October, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 70 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event will launch the "Employ Your Rights" initiative which will provide advice and support for employers and show that deafness does not need to be a barrier to employment.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's key themes of 'City Leadership – strong, fair, together' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £175</p>

BT	<p>Making a Difference Event</p> <p>19th October, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 360 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall	<p>This event seeks to acknowledge the employees who through their long and dedicated service have contributed to the communications network in the City.</p> <p>BT and Belfast City Council have worked together as strategic partners for many years in the area of telecommunications and network infrastructure. A secure, robust and scalable network is the foundation for the council to deliver strategic outcomes across the city. BT is one of the key stakeholders in delivering a 'Super-connected Belfast' and have worked closely with BCC to ensure that a complete picture of telecommunications infrastructure was made available for our Urban Broadband bid.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's key themes of 'City Leadership – strong, fair, together' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'.</p>	The use of the City Hall
Business in the Community	<p>Business/Social Enterprise Exchange</p> <p>8th November, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 50 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	<p>This event will provide an opportunity to introduce businesses to a range of community and voluntary organisations and to ascertain what support can be provided.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's key themes of 'City Leadership – strong, fair, together' and 'Better Support for People and Communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £125</p>
Age Sector Platform	Northern Ireland Pensioners' Parliament –	The use of the City Hall and provision of	This event will provide a mechanism for older people from across	The use of the City Hall and provision of hospitality in the

	<p>Belfast</p> <p>21st February, 2013</p> <p>Approximately 200 attending</p>	<p>hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>Northern Ireland to have their say on the issues that matter to them.</p> <p>The event is one of seven local events which will identify issues of concern within the city and will be used to elect representatives to the overall Pensioners' Parliament.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together', 'Better Services – listening and delivering' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>form of tea/coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
<p>Scripture Union Northern Ireland</p>	<p>Unite</p> <p>9th March, 2013</p> <p>Approximately 500 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a soft drinks reception</p>	<p>This event will seek to bring together young people from across Northern Ireland. It is hoped to promote the voice of young people whilst empowering them with the experience and transferable skills to demonstrate their Christian faith.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's key themes 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and of 'Better support for people and communities' and in addition would contribute to the Council's thematic area of Children and Young People.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a soft drinks reception</p> <p>Approximate cost £1,000</p>
<p>Belfast Healthy Cities</p>	<p>Health for All – Stronger Equity and Better Governance Lectures</p> <p>26th March, 2013</p> <p>Approximately 100 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits.</p>	<p>This event will provide a unique opportunity to engage senior representatives from Belfast and allow for debate on leadership for health in the City. There will also be an opportunity to learn and share good practice through the a leading and renowned international expert on health. Belfast City Council has been a</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits.</p> <p>Approximate cost £250</p>

			<p>partner of Belfast Healthy Cities since its inception in 1988.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's key theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.</p>	
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The Committee approved the recommendations as set out and agreed also to authorise, on 26th November, the use of the Lavery Room in the City Hall, together with the provision of appropriate hospitality, to the Northern Ireland Local Government Association for a meeting of the United Kingdom Forum for Local Government.

INTERREG 'B-Team' Project

The Committee was reminded that the Council was the Lead Partner in the international INTERREG 'B-Team' Project, which was funded by the European Regional Development Fund. The Project sought to influence regional development policy in the regeneration of 'Brownfield' sites by hosting a range of dissemination events. It was reported that Belfast would host a dissemination event from 10th till 13th September and the Development Department had requested the use of the Council Chamber, on a date to be determined, in order for the findings and recommendations arising from of the various workshops to be considered on a formal basis with a wider audience.

The Committee acceded to the request.

Publication on the Internet of Committee Reports

The Democratic Services Manager reminded the Committee that, at its meeting in November, 2008, it had agreed to publish committee agendas and reports on the Council's internet site in advance of meetings taking place. However, at the meeting on 22nd June, concern had been expressed that such a practice had, on occasion, placed Members, and particularly Chairmen, in an unenviable position since they were being requested by sections of the media to comment on Committee business prior to having been briefed formally by Council officials. Accordingly, the Committee had requested that a review of the Policy be undertaken.

The Democratic Service Manager reported that he had, in conjunction with the Council's Corporate Communications Section, reviewed the Policy. He suggested that, in view of the concerns which had been expressed by Members, the Committee might consider establishing a new policy whereby agendas and reports, with the exception of those reports or parts thereof which were restricted under the publications policy, would be made available publicly, either on the day of the Committee meeting or the next working day following the meeting. That would, he pointed out, enable the media and the public to access reports, whilst ensuring that the several Committees on the Council had an opportunity to consider reports prior to Chairmen being requested to comment publicly.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to amend the Policy as outlined.

European Local Democracy Week 2012

The Committee was apprised of the programme of activities which would be held in October to mark European Local Democracy Week. It was reported that the Banqueting Hall would, on 8th October, host the Opportunity Youth-organised 'EurVoice' which would be attended by the Lord Mayor and each of the Council's Youth Champions which would be nominated by the Political Parties. The Democratic Services Manager indicated that the costs associated with the event regarding hospitality, IT technology, travel and accommodation for invited guests, if required, would be approximately £3,100, provision for which had been made within the Departmental estimates.

The Committee authorised the use of the Banqueting Hall for the event, together with the expenditure as outlined, and authorised also the attendance at the event of the Council's Youth Champions.

Northern Ireland Veterans' Advisory and Pensions Committee – Request for Deputation

The Committee was advised that correspondence had been received from the Chairman of the Northern Ireland Veterans' Advisory and Pensions Committee seeking permission to address the Committee regarding its work in providing assistance to ex-service personnel and their dependants.

The Committee agreed to receive a presentation in this regard at a future meeting.

Live streaming and Archiving of Council Meetings on the Internet

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 18th November, 2011, it had agreed, at a cost of £60,000 for a three-year period, to permit the live streaming and archiving of Council proceedings on the internet. Accordingly, the Committee was provided with an overview of the number of viewers which had accessed the live Council proceedings since 1st December, 2011, together with figures on the number of viewers which had accessed archived proceedings since that date.

The Committee noted the information provided.

Signing of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant – Request for Further Re-enactment

The Committee was reminded that the Joint Ulster Centenary Committee had been granted permission by the Council to stage a re-enactment of the signing of the Ulster Solemn League and Covenant in the City Hall on 29th September between 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that correspondence had been received on 17th August from an organisation known as the 2012 Centenary Committee, which was affiliated to the Joint Ulster Centenary Committee, requesting that the Council consider granting it permission to stage a further re-enactment of the signing ceremony on 29th September between 1:00 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. That request had arisen since a number of the members of the 2012 Centenary Committee would be unable to attend the morning ceremony since they would be involved with events elsewhere. He reminded Members that such a request would normally be referred to the Joint Group of the Party Leaders' Forum and the Historic Centenaries Working Group. However, given that there was not sufficient time for that to take place, he suggested that the matter be considered on a one-off basis.

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Maskey,
Seconded by Councillor Corr,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the request by the 2012 Commemoration Committee to enable meetings to be held with the organisers to consider the matter in more detail.

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 Reynolds,
Seconded by Councillor Newton,

That the Committee agrees to accede to the request by the 2012 Commemoration Committee, on the basis that the organisers adhere to the Council's agreed principles for the commemoration of events associated with the Decade of Centenaries.

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

Laying of Wreath at the Memorial to the 14th Battalion Royal Irish Rifles

The Democratic Services Manager reminded that Committee that the Council, at its Annual Meeting on 1st June, had agreed to permit the 36th Ulster Division Memorial Association to use the City Hall on 10th September for an event to mark the formation of the Young Citizen Volunteers of Ireland. It was reported that the Association had written to the Council indicating that, as part of the event, they were requesting permission to lay a wreath at the Young Citizens Volunteers Memorial, in the East Entrance of the City Hall, in honour of those members of the 14th Battalion, Royal Irish Rifles (Young Citizens), who died in the Great War.

The Committee acceded to the request from the 36th Ulster Division Memorial Association.

Finance/Value-for-Money

**District Rate Position at 31st March, 2012
and Implications for District Rate Income in 2013-14**

The Committee considered a report which provided an overview in respect of the above-mentioned matters and, after discussion, agreed that Council officials would continue to work in conjunction with officials from Land and Property Services to progress the following matters:

- to assess the likely impact of the current debt levels on future income from the rate, including the rating of empty homes;
- to ensure that the risk associated with valuation challenges would be included within the Estimated Penny Product for 2013/2014;
- to test the Land and Property Services' position regarding the sharing of data on vacant properties for the purposes of maximising the rate; and
- to examine a number of scenarios regarding the impact potential which zero growth in the rate base, or a fall in the rate base, would have on the District Rate requirement for 2013/2014.
-

Rate Setting - High Level Guidance Process 2013/2014

The Committee considered a report which provided an overview in respect of the above-mentioned matters.

Alderman Stoker, with the permission of the Chairman, on behalf of the Ulster Unionist Party on the Council, indicated that he wished to place on the record that his Party would be opposing any increase in the District Rate for 2013/2014.

The Committee adopted the following recommendations, subject to future update reports clearly identifying the basis of the rate of inflation comparator figure being used:

- that the high level guidelines issued to departments should require that the overall increase in departmental estimate submissions should be zero percentage (excluding a potential pay rise, since this will be accounted for corporately);
- note that work would continue with the Land and Property Services to estimate the impact of the current economic conditions on the City Rate Base and to agree initiatives aimed at reducing the risk to the rate base;

- note that further updates on the development of the estimates, capital expenditure plans and the rate base position, will be provided to Members in line with the timetable provided.

Financial Reporting – Quarter 1 2012-13

The Committee considered the contents of a quarterly finance report for the period from 1st April till 30th June, 2012. The Head of Financial Services answered a range of Members' questions in respect of the figures contained therein.

The Committee agreed that no further action was required at this stage and that the position would be considered further at the end of Quarter 2.

Noted.

Publication of Employee Travel Costs

The Committee noted the costs for employee travel for the financial year 2011/2012 and agreed that, in line with previous years, the figures would be published on the Council's website. In addition, it was noted that details regarding employees' conference, subsistence and accommodation fees were placed on the Council's website and details would be provided to the Committee.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the Budget and Transformation Panel of 17th August.

Human Resources

Policy on Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace

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

The Committee approved and adopted a Corporate Policy on Domestic Violence and Abuse in the Workplace, a copy of which was available on the Council's Modern.gov website.

Asset Management

Derelict Gate Lodge at City Cemetery - Whiterock Road Entrance

The Committee was reminded that the Parks and Leisure Committee had, at its meeting on 13th January, 2011, approved the contents of a Development Brief to seek to restore the derelict Gate Lodge at the Whiterock Road entrance to the Belfast City Cemetery. It was reported that, since that time, further discussions had been undertaken with officials from within the Parks and Leisure Department and local Elected Members regarding the content of a future Development Brief in order to ensure that the Gate Lodge was developed in a sensitive manner which would be in accordance with the surroundings within the City Cemetery.

In accordance with Standing Order 60, the Committee authorised the issue of the Development Brief as outlined and noted further that update reports in this regard would be submitted in due course.

Drumglass Park - Gate Lodge

The Committee was reminded that the Gate Lodge at Drumglass Park had in 1991 been sold to a private individual for use as a residential dwelling. At the meeting of the Parks and Leisure Committee in January, 2011, it had been agreed, in response to a request from the owner of the Gate Lodge, to explore the feasibility of changing the terms of the 1991 lease to permit the development of a retail boutique at the site. Accordingly, the Council had consulted the Department for Social Development's Charities Branch and it was reported that authorisation had been granted to the Council to amend the terms of the 1991 lease by Deed of Variation to enable the change to the use of the building.

It was reported also that in 1923 the Council had been gifted the Gate Lodge for a period of 900 years. However, the terms of the 1991 long-term lease agreement between the Council and the resident had been for a period of 850 years, which had exceeded the Council's ownership of the Gate Lodge by 18 years and would, therefore, require amendment.

In accordance with Standing Order 60, the Committee agreed to endorse the change of use of the Gate Lodge at Drumglass Park and agreed also to the amendment to the 1991 long-term lease as outlined.

North Foreshore - Commercial Leisure and Cultural Development Proposals

The Committee considered the undernoted report.

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 At its meeting on 21st January 2011 the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee were advised of an interest from Crusaders/Newington and a third party to develop a sports/leisure complex at the North Foreshore. The Committee agreed that officers explore the proposals further and seek Expressions of Interest in this regard.**
- 1.2 A public advertisement was thereafter made on 4 March 2011 inviting Expressions of Interest for Commercial Sports/Recreation uses for a site comprising up to 23 acres. At a subsequent meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 19 August 2011 Members were advised that two submissions for commercial sport/recreation use had been received prior to the closing date.**

- 1.3 The Expressions of Interest stage was the first stage of a site disposal process and was largely intended to explore the nature of interest in the market. The Expression of Interest had indicated a site up to 23 acres would be available but the submissions received indicated that a larger site footprint would be required. It was also evident from the submissions that much more detailed information would be required from the developers in order to demonstrate that the proposed schemes were deliverable, financially and commercially viable and suitable for the environmental conditions of the site and that the developers have a proven track record in the delivery and operation of large scale regeneration projects.
- 1.4 At the 19th August 2011 Committee it was agreed to move to the second stage of the process and publicly advertise a Developer's Brief seeking Commercial Leisure and Cultural uses for a defined site. Three site size options were put to the Committee ranging from a 23 acre site to a 39 acre site and it was agreed that in order to fully test the private sector interest that a 39 acre site be made available.
- 1.5 The Development Brief was subsequently advertised both locally and in Europe with a closing date of 21 November 2011. However no positive responses were received as at the closing date. One of the original developers who had responded to the Expression of Interest advised that he had decided not to go forward. The second party who had responded to the Expression of Interest was Paul Durnien-China Sun Asia Pacific Ltd; Crusaders FC & Newington FC (Durnien). They had proposals for a major sports complex including a stadium for Crusaders Newington together with a digital film post production facility. However they failed to submit a bid in response to the Developers Brief.
- 1.6 Members were advised, at the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 9 December 2011, that Durnien had subsequently firmed up the proposals and now required a larger site than that proposed in the Development Brief. Durnien had advised that they had not responded to the Development Brief as they wanted to avoid the risk of a bid for a larger site being contested. They did however say that they remained committed to their scheme and had requested a meeting with the Council and relevant ministers from DCAL, DSD & DETI to explore options. Members agreed that as the Development Brief exercise had been completed the offer of the meeting should at least be taken up as there was potentially substantial investment and job creation associated with the proposal.

- 1.7** Various meetings and exchanges of correspondence have taken place from this date. The Council met with Durnien / China Sun Asia Pacific Ltd on 19 January 2012; 2 February 2012 and 15 March 2012 to discuss proposals and to request that more detailed information be forwarded to the Council.
- 1.8** The Council then met with DCAL on 5 April 2011 to discuss proposals and to agree on the best way on taking these forward from a joint Council/DCAL perspective. DCAL had advised that they had met with Mark Langhammer and associates and had received a written proposal from them. They also advised that the Minister Carál Ni Chuilin had agreed in principle to be the lead department in the project and that the Minister was also keen to have sight of the Council's in depth due diligence on the proposal when completed. It was agreed that due to the nature of the proposal and to avoid duplication in the due diligence exercise that a round table meeting be convened of the relevant government departments, to include DCAL, DETI and DSD and the Council. The Council wrote to Durnien after this meeting to advise him of this and also reiterating the need for due diligence information and requesting that this information (as set out in the previous Development Brief) be provided.
- 1.9** The subsequent roundtable meeting was held on 29 May 2012 and attended by DCAL, DSD, DETI and the Council. DCAL advised again at this meeting that the Minister had agreed in principle to be the lead department but that she had requested further due diligence information. It was also advised that DCAL had twice written to Mark Langhammer asking for due diligence information but had not received any formal response at that stage. There was a general consensus of support at the meeting for the project if a more robust proposal was submitted and that the government departments, working with the Council, would endeavour to make the project happen should a robust proposal be submitted. It was agreed that the Council would contact Durnien again requesting this information for due diligence.
- 1.10** A subsequent meeting took place on 12 June 2012 between the Council; DCAL and Durnien / China Sun Asia Pacific Ltd. Durnien advised at this meeting that they were still working up the detail of their project and proposed to set up a new Belfast Limited company and a special delivery company for the site. They also indicated they had funds available for the project and that they would be happy that the land is released on a phased basis. They said they had made inroads into appointing a team of specialists including a commercial agent

who would subsequently contact the Council. They further advised that they were well advanced with the indoor arena proposals and had started on the sound stage designs on the media side. Both the Council and DCAL reiterated again the need for more detail and for the due diligence information previously requested.

- 1.11 Whilst a subsequent meeting did take place on 4 July between the appointed commercial agents and the Council it was in very general terms as the agent had limited details at that time in relation to the proposals.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 In meetings with Durnien / China Sun Asia Pacific Ltd they say they remain committed to the project and are currently working up their proposals. However, despite various requests for more detailed information, which Durnien / China Sun Asia Pacific Ltd have said they will provide, this has not, to date been forthcoming.
- 2.2 There would appear to be a general consensus of support from the relevant government departments (DCAL; DSD; DETI) for the project if a more robust proposal is submitted but these departments have also reiterated the need for more detailed due diligence information in order to properly assess the deliverability and viability of the project.
- 2.3 The previous Development Brief set out information that was to be provided as part of the developers submission, including financial and funding information, detail of the development proposals, proposed financial return and wider economic benefits; planning, technical and environmental considerations and risks etc. This is required to assess the viability, deliverability and suitability of any proposal. This information has not, to date, been provided and in the absence of such information a proper evaluation of any development proposal for the site cannot be undertaken.
- 2.4 Given that the site size requirement may differ from that as originally advertised; together with the time lapse from the date of the last public advertisement of the Development Brief, and the need to try and time limit the return of the requested information, it is recommended that a new Development Brief is publicly advertised setting out a site that may be available (on a phased basis); the due diligence information required and a clear end date for the receipt of this information. It is also recommended that the Brief sets out that the disposal of the land will be on a phased basis,

which will be dependent upon completion of development within agreed timescales. It is also proposed that the detail of the revised Development Brief, particularly in relation to the due diligence information being requested, would be agreed in advance with the relevant government departments.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

The financial implications of any proposed development are unknown at this stage and will be dependent upon the outcome of the Development Brief process.

3.2 Human Resources

Staff Resource, primarily in Property and Projects and Legal Services, to progress.

3.3 Asset and Other Implications

The development of this site represents a major regeneration opportunity for Belfast and has the potential to create significant economic and social benefits

4. Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 None at this time.

5 Recommendations

5.1 It is recommended that Members agree to proceeding with a revised Developers Brief for commercial leisure and cultural purposes for a site at the North Foreshore as outlined above, on the basis of clearly defined time limits for receipt of developers submissions. Further reports will be brought back to Committee following receipt of any submissions.”

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Tamar Street Site

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 25th April, it had agreed to accept the surrender of the lease from the Scout Association for Council premises located on Tamar Street and approved also the demolition of the building located thereon. That decision had been based on the age and condition of the property and on the understanding that the existing requirements of community groups in the area could be accommodated within existing facilities within the locality.

Subsequent to that decision, the Director of Property and Projects reported that requests had been received from the East Belfast Protestant Boys' Flute Band to utilise the premises for a historical and cultural society, a local women's group and a Lambeg drumming club. In addition, a further request has been received on behalf of the Lower Castlereagh Community Group, the Templemore Action Group and the Forward Group which aimed, on a collective basis, to use the facility for the purposes of a drop-in centre for young men who were considered to be at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that the matter be referred to the East Belfast Area Working Group for further consideration.

Proposed Deed of Variation - 10 Stockman's Lane, Belfast

The Committee was advised that the former Client Services Committee, at its meeting on 7th November, 1995, had agreed to dispose of the former Groveland's House, 10 Stockman's Lane. The property was sold subsequently, by way of a 900 year lease, to Children's Enterprise (Northern Ireland) Limited for residential or office use. It was reported that the charity wished to sell the premises and that the proposed buyers were seeking to use the property as medical consulting rooms. Accordingly, a request had been received seeking the Council's consent to vary the terms of the 1998 lease to permit the property to be used as medical consulting rooms. In addition, the proposed buyers had indicated that they would wish to make a number of small alterations to the exterior of the property and such plans had been inspected by Council officials and were deemed to be quite minor and superficial in nature.

In accordance with Standing Order 60, the Committee agreed that the lease dated 30th January, 1998, between the Council and Children's Enterprise (Northern Ireland) Limited be amended to permit, in addition to residential and office use, the property to be used as medical consulting rooms and agreed also to authorise the minor amendments to the exterior of the building.

Shore Road Playing Fields – Community Capital Programme

The Committee was advised that the Parks and Leisure Committee, at its meeting on 9th August, had agreed provisionally to enter into a ten-year management lease agreement with Grove United and Malachians Football Clubs, together with a Deed of Dedication with Sport NI, which would enable the upgrading of an existing pitch to a 3G surface at the Shore Road Playing Fields.

In accordance with Standing Order 60, the Committee endorsed the decision of the Parks and Leisure Committee, subject to the following conditions:

- that the Grove United and Malachians Football Clubs secure the necessary statutory approvals;
- that the clubs secure the necessary funding for the project;
- that the lease would contain clauses to ensure that the facility would support and contribute to the Council's wider strategic outcomes;

- that any legal framework would make provision for a maintenance programme for the upkeep of the pitch and to provide also a capital replacement fund to meet the costs of capital items during the term of the agreement; and
- that full detailed terms and conditions of the agreement would be brought back to a future Committee meeting for approval.

Waterworks Park – Belfast Play Forum Lease

The Committee was reminded that the Parks and Leisure Committee had, at its meeting on the 9th August, agreed to contribute a sum of £5,102.04 to the North Belfast Play Forum to assist it to replace the polymeric surface at the Multi-Sports Games Area at the Waterworks Park with a 3G pitch. In addition, the Parks and Leisure Committee had agreed also to enter into a 15-year lease agreement with the Play Forum to enable it to manage, on behalf of the Council, the facility, which had been a condition of the principal funders for the project, viz., BIFFA Waste Management.

The Committee agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 60, to endorse the decisions of the Parks and Leisure Committee in respect of the payment of £5,102.04 to the North Belfast Play Forum and approved the entering into of an appropriate lease agreement for the future management of the facility as outlined, with full detailed terms and conditions to be brought back to a future Committee meeting for agreement.

Connswater Community Greenway – Land Acquisition Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

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

2 Key Issues

2.1 The Committee is reminded that at its meeting on the 18th June 2010 it approved the purchase of the area for the Greenway. The owners of the Laburnum Site, CBM Developments Limited subsequently approached Council officials with a view to changing the route of the Greenway to minimise the impact on the future development potential of Laburnum Playing Fields.

- 2.2 In addition, the route of the CCG adjacent to the British Legion site off Montgomery Rd has proven difficult to agree and there is little scope for an alternative route at this location. After much negotiation with the British Legion it has been agreed that the CCG will be constructed over the Loop River. The S&PR Committee approved the acquisition of half the bed of the Loop River at this location from Fiona Thompson on the 15th April 2011 and the acquisition of the other half bed of the Loop River at this location from the British Legion on the 17th June 2011. Council officials have now agreed, subject to Committee approval, to acquire a compensatory strip of land from the Belfast Metropolitan College and transfer it to the British Legion at no cost to the British Legion. This arrangement is vital to allow the construction of the Connswater Community Greenway at this location, without the additional land the British Legion could not rebuild their club premises on the site without compromising the position of the Connswater Community Greenway. The transfer will be initially by way of land access agreement until such times as the purchase from the Metropolitan College as outlined below has been completed.
- 2.3 The area of land consisting of 0.501 acres has been identified as being required in part for the construction of the Connswater Community Greenway and otherwise to provide the British Legion with a compensatory strip to allow redevelopment of their site as outlined above. Council officials have agreed to acquire the land outlined red on the plan attached from the Belfast Metropolitan college for £9000.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 There are no additional resources required for the proposed acquisition from CBM Developments Ltd.
- 3.2 The transfer of the land and the grant of the temporary Land Access Agreement will be at no cost to the British Legion.
- 3.3 The proposal to acquire the land from the Belfast Metropolitan College requires expenditure of £9000 plus reasonable legal fees.

3.4 Human Resources

Staff resources required from Estates Management Unit and Legal Services to complete the acquisition from CBM Developments Ltd and the Belfast Metropolitan College and the disposal to the British Legion.

3.5 Asset and Other Implications

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

4 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 The Connswater Community Greenway will have a positive impact in terms of equality of opportunity and good relations.

5 Recommendations

5.1 It is recommended that the Committee approve the change in route for the Connswater Community Greenway;

5.2 It is recommended that the Committee grant approval to the transfer and the temporary Land Access Agreement to the British Legion; and.

5.3 It is recommended that the Committee grant approval for the Council to purchase the land for £9000.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Belfast Zoo Playground –
Capital Programme Request**

The Committee was advised that the Parks and Leisure Committee, at its meeting on 9th August, had agreed to request that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee designate a sum of £215,000 within the Council’s Capital Programme to assist in the re-development of the playground at the Belfast Zoo. That sum, it was reported, would be eligible for match-funding should an economic appraisal and business case of the project be approved by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board under its Tourism Development Scheme (TDS). The Director of Property and Projects reported that the original application had been unsuccessful but that the Tourist Board had confirmed in June that the project had been placed on a reserve list for assistance. He added that the Director of Finance and Resources had indicated that sufficient resources could be identified within existing budgets to cover the anticipated outlay.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that a sum of £215,000 be allocated within the Capital Programme towards the project and agreed also that officers be reminded that the existing criteria for the submission of projects for consideration under the Council’s Capital Programme must be adhered to in future.

Capital Programme - Alleygating Scheme

The Committee was advised that the Health and Environmental Services Committee, at its meeting on 1st August, had agreed that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee be requested to endorse the undernoted course of action in respect of the Council’s Alleygating Scheme:

- To the advancement to Phase 3 of the programme and to commit a sum of £700,000 to enable its delivery;
- To seek tenders for the establishment of frameworks for the supply and the installation of alleygates for a period of up to four years; and
- To delegate authority to the Director of Property and Projects for the award of tenders and frameworks.

The Committee agreed to endorse the recommendations of the Health and Environmental Services Committee.

Good Relations and Equality

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

Minutes of the Meeting of Good Relations Partnership

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Good Relations Partnership of 6th August and endorsed the decisions in respect of the following:

Lower Shankill Community Association

The provision of funding in the sum of £2,500 to the above-mentioned body to enable the undertaking of a programme of work to provide five small community artworks to enhance the Lower Shankill area.

Interfaces – Local Projects

The provision of £2,000 towards the ‘Draw Down the Walls’ interface art project.

Joint Group on Diversity – Update report on Operation Banner

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

At its meeting on 3rd September, 2007, the Council passed the following resolution in response to a Notice of Motion by (then) Councillor Patterson:

‘This Council acknowledges the tremendous support and sacrifice made by Her Majesties Forces during thirty-five years of conflict in Northern Ireland. Operation Banner was the longest running campaign in military history, a campaign

which saw the loss of many lives. Peace in Northern Ireland came at a heavy price but without the selfless dedication and commitment of the British Army, Ulster Defence Regiment, Royal Irish Regiment and the Royal Ulster Constabulary /Police Service of Northern Ireland this great City and, indeed, the entire Province would have found itself in a state of civil war. The Council welcomes the ending of Operation Banner but must be ever mindful of the ultimate sacrifice many had to pay for peace. The Council agrees to construct a fitting memorial to the Servicemen and women who helped to maintain peace and law and order during the duration of Operation Banner.'

No action was taken at that time as the Council was preparing to decant from the City Hall. At its meeting on 24 April 2009 the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee referred this to the (then) Memorabilia Working Group to be considered as part of the overall review of memorabilia and there was a suggestion at the meeting that the memorial might take the form of a stained glass window.

A report was submitted to the Memorabilia Working Group on 29 May 2009 which noted that there were already 3 stained glass windows in the City Hall dedicated to various arms of the forces – including the UDR, the British Army and the RUC/George Cross. The Working Group agreed, on that occasion, that the memorial should be located in the City Hall grounds, preferably in the Garden of Remembrance and made several suggestions, including a bench with a suitable memorial plaque, tree planting etc.

The Memorabilia Working Group considered a further report with a range of options and costs at its meeting on 14 August 2009. These options included the planting of semi-mature trees, a bespoke granite seat and a memorial bronze statue. The Memorabilia Working Group Members discussed these options at various meetings in 2009 and 2010 but no decisions were made; Party Groups were to consider the issue and report back their views but no agreement was reached regarding what form the memorial should take or an associated budget.

Members may wish to note that in the interim, a 19 feet high bronze statue in memory of the Ulster Defence Regiment was unveiled in the centre of Lisburn in June 2011. It was funded entirely by the UDR Memorial Trust and was intended to be a regional/Northern Ireland wide memorial.

Key Issues

At the meeting of the Joint Diversity Working Group on 29 June 2012, the issue was considered again and the Members requested

updated costs for a number of options, including the alteration of the existing UDR window and additional features provided within the Garden of Remembrance. These are set out below in ascending order of cost:

Option	Description	Approximate cost
1.	Existing UDR window to be modified to include the 'Conspicuous Gallantry' Cross awarded by HM The Queen on 6 October 2006 for their work 'during Operation Banner' and an interpretative brass plaque to be placed alongside the window	£1,800 (Window = £1,000; internal plaque = £800)
2.	A granite bench and four semi-mature trees (one for each decade of Operation Banner) with a dedication plaque on one planter, located in the Garden of Remembrance	£25,100 (Bench = £2,220; planters + trees = £17,900; external plaque = £5,000)
3.	An external bronze memorial on a Portland stone plinth	£55,000

The Joint Group discussed the matter and recommended that these 3 options should be forwarded to SP&R Committee for their consideration.”

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Maskey,
Seconded by Councillor Mac Giolla Mhín,

That the Committee agrees not to adopt any of the recommendations within the foregoing report.

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

Wreath-laying at the Cenotaph

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 At a meeting of the Joint Group of Party Group Leaders Forum and Historic Centenaries Working Group, there was preliminary discussion on the arrangements relating to the laying of wreaths at the Cenotaph. This has arisen in relation to a number of requests from Honorary Consuls to join the Remembrance Sunday ceremony.

- 1.2 There is a further matter in relation to unofficial wreath-laying at the Cenotaph. A second report will be brought to SP&R Committee in due course. This will also include criteria regarding requests for access to the Cenotaph and other related issues.

2.0 **Key Issues**

- 2.1 The Cenotaph at City Hall is a focal point for paying respect and honouring the military dead of the two World Wars. The two main large scale public events hosted by the Council are the Somme Ceremony on 1 July and Remembrance Sunday in November; both are organised in association with the Royal British Legion.

There appears to have been no formal criteria related to participants at the main ceremony and this 'custom and practice' has been established over the past 30/40 years. The only major change in the VIP wreath laying in this ceremony in recent years has been the inclusion of the Honorary Consul from Poland, because of the size of the Polish population in Belfast and the contribution of the Free Polish forces in the Second World War. In addition, in 2011, the First Minister attended to represent the NI Assembly for the first time.

- 2.2 More recently, two new requests have been received by the Council. These are from the Honorary Consul of Malta and the Honorary Consul of St. Vincent & the Grenadines. Members should note that there are at least 30 Honorary Consuls in NI.
- 2.3 Given the civic importance of the Belfast event, the Joint Group reviewed current practice and how best to deal with new requests to lay additional wreaths. Officers advised the Joint Group that some preliminary discussion had taken place with the Royal British Legion (RBL) on the matter. The RBL had already written to the Council asking us to be mindful of the length of the current ceremony in view of the advanced age of the remaining veterans and members of the RBL.
- 2.4 The Joint Group considered the new requests and noted the potential for further requests. They recognised the importance of the new Honorary Consuls, particularly in the context of the changing diversity of the city and promoting good relations.

They also acknowledged that the ceremony is already quite long and is an extended period to be standing outdoors in winter months, particularly for older members of the RBL.

- 2.5 In recognition of both of these issues, the Joint Group is recommending to SP&R Committee that the current arrangements remain in place for invitations to the Honorary Consuls representing France, India, United States, Canada and Poland.
- 2.6 In order to accommodate new requests, the Joint Group recommend that a single additional invitation is issued to the other Honorary Consuls. It is proposed that this will be on a strictly rotational basis, ensuring all Consuls are fairly treated, and the attending Honorary Consul will be asked to lay a wreath on behalf of all of the other Honorary Consuls in Northern Ireland (i.e. on behalf of those not included above at 2.5).

It is proposed that invitations for 2012 and 2013 are extended to the Honorary Consul of Malta and the Honorary Consul of St. Vincent & the Grenadines in the order of their written requests as received by Council; and in alphabetical order thereafter. Should an Honorary Consul choose not to take up the invitation, it will be passed onto the next on the list, time permitting.

- 2.7 Any further new requests to lay wreaths at either the Remembrance Ceremony or the Somme Ceremony will be brought to Committee for their consideration.

It is anticipated that any new arrangements will be in place in readiness for this year's Remembrance Day ceremony.

3.0 **Resource Implications**

None

4.0 **Equality Implications**

This policy revision has been screened and there are no adverse impacts for any S75 group.

5.0 Decisions Required

Committee is asked to agree:

- the new arrangements for issuing invitations for the Remembrance Ceremony to Honorary Consuls;**
- any further new requests are brought to Committee for consideration.**

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that any further requests received from Honorary Consuls be brought to the Committee for its consideration.

Chairman