

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 19th October, 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,
Hendron, Jones, Lavery, Maskey, McKee,
McCarthy, McVeigh, Mac Giolla Mhín,
A. Newton and Reynolds

In attendance: Mr. P. McNaney, Chief Executive;
Mr. C. Quigley, Assistant Chief Executive/
Town Solicitor;
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

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

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 7th and 21st September were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st October, subject to the amendment of the minute under the heading "Request for the Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality" to provide that a finger buffet be served at the Falls Youth Providers Awards in the City Hall on 15th October.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Attwood declared an interest in respect of Item 2(a) Local Investment Fund Update in so far as it related to the application by Colin Glen Forest Park.

Investment Programme

Local Investment Fund - Update

(Councillor Attwood left the meeting whilst this item was under discussion.)

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.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 AWG Recommendations on LIF proposals

At the most recent round of AWG meetings, officers updated Members on the external meetings they have facilitated on the LIF proposals. In accordance with Council procedures, individual Members declared any conflicts of interest and this was noted in the minutes of the AWG. Members are asked to note that only the West, North and Shankill AWGs have met in time for the preparation of this report and put forward project recommendations.

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

Proposal	Ref No.	Up to £	AWG Comments
WEST AWG			
Colin Glen Forest Park	WLIF009	£61,500.00	Subject to match funding being obtained within 12 months
Suffolk	Agreed that this would be passed to Parks & Leisure for consideration under its capital programme. The AWG is arranging a site visit to the Suffolk area for consideration of a number of potential projects		
WEST sub-total		£61,500.00	
NORTH AWG			
Midland Boxing Club	NLIF011	£100,000	All are subject to match funding being obtained within 12 months
Macrory Hall	NLIF023	£100,000	
Cliftonville Community Economic Development	NLIF047	£100,000	
NORTH sub-total		£300,000	
SHANKILL AWG			
Highfield/Springmartin floodlit astroturf sports facility	ShLIF009	£100,000	In principle subject to discussions with DSD for additional funding
SHANKILL sub-total			

All of the above have been assessed against the prioritization matrix and the summary is contained in appendix 1. It is recommended that Committee approves the above projects subject to confirmation of costs, clarification of legal issues, sustainability etc.

Total LIF Commitment to date

- 2.2 43 LIF projects have been approved in principle by SP&R Committee at its meetings in June, August and September. At September the amount that had been committed in principle was £3,359,893.40. This was subject to confirmation of detailed costings and sustainability as well as seeking authority from the relevant Committees on leasing arrangements.

AWG	Total LIF allocation	Agreed in principle SP&R June	Agreed in principle – SP&R Aug	Agreed in principle – SP&R Sept	Total agreed in principle (as at October Council)	Add. Proposals (Para 2.1)	Amount remaining**
East	£1,127,500	£280,852		£580,000	£860,852	-	£266,648
South	£1,127,500	£60,000	-	£173,541.40	£233,541.40	-	£893,958.60
West	£1,127,500	£250,000	£816,000	-	£1,066,000	£61,500	£0
North	£1,127,500	£100,000	£530,000	-	£630,000	£300,000	£197,500
Shankill	£490,000	£100,000	£108,000	-	£208,000	£100,000	£182,000
Sub total	-	£790,852	£1,454,000	£753,541.40	-	£461,500	-
TOTAL	£5,000,000				£3,359,893.40		£1,540,106.60

**Assuming the above projects at 2.1 are approved by Committee and ratified at Council.

Feasibility Fund

- 2.3 The SP&R Committee, at its meeting on 22nd June, approved the establishment of a Feasibility Fund up to the value of £500,000. The Fund is intended to be used to move projects to a stage where Members can make decisions regarding future financing. This work may involve the preparation of

- 2.4 The following projects have been recommended for progressing to feasibility -

NORTH AWG - Projects proposed for Feasibility Funding	
Project Ref	AWG Recommendations
NLIF010 – New Sunningdale Community Centre	Feasibility study
NLIF057- Ardoyne Holy Cross Boxing Club	Feasibility study

NLIF032 – Finlay Park Community Centre NLIF033 – Fairyknowles Play Park NLIF058 – Community Hall – St. Ninian’s	To be combined as one Feasibility Study
NLIF027 – Sailortown Forum – St. Josephs Church NLIF028 – Sailortown Regeneration	To be combined as one Feasibility Study
NLIF016 – Play Park at Gray’s Lane	Feasibility study

SHANKILL AWG - Projects proposed for Feasibility Funding	
<i>Project Ref</i>	<i>AWG Recommendations /comments</i>
ShLIF022 – Welcome Church Community facility	Feasibility study

The other AWG’s will recommend Feasibility fund proposals in November as agreed at Committee in September.

- 2.5 As outlined to Committee at its meeting on 21st September, any feasibility work undertaken will be commissioned and procured by Council through the Project Management Unit ‘Call-Off’ contracts. If the above projects are agreed, Council officers will progress these to the next stage.

Update on Area Working Group Workshops

- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 The first round of these workshops, which were facilitated by Jon Huish, took place during the last week of August and the first week of September. The objective of the initial workshops was to develop a shared understanding the local area, its assets, issues and existing investments. A joint workshop, to which all Members were invited, was then held on 24th September. This workshop explored best practice around place-shaping and started to identify the capacity and processes needed to undertake effective community engagement.
- 2.8 The dates for the next series of workshops, which will be focused on identifying a vision for change for each area and agreeing area specific outcomes, are currently being finalised and Members will be notified by Democratic Services when these have been agreed.

3.0 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.

4.0 Resource Implications

Human: Resources are currently being allocated to individual projects.

Financial: As outlined in para 2.2 above

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

5.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee:

1. endorse the North, West and Shankill AWG project recommendations in paragraph 2.1
2. note the current remaining levels of LIF allocation as set out in paragraph 2.2
3. endorse the North and Shankill AWG Feasibility Fund recommendations as set out in paragraph 2.4
4. note the update on the ongoing Area Working Group workshops."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Social Investment Fund – update

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

"1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 The Executive has published revised guidance on the implementation of the programme in June 2012. It outlines that:

'The aim of the programme is to reduce poverty, unemployment and physical deterioration through strategic areas based interventions of significant scale. The fund will encourage communities, statutory agencies, business and local political representatives to work together in a co-ordinated way, reducing duplication, sharing best practice and enhancing existing provision for the benefits of those communities most in need.'

A total funding of £80m (£40m for programmes and £40m in respect of capital programmes) will be provided during the life of the programme to end in March 2015.

1.2 The 4 strategic objectives of the Fund are:

Build Pathways to Employment by tackling educational under achievement and barriers to employment; tackling skills deficits and promoting jobs brokerage, widening access to the labour market, promoting business start up and increasing sustainability through social enterprise;

Tackling the systemic issues linked to deprivation including poor mental and physical health, young unsupported parents, substance abuse, children and young people at risk, and enhancing community capacity, confidence and partnership working to help reduce deprivation;

Increase community physical resources – by regenerating and refurbishing existing facilities and providing play facilities and environmental improvements.

Address dereliction – and promoting investment in the physical regeneration of deprived areas.

1.3 The Steering Group within each zone will be tasked with managing the design, delivery and development of an Area Plan. OFMDFM has defined the criteria for allocating resources as:

Areas within the top 10% most deprived super output areas on the Multiple Deprivation Measure 2010;

Areas within the top 20% most deprived Super Output Areas on the key domains of income, employment, education and health;

Areas with independently verified and robust evidence of objective need which can include data at Census Output Area level.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 Zones

The membership of each Steering Group has now been published. The membership of all Belfast groups is attached.

There is a Belfast Councillor on each Steering Group and will be a useful opportunity for Members to strategically align the work of the Council, including the Area Working Groups, to inform and influence the emerging Zone action plans.

Twinbrook and Lagmore are the only 2 areas which are set to transfer to Belfast under the new local government boundaries which are not included in the Belfast zones. They are zoned within South East zone. It will be important to ensure that the Council has sight of their plans.

2.2 Workshop – 17/18 October

OFMDFM convened an introductory workshop for all the Steering Groups. The workshop was an opportunity for members to come together to discuss the area planning process, outline the role of Steering Groups and identify priorities for a work plan.

2.3 Steering Group

There will be up to 14 people per Steering Group:

- ~ Political x 4 representatives (Political parties, in proportion determined by D'Hondt, nominated MLAs, councillors or non-elected reps)
- ~ Statutory x 4 representatives (senior level with authority to make decisions)
- ~ Voluntary and Community x 4 reps (Applications from the voluntary and community sector)
- ~ Business x 2 representatives (Key business organisations to nominate reps.)

The Council is currently the only named statutory representative on each group. In addition to this, a group of 'floating' statutory reps will be established. They will be called to join Steering Groups on the basis of the focus of the emerging action plan.

There is an ongoing process to identify the business representatives.

2.4 Working with neighbouring Councils

Consequent to the decision of Committee at its meeting on 7 September, it has been agreed with Castlereagh Borough Council that the Belfast City Council nominees for the Belfast South and Belfast East zones will rotate with the Castlereagh representative.

In the interests of inclusiveness, all Castlereagh and Belfast officers were invited to attend the Steering Groups' induction workshop and they will rotate thereafter.

Regarding a sub-group to support the effective co-ordination and communication between the Councils, officers are developing the terms of reference for this group and will present this to Committee in due course for their consideration.

2.5 Technical assistance

OFMDFM completed a tender exercise to identify service contractors to assist the Steering Groups in each zone in developing strategic area plans. These have now been appointed and will attend the workshop also. Copius Consulting has been confirmed as supporting consultant for all 4 areas of Belfast.

3.0 Resource Implications

Financial: none
Human: officer time
Assets: none at present

4.0 Equality Implications

OFMDFM is responsible for screening the Steering Group action plans.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to note the above information."

After discussion, during which the Chief Executive undertook to convene a meeting of the Council's representatives on the Steering Groups and the Party Group Leaders in order to ascertain the Council's position and way forward in relation to the Social Investment Fund, the Committee noted the contents of the report.

City Investment Fund – update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 The existing objectives for the City Investment Fund (CIF) were agreed in December 2007:

- create a focal point for the Council to play a leading role in the development of the city;
- create a 'can do' attitude amongst its citizens and create a sense of place and pride;

- encourage investment from and engagement of public, private and voluntary sectors, in the achievement of that aim; and
- to contribute to the Council's priorities and vision for the city.

To date, £16million has been allocated to four iconic projects (Titanic Belfast; Connswater Community Greenway; Lyric Theatre and the MAC).

- 1.2 CIF is designed to enable us to take a lead role and work in partnership to deliver key investment projects which:
- Promote the image of Belfast as a place to visit
 - Enable and/or promote the city as a place in which to do business
 - Bring financial or other economic returns to the city which help to build the city's rate base
 - Promote Belfast as a city in which its citizens have pride and belief in a brighter future.
 - Enhance the city's strategic, social, cultural and environmental infrastructure.
 - Provide a lasting legacy for future generations.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 23 March 2012, SP&R Committee reviewed and confirmed the objectives for the next phase of CIF. Given both the changed needs of the city as well as the broader economic context, it was agreed that CIF support was extended to include programmes of capital investment (or clusters) as well as single iconic projects, which can demonstrate a cumulative iconic or transformational impact.

2.0 Key Issues

- 2.1 Moving forward into the next phase of CIF, and drawing from the learning from previous investments, there are a number of key issues for discussion, outlined below for Members' consideration, in line with the guiding principles for the Investment Programme.

2.2 Good relations and equality

In the first phase of the CIF, the Council did not make a public call for proposals seeking support. Rather, in a civic leadership role, the Council considered a number of cultural, environmental and economic 'legacy' projects to determine its short-list for investment. While the Council is still fulfilling a civic leadership role and determining its strategic investments, it may be advisable to issue a public call outlining the criteria and objectives for investment to identify potential projects. It should be noted however that in the context of the projects already identified in the Investment

Programme as potential CIF projects, there already has been public consultation and it is suggested that in the case of these proposals public consultation should take place on a short-list agreed by SP&R, allowing the Council to satisfy its equality screening obligations.

2.3 Balanced investment

At its meeting on 23 March, it was noted by SP&R Committee that in order to ensure a balanced investment across the city, and given the scale of investments, that the time horizon for CIF is over three terms of Council, from 2007 when CIF was initiated through to 2019/20. This balance will need to be considered in the context of investments already made i.e. Titanic, Connswater, MAC and Lyric, and the money available for allocation.

The AWGs have played a key role in the decisions related to the Local Investment Fund. A key consideration will be the impact of CIF projects on both city-level and area level outcomes. Therefore, it is proposed the final short-listing and decisions on CIF investments will be at a city-level i.e. SP&R Committee with input at an AWG level.

2.4 Partnership and integration

The first phase of CIF helped to lever in more than £160million in additional private and public sector investment. It is suggested that the next phase should also encourage investment from the public, private and voluntary sectors. There may be merit in proposing an indicative match-funding ratio e.g. that the Council contribution is no more than 50% of the total cost of the project. This is particularly pertinent in the context of the Social Investment Fund, enabling the Council to be a partner with serious resources, rather than one of a number of lobbying groups.

Appropriate governance arrangements were established for the previous projects through which the Council influenced and secured project realisation, mitigated potential risks in regards to reputational risk, construction and ongoing operation. It will be essential that similar legal agreements are in place for the next phase.

2.5 Value for money

In terms of financing for the CIF, it is anticipated that there will be up to £26.5m by March 2015.

SP&R Committee previously agreed that the 4 principles which are to guide all Council's investments are: affordability inc. consideration of available match funding; deliverability; feasibility; and sustainability inc. consideration of

complementarity, deprivation and need. A draft outline process map for decision-making and implementation is appended. It is based upon the agreed process for the Local Investment Fund and the capital programme.

In the first phase, investments were determined to be 'iconic'. In this next phase, SP&R has agreed that 'clusters' of projects might be considered, that will have a cumulative iconic or transformational impact. Therefore, while we will appraise projects on an individual basis, we will also appraise the cumulative impact of a cluster to contribute to the city's strategic, social, cultural and environmental infrastructure. This will ensure that the impact of investments is not dissipated across a number of small, local projects.

In the first phase, investments were rigorously and independently tested in line with standard 'Green Book' economic appraisal requirements. It is recommended that this is a condition of investment for the next phase and will test the socio-economic and social benefits of projects to the city of Belfast, as well as financial returns to the city, in terms of the rate base and attracting further investment. This work will be supported by the recently agreed Feasibility Fund. It will also be necessary to ensure that externally commissioned appraisals, e.g. for the Social Investment Fund, meet this standard and are appropriately aligned to maximise value for money.

2.6 Sustainability

A key political ambition in the first phase of CIF was to derive maximum community benefit to ensure that investments benefited all the citizens of the city. In the next phase, this could include alignment to any emerging corporate outcomes framework (linked to community planning) and include the use of social clauses, as well as potentially contracting, measuring and monitoring secured community access in the benefits realisation period of the project.

Consideration needs to be given to the ensuring that the appraisal demonstrates that there are no ongoing revenue cost implications for the Council, in advance of decision to invest.

2.7 Next steps

Following discussion at Committee, and party group briefings if requested, officers will prepare revised guidance and an implementation plan for CIF to present to Committee in November.

2.8 In order to distinguish CIF from SIF (Social Investment Fund), it is also recommended that CIF is changed to become the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF).

3.0 **Resource Implications**

Financial: up to £26.5m by March 2015

Human: none at present

Assets: none at present

4.0 **Equality Implications**

When finalised, the CIF guidance and implementation plan will be screened in accordance with the obligations set out in the overall equality document for the Investment Programme.

5.0 **Recommendations**

5.1 Members are asked for their feedback on the issues raised above, in particular:

- Need for public call for proposals and public consultation/engagement process;
- Investment priority for North and West Belfast, and rotational basis thereafter, to ensure balanced investment across the city;
- AWGs are consulted in long-listing process but overarching decision on short-list rests with SP&R;
- Potential indicative match funding ratio;
- Need to appraise the cumulative impact of a cluster to contribute to the city's strategic objectives;
- Ongoing contractual requirements regarding sustained community benefit; and
- Zero revenue implications for Council.

5.2 Committee agrees to brand the fund as the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF)."

After discussion, during which conflicting views were put forward in relation to the need for a public consultation/engagement process; the need to put an upper cap on the match funding and the need for an enhanced role for the Area Working Groups in relation to the decisions regarding projects which should be progressed, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Girdwood Community Hub - Update

The Director of Property and Projects submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

"1.0 **Purpose of report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Girdwood Community Hub project.

Key issues

2.0 Current status of submission with SEUPB

2.1 The Girdwood Hub proposal is in the last stages of assessment by the DSD Economist Team after which it will be passed to the DFP for final approval. Council officers met with SEUPB and the DSD Economist Team on 18th September to go through a number of final outstanding clarification points in relation to the project. A number of issues were raised at this meeting –

- SEUPB emphasised the tight timescales for Priority 2.1 capital projects (all contracts need to be ended by March 2015 with final cut-off by June 2015). This leaves very little slack in the timescales for delivery/slippage etc.
- in order to meet the tight timescale projects will need be approved by DFP and a Letter of Offer given by end of October
- that while there were a number of outstanding issues to be resolved in relation to the Hub project, SEUPB did not believe there are any ‘show stoppers’
- SEUPB have engaged CPD to review the Girdwood Hub project and costs

At this meeting SEUPB and the DSD Economists requested further assurance around a number of key issues including usage and costs. The final information provided by the Council is still being economically appraised by the DSD Economist Team. As outlined above in order to meet the tight timescales it is anticipated that the approval process for projects will be concluded by end of October 2012. Members will be updated when a Letter of Offer is received.

Initial design and Schedule of Accommodation for the Hub

2.2 Although a formal letter of offer has not yet been received, Committee had previously agreed that the Council work ‘at risk’ on the Hub project in order to ensure that the tight timescale would be met. This included appointing a design team and continuing with Phase 2 of engagement around the Hub. Members will be aware that Phase 1 of the engagement was completed in May 2011 and included the distribution of 22,000 newsletters to households; a website questionnaire; an article in City Matters; and a successful community fun day on Clifton Park Avenue with over 400 attendees. From these events, over 110 consultation responses were received, proposing a range of ideas for the Hub.

2.3 Committee Members were updated at their meeting on 7th September that Capita Symonds have been appointed to lead on design of the Hub. Since appointment Capita Symonds have undertaken a number of meetings with a range of stakeholders to ascertain their requirements and consider these as part of the initial design process. It was stressed at these meetings that these were preliminary discussions and that all ideas were welcome and encouraged at this stage. However it was also made clear that budgetary restrictions may constrain the overall scope of the project.

2.4 To date Capita Symonds have met with –

- Hub Forum (2 meetings - 30th August, 18th September)**
- Belfast City Council Leisure Services (14th September)**
- Department for Social Development (DSD) (3rd September)**
- Youth providers (10th September)**
- Belfast Metropolitan College (10th September)**
- 174 Trust – (20th September)**

The Hub Forum also undertook a best practice visit to Brownlow Community Hub in Craigavon (21st August) to see a community hub in practice and to get an understanding of room sizes etc and what these are used for.

2.5 A number of wishes/issues/suggested uses for the Hub were highlighted during these discussions including –

- dedicated youth space**
- dedicated crèche/childcare facility**
- the need to ensure complementarity with other facilities in the surrounding area (including 174 Trust's new arts centre etc.)**
- issues with safe-guarding means that there will need to be controlled access to the classroom suite and the childcare provision**

2.6 Informed by the consultation feedback received to date under Phase 1 of the engagement process, the stakeholder meetings and the feedback following the best practice visit, Capita Symonds prepared an initial Schedule of Accommodation (SoA) for the Hub based on the 'wishlists' expressed as part the initial stakeholder consultation which was presented to the Hub Forum for consideration at its meeting on 18th September. This included provision for all the above and meant that the footprint for the building increased to 5,017m², which is in excess of the footprint available, and increased the project costs beyond the funding requested.

- 2.7 Following this, the DSD informed the Council (28th September) that they do not consider that the provision of a dedicated crèche/childcare facility to be entirely compatible with the other uses that are planned for the Hub and that they do not agree with this proposal. The Department has highlighted that it would be happy to look at other possibilities for locating a crèche within the area as the wider plans develop. It should also be noted that a dedicated childcare /crèche facility in the Hub was not part of the Council's original bid submission and so has not been considered in the economic appraisal process to date. At this stage therefore a dedicated childcare facility is not included in the SoA. Members are asked to note that the Hub will still be able to offer a number of crèche sessions or supervised play times as in the Council's other leisure and community facilities if this is agreed as part of the programming.
- 2.8 Capita Symonds have now prepared an initial design for the Hub. The key elements of the proposed Schedule of Accommodation and design include –
- a multi-purpose hall
 - dedicated youth provision
 - classroom space for Belfast Metropolitan College (it should be noted that BMC have specific minimum requirements/standards for classroom sizes etc to ensure they meet with Education Training Inspectorate Standards)
 - a number of smaller flexible multi-purpose meeting rooms
 - fitness suite and sauna/steam area with changing facilities
 - a café
- 2.9 Members are asked to note that the design is not definitive at this stage and will be subject to further refinement over the coming weeks following more detailed community and political engagement.
- 2.10 Members are further asked to note that the initial designs (without or without dedicated childcare provision) are based on an assumption that the Council will receive the entire funding of £9.6million requested from SEUPB for this project. The final layout and design of the Hub will be influenced by the final level of offer which the Council receives.
- 2.11 Members are asked to agree the initial design which will used as a basis for further consultation and engagement purposes with local communities and other stakeholders.

Community and political engagement

- 2.12 Members are aware that the Council has stressed from the outset that this is a community-led project to ensure it delivers the facilities and services that the community need and to ensure it is a safe, welcome and useful venue for all. As outlined above the initial design will be the subject of further consultation over the coming weeks which will inform the final design.
- 2.13 The timeframe for this consultation phase is determined by the planning application deadline which needs to be submitted by 21 December to meet the tight timescales. Therefore, 'design freeze' will be the end of November, to give the design team 1 month to finalise the necessary drawings, plans and infrastructure assessments (such as roads and sewage) for submission to the Planning Service. The community engagement phase will therefore be over the next six weeks up to week commencing 19 November.
- 2.14 To inform the final design and layout, it is proposed that the Hub Forum consults and engages with the following groups:
- Local people living close to the site
 - Confirmed strategic partners e.g. Belfast Metropolitan College
 - Potential strategic partners e.g. Police Service NI
 - Elected representatives
 - Children and young people
 - Older people
 - People from minority backgrounds
 - People with disabilities
- 2.15 It should be noted that there will be a statutory period of public consultation, in 2013, as part of the planning application process. However, one of the purposes of a robust community engagement process at the pre-submission stage is to ensure that any objections are identified and mitigating actions are integrated into the final design.

Overall site and associated infrastructure works

- 2.16 As Members are aware, in order to obtain planning permission for the Hub, the Council not only requires the building design, but also the site context including access to and from the site. From a construction perspective, the Council also needs to ensure that the necessary infrastructure in terms of roads, power and utilities is planned for and developed in line with the Hub building.

- 2.17 Council officers have been working closely with DSD officials over the past few months to progress this and it has been agreed that the design brief for the Hub be extended to include the preparation of a Site Layout Plan (SLP) for the wider Girdwood site. This SLP will be required for the Hub's planning application. The infrastructure works will be procured and delivered by the Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) which they have agreed to align with the delivery of the Hub.

Girdwood Community Hub – Proposed Governance Structures

- 2.18 The Girdwood Community Hub project is a key project under the Council's Investment Programme. A proposed governance structure has been circulated.
- 2.19 The decision making authority will follow the Council's Scheme of Delegation with strategic direction and decisions being made by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee as the Council's Investment decision maker. Given the strategic importance of this project it is proposed that the Girdwood Project Board comprises senior officers from the Council, DSD, BMC as the strategic partner and two community representatives.
- 2.20 Members will be aware that a Hub Forum, made up of community and statutory partners, was established in May 2011. This Forum has been the key mechanism for ensuring that stakeholders remain committed to the project and is the key discussion arena for all issues relating to the Hub project. This Forum, which is made up now of over 24 groups, has met on a regular basis and its effectiveness is demonstrated by the fact that the project is still on track and that any issues which have arisen have been successfully resolved. As part of the governance review it is proposed that the Terms of Reference and membership for the Forum are reviewed and refreshed to reflect the next stage of the Hub process as it moves towards a build stage. The Hub Forum will be responsible for overseeing the stakeholder engagement around the Hub and developing the Shared Space Action Plan which is the unique aspect of the Hub proposal and central to delivering the peace and reconciliation outcomes.
- 2.21 At officer level decisions will be made through the authority delegated to CMT and the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) the Director of Property and Projects. The senior user for the project is the Director of Parks and Leisure. A Project Delivery Team has also been established with a number of workstreams under this including Capital Works/Design Team and a Management & Maintenance Coordination Team to ensure the successful completion of the Hub project.

Critical Path – Next steps

2.22 Key milestones for the Hub project over the coming weeks include –

- Formal Letter of Offer received - End of October
- Consultation and engagement on the final layout and design of the Hub – next 6 weeks till week commencing 19 November
- Sign-off of final Hub design – 30th November
- Submission of planning application – 21st December

3.0 **Decisions required**

Members are asked to –

- note the update in relation to the current status of the bid
- agree the initial design which will be used as a basis for further consultation
- note that the initial design is based on an assumption that the Council will receive the entire funding of £9.6m for this project. The final layout and design of the Hub will be influenced by the final level of offer which the Council receives.
- agree the proposals regarding Phase 2 of the engagement to inform the final layout and design of the Hub
- note that discussions are ongoing with the DSD regarding the wider site and the infrastructure
- agree the proposed governance structures for the Hub project
- note the key dates as outlined in 2.22 (up to Christmas) in relation to the Hub

4.0 **Resource Implications**

Human

Officers from the relevant Council departments will continue to work with the Department for Social Development, the Capita Symonds design team and the Hub Forum on a community engagement process.

Financial

All expenditure for the project, as outlined in the application, must be claimed from SEUPB by mid-2015.

Assets

Property and Projects Department, in liaison with other departments, will oversee the land acquisition issues and construction programme and seek the appropriate approvals from Committee in due course.

5.0 Equality Implications

The Committee previously approved the Equality Strategy for the Girdwood Community Hub. It outlines how the Council will fulfil its equality obligations during the development of the Girdwood Community Hub and the Hub's likely impact and outcomes in terms of equality and good relations."

During discussion, the Director of Property and Projects clarified the current position in relation to the proposed childcare provision at the site. He pointed out that it could still be considered as part of the wider plans for the development as could the potential for a swim centre at the site which had previously been raised by Elected Members.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Democratic Services and Governance

Freedom of the City

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Council to confer on Dame Mary Peters the Freedom of the City and that a special meeting of the Council be held for that purpose on Thursday, 1st November at 6.00 p.m. prior to the monthly meeting of the Council due to be held on that date.

IBM Smarter Cities Global Conference

The Chief Executive reminded the Members that they had been advised previously that the Council had been requested by IBM to submit a bid to participate in the IBM sponsored Smarter Cities Challenge. In 2010, IBM had announced its intention to partner with 100 cities around the world to solve complex urban challenges, awarding \$50 million worth of services in technology over three years through the Smarter Cities Challenge. Through those grants, teams of top IBM experts would sit side-by-side with the city leaders for three weeks to investigate issues ranging from workforce readiness to safety and security, economic development, strategies and sustainability and deliver solutions. By the end of 2012, IBM would have completed 64 of the grants to cities around the world. Each project had developed new insights into challenges facing cities and what was possible and had built an exciting Global Network of city leaders solving critical problems.

The Chief Executive reported that, pursuant of that invitation, the Council had submitted a Smarter Cities application, a copy of which was circulated for the information of the Members. He stated that IBM had now advised the Council that Belfast had been shortlisted as one of the potential challenge cities for 2013/14. In that regard, representatives from IBM London and Dublin had visited Belfast the previous Wednesday to conduct interviews with key City stakeholders to determine whether the

City was committed to working with the Council on the back of the bid. A telephone conference call had been arranged with the IBM Vice-President in New York and the Council's team which had been led by Councillor Hargey, Chairman of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and the Lord Mayor, Alderman Robinson, Council officers and representatives from the Department for Social Development, the Department of the Environment, the University of Ulster and NICVA had also attended.

Following that meeting, IBM had contacted the Council the previous day to invite Belfast to attend its Smarter Cities Challenge Conference in New York between 14th and 16th November. IBM had also offered the City a speaking slot at one of the plenary sessions. There would be four panels with distinguished city leaders from around the world examining insights on economic development, smarter transportation and open data. At that meeting, the recipients of the Smarter Cities Challenge Support for 2013/14 would be announced. The invitation to attend would be extended to the Lord Mayor, Alderman Gavin Robinson, the Chairman of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee (Councillor Deirdre Hargey) and the Chief Executive. IBM had extended also an invitation to Dr. Duncan Morrow who had attended the City's stakeholder briefing with IBM. The costs of all the Council's delegates whilst in New York would be covered by IBM and the only cost to the Council would be return flights to New York, which would be unlikely to exceed the sum of £6,000.

The Committee authorised the attendance of the Lord Mayor, the Chairman of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, the Chief Executive and one other key City stakeholder at the conference and approved the necessary transportation and ancillary costs associated therewith.

Party Leaders Forum - Meeting Note

The Committee noted the contents of a report which had provided details of the meeting of the Party Leaders' Forum held on 27th September.

Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality

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

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
British Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society	Annual Scientific Meeting and Instructional Course Dinner 6th November, 2013 Approximately 250 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the 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 red/white wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500

SIPTU	<p>Equality Conference Evening Reception</p> <p>4th December, 2012</p> <p>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>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'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
Malachians Football Club	<p>50th Anniversary Event</p> <p>15th June, 2013</p> <p>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 celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Malachians Football Club and to acknowledge its contribution to the general life and well-being of the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
Harberton Special School	<p>Extended Special Schools Cluster</p> <p>12th March, 2013</p> <p>Approximately 500 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This fashion show aims to showcase the talents of the children and young people from across the seven special schools in the Belfast area and to present awards in recognition of their hard work and achievements. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together' and '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 provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £1,250</p>
Young Social Innovators	<p>"Speak Out" Event</p> <p>1st March, 2013</p> <p>Approximately 200 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 positive contribution that young people can make to their communities and will showcase the various projects they have taken part in and how these can help to improve the future of the city.</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 of £500</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'.	
Barnardos Northern Ireland	<p>Celebratory Event incorporating Book Launch</p> <p>16th May, 2013</p> <p>Approximately 150 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 celebrate the achievements of the young people who Barnardos have supported in their transfer from the care system to independent living.</p> <p>During the event there will be a launch of a specially commissioned book charting the history of the Leaving Care Service.</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 tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost of £375</p>
Belfast Hospital School	<p>Night of Celebration for the pupils of Belfast Hospital School</p> <p>10th December, 2012</p> <p>Approximately 150 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 celebrate the academic success of children who attend this special school and will recognise the courage, resilience and sheer hard work and determination of children who are unable to attend school due to their illnesses.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's key theme of 'City Leadership – strong, fair, together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city' 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 tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost of £375</p>

<p>Young Enterprise Northern Ireland</p>	<p>Young Enterprise Northern Ireland Innovation Awards 9th May, 2013 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 celebrate the achievements of a cross-section of young people from the community, many of whom have learning and physical disabilities. The programme provides the opportunity to showcase the unique talents of the participants while clearly communicating that a lack of academic success does not equate to failure.</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 tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost of £1,000</p>
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The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Request for the Use of the City Hall Grounds

The Committee agreed to consider a report which had been tabled in relation to a late request for the use of the City Hall grounds.

The Director of Property and Projects informed the Committee that a request had been received from the Friends of the Earth charity to hold an event in the City Hall grounds on 9th November, 2012 in order to promote transparency in terms of those making large financial donations to political parties. He pointed out that the Committee had delegated authority to himself for routine type requests for the use of the City Hall grounds on the basis of an agreed set of criteria. However, it had been recognised that there would still be occasions in which the nature, scale and/or scope of the request meant that it was appropriate to place the matter directly before the Committee. He indicated that the request from the Friends of the Earth organisers fell into that category and the direction of the Committee was therefore being sought.

The Director explained that Friends of the Earth would be promoting at the event its "Who Pulls the Strings" campaign which was fighting for the right for people to know who was giving large donations to political parties. The organisers wished to hold the event between 12.45 p.m. and 1.30 p.m., including set-up and strip-down. The nature of the event would involve a short piece of physical theatre lasting no more than five minutes, which would be followed by a short speech and photographs and interviews

with the media. The organisers would be hiring their own PA system for the purpose of background music and the speech. It was anticipated that between 60 and 100 people would be attending the event.

Moved by Councillor Maskey,
Seconded by Councillor McCarthy,

That the Committee agrees to accede to the request from the Friends of the Earth organisers to use the grounds of the City Hall for the event on 9th November.

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

Minutes of Meeting of Governance Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Governance Working Group held on 19th September.

Council Constitution

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 As Members are aware, over the last few years the Council has been putting in place the frameworks and structures needed to make it a ‘fit for purpose’ local authority which can deliver the effective, value for money services that our citizens deserve. An important element of this has been the review of those key governance documents which underpin how the Council operates and makes its decisions.

1.2 As agreed previously by Members, work has been ongoing over recent months to develop a draft Council Constitution which would bring together into one document the key governance instruments which explain and govern how the Council operates; how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable.

1.3 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee have received a number of updates on the development of the Council Constitution over the past 18 months, most recently on 4 November 2011.

1.4 Governance Working Group

At its meeting on the 18 November 2012, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee approved the Terms of Reference for an all party Governance Working Group to take forward discussions on the Constitution. The Working Group has

developed the draft Constitution over the past few months and has recommended that the Constitution be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for formal approval.

1.5 The purpose of this report is therefore to seek formal approval from the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the attached Council Constitution, a copy of which has been circulated.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 Council Constitution

The Council's overarching Constitution is a key governance document which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these decisions are efficient, transparent and accountable.

Councils in England and Wales are statutorily obliged to have a Constitution. Whilst there is no statutory obligation here, the DOE issued a consultation document on Local Government Reform Proposals in November 2010 which, in the interests of transparency, recommended that each local authority in Northern Ireland produce and publish a Constitution which sets out details of how it operates in terms of:

- decision making arrangements;
- standing orders;
- scheme of delegation in operation for decision making by officers;
- links to the Corporate and Business Plan

The requirement to prepare a Constitution will therefore be included within the forthcoming Local Government Reform Bill (the Reorganisation Bill) which is due to be presented to the Assembly in the near future. In the interim, Council officers will liaise with the Department of the Environment to discuss governance and transitional arrangements to ensure the Council's approach is aligned to the Department's.

2.2 The draft Constitution is comprised of the following 5 sections –

- Section 1 - Who we are
- Section 2 - What we do
- Section 3 - How we do it
 - Part 1 - Structures and Decision Making*
 - Part 2 - Frameworks (Our Governance, Our People, Our Finances)*
- Section 4 - Our values
- Section 5 - Supporting documents and policies

- 2.3 There is a number of supporting governance documents which form an integral part of the Council's Constitution, and which are currently under review to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. These include:

1. Corporate Plan	The Council's key strategic planning document setting out the vision and strategic objectives of the Council.
2. Standing Orders	The rules which regulate the transaction of the business of the Council and its Committees and should be read in conjunction with the Council's Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation.
3. Financial Regulations	Provides the framework and processes for managing the council's financial affairs. Currently being updated to take account of the requirements emerging from recent legislative changes including the ' <i>Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (NI) 2011</i> ' - need for capital financing and treasury management strategies and a medium term financial plan.
4. Scheme of Delegation	Sets out the types of decisions, with a key focus on operational / routine matters, which designated officers can take on behalf of the Council.
5. Conflicts of Interest Policy	Establishes a register of Members interests and provides clarity in respects to declarations of interests and provides advice on the declaration of private pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests at Council and Committee meetings.
6. Equality Scheme	Equality Scheme and associated Action Plan.
7. Code of Governance	Under the ' <i>Local Government (Accounts and Audit) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2006</i> ' the Council is required to conduct a review each year of the effectiveness of its systems of internal control and prepare an annual governance statement.

2.4 Scheme of Delegation

As the Council's scheme of delegation will be an important part of the Constitution, it is proposed that an updated version of the scheme is brought to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval before the New Year.

2.5 Impact of Local Government Reform

At the last meeting of the Belfast Voluntary Transition Committee on the 5 October, Members received a briefing on local government reform. Members indicated that due to the fluidity behind the RPA process, it was vital that there was a sufficiently flexible mechanism in place to allow changes to be made to the Constitution on a regular basis and often at short notice.

3.0 Next Steps

- 3.1** It is intended that the Council's Constitution will be a 'living' document and once approved, it is recommended that a review of it, and its supporting documents and policies, takes place on a regular basis to ensure they remain up to date. The Constitution will be available in a central location on the Council's website – this will allow for easy access to the documents. Hard copies of the updated Constitution will also be made available to all Members.

Because the Constitution will need to be updated, it is proposed that this be done by regular reports, from the Chief Executive or the Town Solicitor and Assistant Chief Executive, to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee as the occasion requires in order to agree amendments to the Constitution.

4.0 Resource Implications

- 4.1** The updating of the relevant supporting governance documents will require resourcing from Departments. Lead officers from the relevant departments have been identified to update these. A central resource from within the Chief Executive's Department will co-ordinate this work and the overall collation and presentation of the Constitution.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1** Members are asked to note the content of this report and to formally approve the Council Constitution."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

National Association of Councillors
Annual General Meeting and Conference

The Committee was advised that the National Association of Councillors was holding its Annual General Meeting and Conference in Bournemouth from 23rd till 25th November. This year's conference would focus on two themes, that is, health and well-being and equality in service provision, both of which were extremely important and relevant to local communities. A number of prominent speakers from across the tiers of Government would address the conference and take part in a "Question Time" session. The cost per delegate of attendance would be £650.

Accordingly, in accordance with the Council's policy in relation to attendance at National Association of Councillors events, it was recommended that the Committee authorise the attendance at the event of the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman and the Council's representatives on the National Association of Councillors (Northern Ireland Region) and a representative from each of the Parties on the Council not represented by the aforementioned Members.

Moved by Councillor McKee,
Seconded by the High Sheriff (Councillor M. Campbell),

That the Council not be represented at the event.

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

The Committee accordingly adopted the recommendation.

Review of Parliamentary Constituencies

The Committee was reminded that the Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland had published its Provisional Proposals Report for the 6th Review of Parliamentary Constituencies on 13th September, 2011. That report had set out for public consultation the boundaries and names of the proposed new constituencies.

The Assistant Chief Executive reported that, following that consultation, the Commission had published a Revised Proposals Report and was undertaking a consultation exercise from 16th October until 10th December during which comments would be invited on the revised proposals. In accordance with the legislation, there would not be any public hearings in connection with the proposals.

He explained that the Council had, in the past, when previous reviews were being conducted, agreed to display the report and constituency maps in the Reception area of the City Hall in order to inform the public and to assist those interested to submit responses to the consultation. In addition, the Council's accepted practice when considering consultations on proposed changes to electoral boundaries was not to make a corporate response but rather to leave it to each of the Political Parties to respond.

Accordingly, it was recommended that the Committee:

- (i) grants authority for the Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland's Revised Proposals Report for the 6th Review of Parliamentary Constituencies to be displayed in the Reception area of the City Hall with effect from 19th October; and
- (ii) refer consideration of the consultation to each of the Political Parties on the Council.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Finance/Value-for-Money

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

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel of 11th October.

**Approval to Invite Tenders –
Employment Agency Services**

The Committee was reminded that Employment Agency workers were used to provide temporary cover for short-term shortfalls in Council staffing levels. However, while the use of Agency workers within the organisation was currently being analysed to determine if any directly-employed Council posts could be created, in line with the Investment Programme, the need for a contracted employment agency service to provide short-term cover for unexpected events and/or unpredicted upsurges in workload remained a Council requirement. Accordingly, the Committee agreed to:

- (i) approve the initiation of a tendering process for employment agency services on the basis of a two-year contract, with the option to renew on an annual basis for a further two year period;
- (ii) extend the current contract(s) on a month-by-month basis until the successful appointment of new contractor(s); and
- (iii) note that, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, the Director of Property and Projects would award the contract to the successful tenderer.

Giro d'Italia Grande Partenza

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

The Committee was advised that the Development Committee, at its meeting on 16th October, had considered a report in relation to the hosting of a stage of the Giro d'Italia Grande Partenza in May, 2014. That Committee had agreed to support the bid for the staging of the event, at a cost of £400,000, a portion of which would be the in-kind provision of the use of the Waterfront Hall, with the remainder allocated to the festival programme delivery. However, it was a matter for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to agree to the costs being met from the Events Fund and the Development Committee was seeking that authority.

The Committee agreed, in principle, to fund the event, subject to a further report being submitted in November outlining how the costs would be met by the Council.

Pipes Event

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

The Committee was advised further that the Development Committee, at its meeting on 16th October, had agreed also to support a bid for the Champion of Champions Piping Competition for 2013 at an estimated cost of £80,000 and again was commending that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee make the funds available for the event.

The Committee agreed, in principle, to fund the event subject to the aforementioned report on how the costs would be met being submitted to the Committee in November.

Human Resources

(Mrs. J. Minne, Head of Human Resources, attended in connection with these items.)

Re-introduction of Review of Public Administration Vacancy Control

The Committee was reminded that the Review of Public Administration Vacancy Control Procedures, which had been agreed by the Local Government Reform Joint Forum and issued under the authority of the Local Government Staff Commission, had come into force on 1st October, 2009 and had been subsequently suspended on 23rd June, 2010. The primary rationale of those procedures was to seek to "safeguard the employment of existing Council staff as a result of the decisions arising from the Review of Public Administration".

The Head of Human Resources reported that now that the timetable for implementing the Review of Public Administration in Local Government had been clarified, the Local Government Staff Commission had advised that the Vacancy Control Procedures would be re-introduced under Section 40(4)(f) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 with effect from 1st November, 2012. The procedures set out a stepped process for councils to follow in respect of mitigating potential redundancies which were as follows:

- Step 1 - Avoid creating any new posts unless there was an inescapable need or requirement to do so;
- Step 2 - Avoid filling any vacant posts;
- Step 3 - If needs be, fill vacant posts using restricted pools, that is, from "at risk" staff within own council; "cluster" councils; 26 councils; or the Review of Public Administration Affected Group;

- Step 4 - If a post was not filled via the restricted pool approach, publicly advertise the vacant post but consider filling it only on a temporary basis, fixed-term basis, etc;
- Step 5 - Record all relevant issues/decisions made and provide regular reports to the Local Government Staff Commission.

The Head of Human Resources reported that at this stage the procedures related only to vacancies that existed in the following groupings of staff:

- Chief Executive
- Director
- Head of Service
- Personal Assistants to the above posts
- Members'/Democratic Services posts

The re-introduction of the Vacancy Control Procedures would be incorporated into the Council's existing vacancy control processes whereby the decision to fill a post was considered on a case by case basis in the context of corporate priorities, the efficiency programme and the need to deliver the Council's Investment Programme.

She reminded the Members that the Council was committed to providing 200 job opportunities as part of the Investment Programme which in effect meant 200 job opportunities publicly advertised by the Council. The re-introduction of the Vacancy Control Procedures would have a minimal impact on the Investment Programme because the need to avoid creating any new posts, avoid filling vacant posts and fill posts via the restricted pool approach instead of public advertisement would only relate to the aforementioned five categories of affected staff. However, should the scope of affected Review of Public Administration staff be widened beyond those five categories, then the impact of the Review of Public Administration Vacancy Control Procedures might be more significant. She undertook to keep that issue under review and update the Committee accordingly.

The Committee noted the re-introduction of the Review of Public Administration Vacancy Control Procedures for the posts as outlined with effect from 1st November, 2012.

Requests from Belfast City Council Trade Union Group regarding Payment Arrangements

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

Belfast City Council's Trade Unions wrote to the Council seeking the intervention of elected members in the pay arrangements of Council officers earning less than £21,000 per year and in cases where part-time employees of the Council have been adversely affected by recent changes to the HMRC Working Tax Credit system.

Specifically, the BCC Trade Union group has asked that the Council make a payment of £250 to employees earning less than £21,000 per year, in the same way as payment was recently made by Lisburn City Council to such employees.

In respect of part-time employees adversely affected by changes to the Working Tax Credit system, the Trade Union Group has asked that the Council analyse the circumstances of part-time employees who have been disadvantaged by these changes and facilitate an increase in their hours of work where they request it.

Key Issues

Payment of £250 to employees earning less than £21,000 per year

The Trade Union group letter appears to link to a June 2010 budget statement which announced 'a two-year pay freeze for public sector workforces, except for workers earning less than £21,000 a year who will receive an increase of at least £250 per year in these years,' to a recent payment by Lisburn City Council to its officers earning less than £21,000 per year.

The pay awards referred to in the June 2010 budget statement were not, however, made by local government, and the Government's proposals in this regard were set aside by the Employers' Side of the National Joint Council (NJC).

Lisburn City Council made a one-off, consolidated payment of £250 to any member of staff who was remunerated at or below the NJC pay point Spinal Column Point (SCP) 24. (This did not take into account overtime, weekend or shift enhancement).

While the decision whether or not to make one-off, additional payments of this kind is for individual councils, Belfast City Council legal advice is that under the Local Government Act (NI) 1972 an officer of the Council shall not, under colour of his office or employment, exact or accept (whether directly or indirectly for himself or through another) any fee or reward whatsoever other than his proper remuneration. In addition, the fixing of wages and salaries is conducted through the joint negotiating machinery of the NJC. Wages are deemed to be the reasonable pecuniary equivalent of the service rendered and anything beyond that is an addition to wages and is a gratuity. The payment of gratuities to officers is *ultra vires* and therefore unlawful so that the suggested payments to employees would be considered unlawful.

Employees adversely affected by changes to the Working Tax Credit system.

Working tax credits can be claimed from HMRC by employees on low incomes. Eligibility for tax credits, however, depends very much on individual circumstances (eg the employee's age, whether they are part of a couple and whether they have children). HMRC made a number of changes to tax credits which took effect in April 2012, including new working hours rules for couples with children.

The Council currently employs 378 employees who are contracted to work fewer than 24 hours per week. The majority of these are employed on part-time contracts, with others working reduced hours at their request, on the basis of the Council's Work-Life Balance arrangements.

The Council has no access to information about which employees are in receipt of tax credits or about the impact of the changes to the tax credit system on their entitlements, as tax credits are administered by HMRC, separately from the Council's administrative and payroll processes. It is not possible, therefore, to undertake a corporate analysis of the circumstances of part-time employees who have been affected by these changes, as the Trade Union Group has requested.

In respect however, of the request that the Council facilitates requests for increases in the hours of work of employees disadvantaged by Working Tax Credit changes, the Council has in place comprehensive Work-Life Balance arrangements that allow individual employees to request a change to their working hours; such requests are considered on a case by case basis giving appropriate consideration to the operational and business needs of the Council.

Other industrial relations matters

Update on 2013/14 Pay Negotiations

Both sides of NJC have been engaged in pay negotiations for 2013/14 since June 2012. Employers' Side has indicated that they, like the Trade Union Side, are keen to avoid any pay freeze in 2013/14. It is therefore possible that a pay award for Council officers may be agreed for April 2013, although details of this and any other agreements reached as part of these negotiations are unlikely to be finalised until much nearer the end of this financial year. Members will be updated on this matter.

Industrial Action short of strike by NIPSA

On the basis of a ballot in November 2011 in relation to pension scheme changes, pay and job cuts, NIPSA has instructed its members to engage in industrial action, short of a strike, with effect from 16 July 2012.

Specifically, this action is that NIPSA members '*...should not cover any vacant posts.*' To this end, NIPSA has advised its members not to cover vacant posts such as those vacancies trawled as 'temporary cover' posts, or to engage in new additional duties or acting up arrangements, with effect from 16 July 2012.

There has been no discernable impact of this action in BCC but this matter will remain under review and members will be notified of any adverse impact of this action should it arise.

Resource Implications

N/A

Equality Implications

N/A

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. Note the legal advice in respect of the payments requested by the BCC Trade Union group and authorise the Head of HR to advise the Trade Union Group that such payments cannot be made by Belfast City Council
2. to advise the Trade Union Group that all requests for a change in working hours by part-time employees who have been disadvantaged by Working Tax Credit changes will be facilitated through the council's existing arrangements for all requests to change working hours.
3. Note this report's updates on other ongoing industrial relations matters.

Decision Tracking

Update reports about industrial relations matters will be brought to Strategic Policy & Resources Committee as appropriate."

During discussion in the matter, both the Chief Executive and the Assistant Chief Executive stressed that the Council could not make one-off additional payments to staff earning less than £21,000 per annum as it was considered a gratuity and the payment of such was ultra vires and therefore unlawful. The Committee was advised of the possible penalties which could be imposed by the Local Government Auditor in relation to the taking of ultra vires decisions and cautioned against making such payments.

In response to a question in relation to such a payment by another District Council, the Assistant Chief Executive stated that that would be a matter for the Local Government Auditor to examine and ascertain whether any action would be taken against that Council.

With regard to those employees who were contracted to work fewer than 24 hours a week and were affected by the Working Tax Credit system, the Head of Human Resources explained that any of those individuals could submit a request for changes to the hours which they worked and managers throughout the Council had been asked to consider favourably such requests depending on operational needs. She suggested that a joint letter could be sent out by the Council and the Trade Union Group explaining this position and the support of both organisations in this regard.

After further discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Maskey,
Seconded by Councillor McVeigh,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of a one-off payment of £250 to employees who earn less than £21,000 per annum to enable further clarification to be sought in relation to such a payment which had been made by another District Council.

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

The Committee agreed further that a joint letter be issued, in conjunction with the Trade Union Group, outlining the Council's support for all requests for change of working hours by part-time employees who had been disadvantaged by the Working Tax Credit changes and indicating that these would be considered favourably in the context of operational needs.

Review of Local Government Staff Commission

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of a draft response to the Department of the Environment's review of the Local Government Staff Commission.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Department of the Environment is seeking views on the continuing need for the Local Government Staff Commission, which was established in 1972 and given a range of statutory responsibilities under the Local Government Act (NI) 1972. The Staff Commission is an Executive Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) and its remit includes general oversight of matters connected with the recruitment, training and terms and conditions of employment of council officers.

- 2.2 The Commission's statutory duties have been static for many years while in contrast the political landscape and policy context in which the Commission operates has changed significantly. Policy priorities are articulated by the Programme for Government, one of which is the reform of local government.
- 2.3 The review also includes the Local Government Training Group (LGTG) established in 1993 to help discharge one of the statutory responsibilities of the Staff Commission, assisting councils to identify and address training and development needs from an over arching and sector wide perspective.
- 2.4 The consultation questionnaire examines the benefits that councils have derived from the Commission over the years; the validity of the Commission's current remit and how well it has met councils' needs; the sustainability of the Commission in the future; and value for money.

3.0 Key Issues

- 3.1 The full response is set out at Appendix one, but in summary it is proposed the Council responds with these key points;
- Since the establishment of the Staff Commission, councils have matured as corporate public bodies, directly and legally responsible for their own actions, delivering services and internal functions including HR and training. It is expected that capacity to do this will certainly increase post RPA and there will be less need for the Commission's oversight of these matters.
 - The amount of advice sought by Belfast City Council from the Commission over the years has diminished as internal HR capacity has grown. Employment legislation has evolved, ensuring that all council's have in place and follow best practice recruitment and employment policy and procedures. In addition, the Equality Commission set up in 1998 now acts as a watchdog in these matters.
 - The Council has benefitted from Staff Commission initiatives and the LGTG's training programme and select list of training providers over the years and its current aims and objectives are generally in line with council needs. Belfast City Council however believes that delivery of some of the strategic issues around capacity building for the sector, i.e. leadership development at senior level, has not been progressed

as a priority. The Training Group open course provision offers good value for money, often derived from economies of scale achieved through procurement for the sector. Five hundred and fifty-two council officers have attended open courses (with subsidised daily training rates) in the last 5 years and the Training Group also contributed £57 826 for BCC officers to participate in programmes such as Federal Exchange Institute , the Frontline Development Programme etc.

- Some councils may consider the Commission and Training Group value for money because contributions are based on the net rateable value of the district councils. Because this formula is used it is unlikely that Belfast could ever recoup the full benefit of its sizeable contribution each year; (£212 176 was deducted in 2012/13.) The net rateable value of Belfast has no direct correlation to the councils demand for service provision from the Staff Commission or the Training Group and for this reason an alternative charging mechanism should be explored.
- The Commission has advanced the equality and diversity agenda across the sector and it promotes good practice, learning and collaboration.
- Adherence to the Commission's codes of practice can act as a safeguard against accusations of unfairness and mal practice in relation to appointments and employee relations procedure and practice.
- The Commission will have an important role to play in preparation for the HR aspects of local government reform, in the transition and then in embedding and consolidating the change. It will need to continue delivery of its statutory remit with existing clients, assist councils to build capacity for change in general, support the Local Government Reform Joint Forum and advise on the implementation of its agreements etc.
- During the transition it will need to assist with the establishment of new councils, provide independent administration and advice to recruitment panels for senior posts, ensuring the consistent application of transfer procedures for the appointment of staff to new structures and ensure equality of opportunity throughout the process etc.

- Beyond reform it will be required to assist in consolidating new councils and provide advice and assistance on staffing issues, ensuring consistent application of the Joint Forum agreements, etc.
- To enable the Commission to adapt and be responsive to the needs of the new councils in the longer term and add real value, its statutory remit may need to be revised in the context of the new and extended role of Councils and their increased capacity. The need for the Commission's advisory and overseeing role should diminish after the new councils have become established and any long term sustainability must depend upon its ability to drive and facilitate strategic change at sector level, to build the capacity of the sector to deliver this organisational improvement and encourage collaboration and efficiencies across the sector.
- A review of the future role of the Local Government Staff Commission should also consider the roles of other bodies (such as the Public Services Commission).

4.0 Resource Implications

4.1 Financial

Concerns around the formula for calculating annual council contributions are set out above.

4.2 Human Resources

There are no Human Resource implications in this report.

5.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

5.1 There are no equality and good relations implications in this report.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 Members are asked to agree this response to the DOE's consultation questionnaire regarding the review of the Local Government Staff Commission."

The Committee approved the draft response, a copy of which was available on the Council's website, subject to the inclusion of a comment indicating that once the Review of Public Administration - Reform of Local Government had been embedded a further review of the Staff Commission be undertaken.

Asset Management

Land Contamination - Gasworks Estate

The Director of Property and Projects submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Members will be aware that Council undertook extensive ground decontamination of the former Gasworks site following cessation of gas production in order to permit its redevelopment. To provide sufficient comfort to potential developers the Development Committee at its meeting on 15th October 1997 approved additional insurance protection in the event of possible environmental liability claims arising. The resulting commercial redevelopment of the former Gasworks, facilitated by Council's ground remediation policies to date, has received many national awards.
- 1.2 As a result of a planning application in 2008 for a second international hotel to be developed on an existing car park within the Gasworks Estate further potential land contamination risks were raised by the Northern Ireland Environmental Agency (NIEA) in respect of ground water contamination. Difficulties were encountered by the developers in quantifying and agreeing the extent of the contamination risks with the NIEA and how to address their concerns should further development be permitted. Over two years after receiving the application Planning Service finally granted consent to this hotel development subject to conditions in respect of addressing the perceived additional land contamination risks.
- 1.3 At its meeting of 21st May 2010 the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee approved the procurement of suitably qualified consultants experienced in the management and development of brownfield sites to undertake a review of the Gasworks Estate (including the Northern Fringe) in order to produce a strategy for its management and future development.
- 1.4 Following the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee decision Land Quality Management Ltd (LQM) were appointed to undertake this review with the aim of providing Council with advice that would be used to develop an appropriate and cost-effective environmental plan for the Gasworks Estate that would satisfy further land contamination concerns raised by the NIEA. This report was delivered to Council officers in mid-September 2012 with the key message that the existence of

contamination on the site will need to be managed through regular monitoring however that does not preclude any further development only how that development is to be undertaken. A copy of the executive summary from the has been circulated.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Despite undertaking Department of the Environment accredited remediation of the former Gasworks site and the fact that Council also maintains environmental liability insurance for the Estate the NIEA have identified a perceived contamination risk to the underground aquifer located beneath the site.**
- 2.2 Coinciding with the economic downturn the delay caused in securing conditioned planning consent for a second international hotel resulted in the loss of further development for the Gasworks Estate and the benefit of additional income for the Council from an enhanced equity ground rent.**
- 2.3 Working with the Council's Legal and Environmental Health Services it was recommended that a three stage land contamination report that would include a legal review undertaken by Council's Legal Services following an initial Preliminary Risk Assessment (PRA) of the site. The final stage of the report was to produce a strategy for environmental management and way forward for the future development of the Gasworks Estate.**
- 2.4 The key findings of the LQM report are as follows:**

Preliminary Risk Assessment

- There are no current environmental & health risks with the site and no further immediate remedial action has been identified.**
- Uncertainties exist with regard to groundwater conditions, direction of groundwater flow and vapour migration at the site.**
- These uncertainties need to be addressed to allow effective decisions to be made in respect of future developments on the site.**

Legal Review

In developing this site Council should have regard to the following legal drivers:

- Planning (General Development Order) 1993. Future development of the site should not present a risk to future users and the environment.**

- Water Order 1999 & Groundwater Regulations 2009 which relate to the protection of groundwater and groundwater receptors.
- Water Order 1999 regarding the protection of surface water.
- Part 3 Waste & Contaminated Land Order 1997. There are no plans to introduce this legislation in Northern Ireland however if enacted it may introduce possible future liabilities.

Way Forward for the Site

In order to remove the uncertainties identified in the PRA and ensure the future development of the site meets all relevant legislative requirements the report recommends the following:

- That Council should consider establishing an environmental monitoring programme for the site. This information is essential to ensure effective decisions are made with respect to future developments at the site.
- Likely risk assessment and remediation methodologies to be applied in respect of future developments. These will aid development and ensure buildings do not introduce and health & environmental risks.
- Council officers meet with the NIEA to discuss the recommendations of the report and to agree actions for the environmental management and future development of the Estate.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

Should Members adopt the recommendations of the LQM report there will be costs associated with the monitoring regimes suggested. These costs will be met from the annual Gasworks Estate income.

However, failure to address the land contamination risks associated with management and future development of the Gasworks Estate could result in the loss of potential income from leasing/selling development sites on the Northern Fringe

3.2 Human Resources

Staff resources required in Estates Unit, Legal Services and Environmental Protection Unit to oversee management and future development of Gasworks site.

3.3 Asset and Other Implications

By obtaining an understanding of the risks and liabilities associated with contaminated land the Council can discharge its various legislative responsibilities in respect of ownership of the Gasworks site and also in respect of its other property assets.

This LQM report would form the basis for development of a land contamination policy for the Council when acquiring/disposing of property assets in the future.

4 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 There are no equality implications to this proposal.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Members are requested to note the content of this report and to adopt the various recommendations made in the LQM report in respect of instigating a monitoring regime for the Gasworks Estate and that Council officers meet with the NIEA to agree actions for the environmental management and future development of the Estate.”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

Smithfield Car Park

The Committee was reminded that the Council owned the land to the rear of Smithfield Market which the Department for Regional Development Roads Service (and formerly the Department of the Environment) had been operating as a car park since 1990. The former Health, Markets and Meat Plant Committee had, in May, 1990, agreed to seek car park operators and had subsequently entered into a Licence Agreement with the Department of the Environment. The Licence Agreement allowed for a review of the licence payment on 1st December each year and could be terminated by either party giving three months' notice in writing.

The Director of Property and Projects reported that negotiations had taken place with Land and Property Services, which was acting for the Department for Regional Development Roads Service, regarding the Licence payment from 1st December, 2011. The licence fee was based on the gross annual turnover generated by the car park for the preceding twelve month period immediately prior to any review and was subject to fluctuation. The current licence fee was £64,500 per annum. The licence fee proposed for the year 1st December to 30th November, 2012 was for the same amount as there had been a slight fall in gross receipts for the car park and the Department for Regional Development were in agreement to the licence fee remaining unchanged.

The Committee granted approval to the continuation of the Licence Fee at £64,500 per annum, payable by the Department of Regional Development, Roads Service for the Smithfield Car Park for the year commencing 1st December, 2011.

Good Relations and Equality

Minutes of Meeting of Good Relations Partnership

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Good Relations Partnership of 8th October and adopted the recommendations in respect of the following:

Consultation on Human Trafficking and Exploitation

To approve a draft response to a consultation on a Private Member's Bill entitled 'Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Further Provisions and Support for Victims) Bill'.

Intercultural Cities Conference

To approve the attendance of the Chairman of the Partnership and the Good Relations Manager (or their nominees) at an Intercultural Cities Conference, to be held in Dublin from 6th till 8th February, 2013.

Decade of Centenaries – Request for Loan of Exhibition

The Committee was reminded that a major exhibition entitled 'Shared History: Different Allegiances' had been commissioned earlier in the year to mark the Decade of Centenaries and covered the period 1912–1914. It had been launched at the beginning of August and would be in place in the East entrance of the City Hall until the end of February, 2013. The exhibition had received much positive media coverage and the feedback from the numerous visitors had been very encouraging.

The Good Relations Manager reported that, at the beginning of September, Ballymena Borough Council had contacted the Council requesting the Good Relations Unit to facilitate a visit by a number of their Elected Members and senior staff. That cross-party visit had taken place on 12th September and had been very successful, with the Ballymena representatives stating that they had enjoyed the visit and were very impressed with the exhibition. The matter had been discussed within the Ballymena Borough Council and at their monthly meeting in October it had unanimously agreed to host the exhibition. Subsequently, a formal request to borrow the exhibition and display it in the Braid Town Hall Museum and Arts Centre for a period of four months next year, that is, from March till June, 2013 had been received. The Braid Centre was a new purpose-built museum and arts venue and would draw a whole new audience from a wider region.

The Good Relations Manager reminded the Members that the exhibition had been designed specifically so that it could be dismantled, transported and re-mounted elsewhere, as it had been envisaged being displayed, for example, in another venue in Belfast and had also specified that the design should be modular so that individual

elements or panels within the exhibition could be loaned out for display. The Ballymena representatives had already discussed the possibility of making slight amendments to some of the panels to give them more of a "Ballymena" focus. Some of the artefacts currently in the glass display cases would not automatically be included in the travelling aspect of the exhibition but Ballymena might be able to make their own loan arrangements with the owners of those objects and the Council could assist in that.

The exhibition had been funded under the District Council Good Relations Programme by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister at a cost of approximately £45,000. That Office, as principal funder, had indicated that it was delighted to hear of the very positive feedback regarding the exhibition and was very supportive of the proposal to stage it in another district council area, since that would demonstrate collaborative working and sharing of public resources within the good relations sector. The Good Relations Manager pointed out that the costs of the removal and the re-build of the exhibition would be met by Ballymena and would be at no cost to the Council.

The Committee approved of the loan to Ballymena Borough Council of the exhibition for a period of four months, subject to the satisfactory completion of an appropriate loan agreement which would be drawn up by the Legal Services Section.

Operation Banner – Consultation

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"Relevant Background Information

The Committee will recall that at its last meeting it agreed that consultation on proposals in relation to Operation Banner should be undertaken with a broad and inclusive list of groups in Belfast and that this consultation exercise should be time-bound, with a further report to be submitted to its next meeting on 19 October.

Accordingly, those groups named on the two lists submitted to the Committee on 21 September were contacted (lists attached). Representatives from the army, UDR and police welfare groups were invited to a meeting on Tuesday 2 October and representatives from the various victims groups in the city, as indicated on the list provided by the Victims & Survivors Service (V&SS), were invited to a meeting on Thursday 4 October. The invitation letter, a copy of which has been circulated, outlines the various options that had been considered).

Each meeting was facilitated by the Council's Equality & Diversity Officer, the Good Relations Manager and staff from the Good Relations Unit. Groups who were unable to attend the meeting were informed that their opinions were still welcomed and some submitted comments via e-mail.

Key Issues

Police and armed forces

The first meeting on Tuesday 2 October was attended by representatives of the police and Royal British Legion. The police welfare representatives who attended supported in general the proposal to erect a substantial memorial to all those who served in Operation Banner, along with a granite bench, but were not in favour of tree planting.

The official representative from the Royal British Legion reported that he was speaking on behalf of the RBL, the national Custodian of Remembrance and an organisation that makes significant use of the existing Garden of Remembrance at the City Hall. He pointed out that there was already a National UK Memorial at the Arboretum in Staffordshire. He was aware of the political sensitivities surrounding any proposed memorial and stated that the Royal British Legion was keen to avoid anything that might contribute to negative tensions or negative publicity on the issue. Their main concern was the impact that any planned memorial may have on the Garden of Remembrance, which was a focal point for their two main annual commemoration ceremonies in July and November.

The Royal Irish Regiment representative was unable to attend but in a written submission proposed an 'alternative to the ideas of trees, windows, plaques, statues, etc., of which there is already a plethora in and around City Hall and which, I suggest, may be of limited interest to the citizens of Belfast and casual visitors'.

The RIR representative stated that they are currently planning a Military Gallery in Belfast which would tell the story of the Irish soldier in service to the Crown. The involvement of the Army in Northern Ireland would form a significant part of that story but would be set in the wider context of the service of Irish men and women, from all sections of our divided community, to the Crown over the past 3-4 centuries. He felt that such a Gallery might achieve far more than would be possible with a conventional memorial. It could provide information in an educational, interactive environment, challenge myths and would contribute positively to the local economy.

Victims' groups

The meeting on 4 October was attended by representatives from the Ashton Centre, Forum for Action on Substance Abuse (FASA) and Haven Victims Support; all these groups appear on the official V&SS list. One individual representing the Greater Shankill Community Council and one other representing a local Branch of the Royal British Legion (the Oldpark/ Cavehill Branch) also attended.

Despite the fact that these victims groups represented very different views and expressed a wide range of opinions, this was a very measured and respectful discussion.

Both the Shankill Community and the (unofficial) local RBL Branch representatives were keen to support the option of a memorial but they were aware of the process involved and stated that, in their opinion, their views would not affect the ultimate decision which would be made by the Council, probably on political party lines.

The Ashton Centre representatives noted that there were already a number of pieces of art in the City Hall dedicated to the armed services. In their opinion, symbolism was important and the building should provide a space that reflected all the communities in Belfast. They were concerned as to how this consultation fitted within the current EQIA on artefacts and balance within the City Hall and Council staff stated that any proposal would have to take into account the broader equality context. One Ashton Centre representative stated that a memorial for Operation Banner would be seen as insulting by many nationalists and could be regarded as divisive and retrograde at a time when Belfast had experienced substantial progress and should continue to be moving forward.

All present acknowledged that this was a very complex situation and there was no simplistic solution.

Two victims' groups - Relatives for Justice and Survivors of Trauma - were unable to attend but submitted written comments. Relatives for Justice felt that an inclusive memorial to all those killed or injured would be a timely acknowledgement for all those affected by the conflict. The Survivors of Trauma group noted that there were already several stained glass windows in the City Hall acknowledging the role of the armed forces and were not in favour of any more memorials being erected to the legacy of Operation Banner.

Conclusion

There was no consensus on this issue. Even among the armed forces and police welfare agencies there was no universal agreement about a memorial. The army and RBL representatives in particular were clearly aware of the political composition of the Council and were keen to avoid any course of action that might be seen as damaging community relations in the city.

Resource Implications

None at this stage but could be various amounts up to £55,000, depending on the Committee decision.

Equality and Good Relations Implications

The Committee will be aware that a major Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) on memorabilia in the City Hall is underway, with a period of public consultation just completed on 1 October. Any decision taken in relation to Operation Banner should be taken with due regard to this broader context and would have to be fully consulted upon in line with our current statutory equality obligations.

Recommendations/Decision required

The Committee is requested to note the report back on the consultation exercise and decide on an appropriate course of action.”

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor McVeigh,
Seconded by Councillor Maskey,

That the Committee agrees, given that the Council was undertaking a major Equality Impact Assessment on memorabilia in the City Hall, with a period of public consultation having been completed on 1st October, that the proposals in relation to Operation Banner be deferred and that any decision taken should give due regard to that broader context and would have to be fully consulted upon in line with current statutory equality obligations.

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

Cross-Cutting Issues

Response to Fit and Well – Changing Lives Consultation

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

The Committee was advised that the Health and Environmental Services Committee, at its meeting on 3rd October, had approved a draft response to the consultation document on the proposed new 10-year Public Health Framework for 2012/22 entitled “Fit and Well – Changing Lives” which had been issued by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. The framework was designed to be strategic and to provide direction for policies and actions to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Northern Ireland. It built on the aims of the previous strategy, Investing for Health, and placed a focus on dealing with the health inequalities which existed using the recommendations put forward through the Government’s review on addressing the social determinants of health (the Marmot Review). In view of the impact of the public health framework on the role of the Council, in terms of its community planning role, any further comments to the response were being sought from the Committee in that regard.

The Committee endorsed the draft response to the consultation, a copy of which would be included within the minutes of the Health and Environmental Services Committee of 3rd October.

**Urban Regeneration and Community Development
Policy Framework - Consultation Response**

The Committee considered the undernoted report and approved the comments as the Council's response to the consultation:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The Department for Social Development (DSD) is currently running a public consultation on the Government's proposals for an Urban Regeneration and Community Development policy framework for Northern Ireland. The consultation ends on 25 October 2012.**

DSD state that the new framework will:

- shape the strategic direction of urban regeneration and community development policy over the coming years, and**
- set out clear priorities for urban regeneration and community development programmes, both before and after the operational responsibility for these is transferred to councils under the reform of local government.**

The Development Department led on the co-ordination of the council's response working with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) and the Chief Executive's Strategic Planning & Policy team. Given its obvious cross-departmental implications input was gathered from across the council via a number of methods:

- A special meeting of the Development Committee was held in September, to which all Members of the Council were invited;**
- A facilitated workshop for relevant officers from all departments; and**
- A facilitated workshop for CMT**

The three meetings all considered a series of questions which were used to frame the draft corporate response:

- What were the council's priorities for urban regeneration and community development?**
- How could the new framework contribute to these priorities?**
- How could the council best work with DSD post-RPA?**
- How could the council work strategically to support DSD to shape the final framework and its delivery.**

2.0 Key Issues

- 2.1** The draft council response (attached as Appendix One) broadly welcomes the new Framework and suggests that it has the potential to set a clear direction for the future in its stated intention to establish clear priorities for urban regeneration and community development.
- 2.2** The response also endorses the policy objectives that are set out within it, particularly those which outline the ongoing focus on tackling deprivation and on city competitiveness. The response suggests that these are central to the success of any framework for urban regeneration and community development.
- 2.3** However, the council response also provides a series of challenging recommendations which would strengthen the final DSD framework. These are summarised below:
- 1.** The framework should act as a catalyst for discussions on the future source and allocation of resources for urban regeneration and community development;
 - 2.** The economic and social potential of Northern Ireland is dependent upon effective urban regeneration and community development in Belfast City;
 - 3.** It must support the future role of local government in place making, post local government reorganisation;
 - 4.** Urban regeneration and community development must be fully integrated within the Framework to achieve positive social and economic outcomes;
 - 5.** The language of urban regeneration and community development used in the Framework should consider using an asset based approach, which recognises the opportunities as well as the challenges;
 - 6.** The private sector must be included as a partner in the process of urban regeneration and community development if progress towards a more balanced economy is to be realised;
 - 7.** The Framework must acknowledge that urban regeneration and community development in Belfast and other parts of Northern Ireland is still affected by the context of post conflict and sectarianism and aim to work towards a shared future;
 - 8.** It must reflect the important role of culture in regeneration.
- 2.4** The response notes that Belfast City Council looks forward to engaging with the department in the on-going development of the model. It suggests there is the opportunity, through joint

working on key regeneration projects in the city, to test out and enhance the framework further in advance of the transfer of functions post RPA.

2.5 Following approval by Members the draft response will be forwarded to DSD with a note explaining that the response is subject to endorsement by Council in November.

3.0 Resource Implications

3.1 None.

4.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 None.

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to approve the draft response to the consultation and raise any additional issues, relating to the consultation document, that they would like to be included in the final response.

DSD Consultation on a New Framework for Urban Regeneration and Community Development

Consultation response: Belfast City Council's view

Belfast City Council welcomes the new Framework for Urban Regeneration and Community Development and suggests this framework has the potential to be a 'high level' strategic document which sets a clear direction for the future in its stated intention to establish clear priorities for urban regeneration and community development.

We strongly endorse the policy objectives set out in the Framework: particularly objectives one and two which outline the ongoing focus on tackling deprivation and on city competitiveness. We believe these objectives to be absolutely vital and therefore central to the success of any framework for urban regeneration and community development. Furthermore, these objectives are supportive of the key policy drivers set out in the Regional Development Strategy and in the Programme for Government and they highlight the strategic importance of Belfast as 'the economic driver for the region'. This should form the basis on which resources are allocated to inform delivery against the framework.

Belfast City Council believes the framework might be strengthened in a number of key areas. Our recommendations include:

1. the economic and social potential of Northern Ireland is dependent upon effective urban regeneration and community development in Belfast City;
2. the framework could act as a catalyst for discussions on the future source and allocation of resources for urban regeneration and community development;
3. the Framework should support the future role of local government in place making, post local government reorganisation;
4. urban regeneration and community development must be fully integrated within the Framework to achieve positive social and economic outcomes;
5. the language of urban regeneration and community development used in the Framework should consider using an asset based approach, which recognises the opportunities as well as the challenges;
6. the private sector must be included as a partner in the process of urban regeneration and community development if progress towards a more balanced economy is to be realised;
7. the Framework must acknowledge that urban regeneration and community development in Belfast and other parts of Northern Ireland is still affected by the context of post conflict and sectarianism and aim to work towards a shared future;
8. the Framework should reflect the important role of culture in regeneration;
9. Belfast City Council looks forward to engaging with the department in the on-going development of the model. There is the opportunity through joint working on key regeneration projects in the city to test out and enhance the framework further in advance of the transfer of functions post RPA.

Future drafts of the strategy should explore these areas in more detail in order to effectively support successful urban regeneration and community development in Northern Ireland and Belfast City Council is keen to work with the Department to this end.

This consultation response therefore sets out Belfast City Council's views on the new Framework in relation to the recommendations identified above; and includes detailed responses to each of the consultation questions in Appendix 1.

Reflecting the importance of urban regeneration and community development in Belfast, the City Council has developed this response from a series of facilitated workshops with Council

Members, the Corporate Management Team and policy officers across the Council.

1. *The economic and social potential of Northern Ireland is dependent upon effective urban regeneration and community development in Belfast City*

Belfast has a key position within the Framework for Urban Regeneration and Community Development because of its economic role as a driver for growth in Northern Ireland. However, regeneration and community development are also priorities because of concentrations of deprivation in the city, which constrains, not only Belfast's economy but the economy of Northern Ireland as a whole. Subsequently, there is an urgent need to prioritise support for those communities living in the city who experience deprivation, worklessness and poverty.

As identified in both the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland and the Programme for Government, the new framework highlights the strategic importance of Belfast as 'The economic driver for the region'^[1]. Belfast is a focus for the majority of economic activity and transactions in the region (e.g. Belfast accounts for 28% of the total employment in Northern Ireland, a figure which rises to 46% within the Belfast metropolitan area). The city is also a focal point for tourism in Northern Ireland. Belfast however also has some of the most serious regeneration challenges in the region. Fifteen of Northern Ireland's 10% most deprived neighbourhoods are located within the city (out of total of thirty six across Northern Ireland)^[2]. Many of these areas have been relatively 'untouched' by the economic growth that occurred in the late 2000s^[3]. Whilst there is a not only a strong social justice argument as to why these areas should be supported, there is also a strong economic justification; social deprivation not only limits Belfast's economic competitiveness but the competitiveness of Northern Ireland. Deprivation in communities also weakens the resilience of our region to withstand future economic, social and environmental shock. Subsequently, supporting Belfast's role as the key economic driver whilst addressing the deprivation that prevents the city fulfilling its potential is critical to achieving the outcomes identified in the Executive's Programme for Government and should form a key element of the Framework.^[4]

These should therefore form the basis on which resources are allocated to inform delivery against this framework.

2. *The framework should act as a catalyst for discussions on the future source and allocation of resources for urban regeneration and community development*

An important question which remains unanswered in the Framework is from where future resources for regeneration and community development will come and how these resources will be allocated. Given the reduction in funding available generally for urban regeneration and community development, this new Framework needs to act as catalyst for new ideas and innovative thinking about how to fund urban regeneration and community development in the future.

Resource challenges

Nationally, the collapse of the banking sector and subsequent recession has led to deep cuts in public funding, as outlined in the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review and reiterated in the Budget 2012. Given the fact that the UK has slipped back into recession, there may be further reductions in expenditure announced in the Autumn Budget statement, expected on 5 December 2012. At the same time, specific funding programmes in Northern Ireland are also due to complete their current cycle in 2013. There has also been a gradual reduction in funding available from large philanthropic funding sources, such as Atlantic Philanthropies and the Building Change Trust,^[5] although nationally, the UK government, through initiatives such as the Big Society Capital^[6], have placed a greater emphasis on philanthropy as a potentially important source of funding for regeneration and community development in the future.

The Comprehensive Spending Review significantly reduced funding for area based regeneration in England, phasing out specific programmes such as the neighbourhood renewal and housing market renewal programmes.

Instead, greater emphasis was placed upon targeting long term unemployment through welfare reform. The key outcome of this reform, Universal Credit, is due to be launched across the UK in October 2013.

There has also been a change in the way in which the community and voluntary sector work, with funders placing a much greater emphasis on social enterprise, income generation, sustainability and public service commissioning; however the ability and resources to evolve to this new model of working varies enormously due to the diversity of the

community and voluntary sector. Belfast City Council is working closely with the third sector to support organisations to develop capacity and assess the feasibility of this new model of working, particularly through its Community Development Strategy and Support Plan.^[7]

Resource opportunities

The new EU Programme provides a real opportunity to the DSD and local government to resource an integrated urban strategy for regeneration and community development across Northern Ireland. Of particular interest are the opportunities for Northern Ireland in pursuing financial investments such as JESSICA. In their recently published regeneration strategy, the Scottish Executive have already established a regeneration investment fund, part funded from SPRUCE, which is the Scottish JESSICA funding programme worth £50m and providing loan support to thirteen eligible areas.

There is also much that can be learned from Belfast City Council's planning and pilot work on a new community development strategy and support plan, particularly work to develop the Belfast Community Investment Programme (BCIP). This will play a key role in strengthening the capacity of community development infrastructure organisations. This is a model of supporting community development and regeneration that could be replicated in other areas post local government reorganisation.

Belfast has also been working closely with the DSD on a number of strategic projects including the BCIP, the University of Ulster relocation in North Belfast, City Centre redevelopment, and Glen 10. All of the joint working on these projects provides key learning for future initiatives as to how to effectively resource and project manage urban regeneration and community development in the future.

Finally, the Framework makes no reference to the potential role of local government financing (e.g. the role of levers such as council business rates, public procurement and local government borrowing may play in supporting future urban regeneration activities). These are key tools for understanding how to maximise the role of public money in urban regeneration (e.g. using public procurement to support positive economic and social outcomes through the use of social benefit clauses).

3. *The Framework must support the future role of local government in place making, post local government reorganisation*

The Framework states that it will shape the strategic direction for urban regeneration and community development in the future by setting out clear priorities, both before and after local government reorganisation. However, whilst the document sets out four clear policy objectives for the future, there is a lack of clarity about the role of partners in responding to them, particularly local government who will be taking on new responsibilities for regeneration, planning and community development from 2015 onwards. In this new operational context, local government will play a key role as a place maker^[8] in the new council areas, providing a leadership role for the community and voluntary sector and the private sector. How will this impact on urban regeneration and community development activity? How will this change and impact upon the current systems of delivery? These types of questions are not addressed in the Framework, but for preparations towards the reorganisation of local government, these issues are critical.

The document also attempts to combine both strategic visioning and delivery through the policy objectives and key actions, but without identifying outcomes or local government partners. Belfast City Council believes that this Framework should establish a clear strategic vision for the future of urban regeneration and community development, which firmly establishes these functions as integral across the Executive for the development of a successful and shared future for all. A redrafted Framework with a clear focus on strategy could then be used to establish clear roles and responsibilities for local government and other partners in the design and delivery of urban regeneration and community development. Local councils like Belfast could then respond to this strategic vision with a plan of implementation.

4. *Urban regeneration and community development must be fully integrated to achieve the positive social and economic outcomes*

In parts of the Framework, urban regeneration and community development are portrayed as separate entities which, whilst complementary, are nevertheless undertaken separately. Belfast City Council firmly believe that, based on experience in the city's most deprived communities, community development is both an enabling objective for regeneration and a positive outcome of regeneration. The importance of

community development has also been recognised by the European Commission who describes it as '*an effective and efficient tool in the delivery of development policies*' ^[9]. The EU also describes how community led development links to economic priorities suggesting that it helps to improve the '*quality of growth and the need to ensure that it is inclusive and sustainable.*' ^[10]

Belfast City Council are currently finalising a new community development strategy for the city and would welcome the opportunity to contribute some of the learning from this process with the DSD to inform future iterations of the Framework.

Belfast City Council believe the framework should be a positive enabler to support integrated approaches to urban regeneration and community development and would point DSD to current demonstration projects, for example, the relocation of the University of Ulster and the regeneration of the Titanic Quarter. These initiatives successfully demonstrate the capacity of multi-agency approaches to affect combined and mutually re-enforcing impacts across physical, social and economic indicators.

5. *The language of urban regeneration and community development used in the Framework should consider using an asset based approach, which recognises the opportunities as well as the challenges*

Belfast City Council is increasingly reconceptualising regeneration activity in a way which attempts to present regeneration as a positive activity, aimed at making the most of the opportunities and strengths that exist within communities, rather than simply an activity responding to need or market failure. The language of the Framework is at times problematic and overly negative, defining places in terms of 'areas of need' and 'areas of opportunity'. In recent years, there has been a move away from this type of categorisation because of its potential to problematise communities and further blight their reputation and potential^[11]. We suggest that a different narrative, where the emphasis is one focused on the assets rather than the disadvantages that define communities, would be beneficial.

6. *The private sector must be included as a partner in the process of urban regeneration and community development if progress towards a more balanced economy is to be realised*

The focus of this Framework is upon the public and voluntary and community sectors; there is no mention of the role that the private sector can potentially play in regeneration. In a time of public sector austerity, the private sector is a key

partner in regeneration, (e.g., in inward investment, employment and skills development). The private sector's role is also important in the context of Northern Ireland's Economic Strategy^[12] and regional development strategy both of which stress the importance of rebalancing the economy by reducing the region's dependence on public sector employment.

- 7. The Framework must acknowledge that urban regeneration and community development in Belfast and other parts of Northern Ireland is still affected by the context of post conflict and sectarianism and aim to work towards a shared future*

It is important that the Framework does not lose sight of the fact that this work is still taking place in a post conflict context. Whilst the context for regeneration and community development has changed significantly, there are still serious divisions in society and community tensions, as demonstrated by the sectarian violence in North Belfast during August and September 2012. It is no accident that areas with the highest levels of deprivation, poor educational attainment and low levels of employment are also those areas who continue to experience social unrest. This context presents a set of very unique challenges for regeneration and community development, whereby traditional market failure is compounded by the legacy of conflict and social division.

Whilst the Framework suggests that housing led regeneration may be a solution to some of these problems, Belfast City Council believe that in the short and medium term, the priority should be to tackle not only the physical barriers of division but the social manifestations of sectarianism which persist in society. This means that despite the challenge of recession, resourcing and reform, the Framework must face up to these challenges honestly, otherwise the work that has been undertaken to date by DSD and partners to create a better and shared society for all will be lost.

- 8. Why culture's role in regeneration must be recognised in the Framework*

The role of the arts, music and language is increasingly recognised as making an important contribution to economic prosperity and community wellbeing, but unfortunately is not acknowledged in the Framework. Creativity and knowledge are now key drivers for the creation of new jobs, enterprise and investment, something recognised by the EU

Commission's Green Paper '*Unlocking the Potential of Cultural and Creative industries*' published in 2010^[13] and more widely in academic literature.^[14] In addition, culture has played a significant role in Northern Ireland in recent years, particularly in Belfast, and the City Council has established culture as a key driver for regeneration in the '*Integrated Cultural Strategy for Belfast*.'^[15] Culture led regeneration was also central to the development of the Titanic Quarter of the city. Elsewhere in Northern Ireland, culture also plays a crucial role (e.g. the forthcoming city of Culture festival in Derry/Londonderry in 2013).

Appendix 1: Detailed responses to consultation questions
Consultation response: The Framework's policy objectives

Belfast City Council strongly endorses the policy objectives set out in the Framework: particularly objectives one and two which outline the ongoing focus on tackling deprivation and on city competitiveness. We believe these objectives to be absolutely vital and therefore central to the success of any framework for urban regeneration and community development. Furthermore, these objectives are supportive of the key policy drivers set out in the Regional Development Strategy and in the Programme for Government and they highlight the strategic importance of Belfast as 'the economic driver for the region'. This should form the basis on which resources are allocated to inform delivery against the framework.

We would however make the following observations in order to strengthen the framework:

- **Make the objectives more specific:** The objectives are extremely ambitious but, in their current state, too broad and generic. They lack focus and are not specific enough, neither geographically nor thematically.
- **Present framework outcomes:** The Framework refers to the importance of an outcomes based approach, and presents the logic model as a means whereby practitioners work backwards from the outcomes to design and deliver interventions. However, despite this sentiment, the Framework contains no outcomes and instead moves from policy objectives and enabling objectives straight to key actions. This means that it is difficult for respondents to the Framework to have clarity on how success against the objectives will be understood and measured. Belfast City Council is currently working in partnership with DSD (BCIP)

- to develop outcomes for community development and would welcome the opportunity to share some of this thinking to inform the Framework.
- **Balance the current focus on physical and economic development with social development:** The policy objectives are overly focused on physical and economic development. There needs to be greater exploration of people based development and social issues (e.g. the alleviation of child poverty, the removal of barriers to education, and consideration of health and wellbeing issues).
- **Integrate the objectives across government departments to ensure connectivity:** Achieving the objectives outlined in the Framework will necessitate an integrated approach on the part of the Executive and local government. Tackling the challenges of area based deprivation, improving competitiveness, developing infrastructure, and working towards a shared society will all require government departments to work together. This includes health, education, OFMDFM, regional development, and planning.

This Framework will fail if it is simply the responsibility of DSD alone. There must be commitment from other departments to endorse the Framework's objectives and ensure that community development is of key importance across government departments. In the context of local government reorganisation, the Framework should also make reference to the current and future role of local government in the delivery of urban regeneration and community development. This can be informed from the significant historical and ongoing partnership between Belfast and DSD on the development of many strategic regeneration sites.

Consultation response: The Framework's enabling objectives

The enabling objectives do seem to be appropriate for this Framework. They could however be strengthened, in that there are other enabling objectives which will also help to support future community development and urban regeneration. These enabling objectives require further work to ensure they reflect the existing work of councils like Belfast on community development.

- **Enabling objectives reflect what is already happening in Belfast:** The Framework presents the enabling objectives as a new approach. It needs to acknowledge that this type of work is already taking place in Belfast and other parts of Northern Ireland, and that the Framework is only attempting to build on this existing good practice. A key

example of current practice is the BCIP Programme which is due to come into place in 2014. Other councils may be able to learn lessons from this work.

- **The enabling objectives make no reference to other mechanisms:** Planning policy, particularly the community planning agenda, will potentially be powerful enabling objectives for helping to support urban regeneration and community development. However, there is no reference made to these mechanisms, neither in the enabling objectives nor in the rest of the document.
- **Enabling objective 2 – maximising the resources available:** Enabling objective 2 makes reference to the use of new financial instruments, which is also a theme of UK national policy. However, there is no reference to what these new financial instruments might be and their usefulness in Northern Ireland (e.g. mechanisms such as Accelerated Development Zones (ADZs), Tax Increment Financing (TIF), charitable bonds and crowdsourcing). It would be helpful, particularly in the context of a reduced funding environment, if a redrafted Framework could present an options analysis which outlines the possible strengths and weaknesses of these new financial instruments for the context of Northern Ireland. It would also be useful if this analysis could look specifically at the options for social finance, building on previous research such as the recent report by Charity Bank and the Ulster Community Investment Trust.^[16] It may also be important to examine the feasibility of the Big Society Capital model and its application in the Northern Ireland context.
- **Enabling objective 4 – appreciate the diversity of the community and voluntary sector:** This enabling objective makes assumptions about the capacity and composition of community and voluntary organisations, treating it as a clearly identifiable, distinct and measurable sector. However, this sector is extremely diverse and generalisations are difficult; therefore any interventions which attempt to work with this sector need to appreciate this complexity in both designing and delivering interventions. In addition, the policy objective of developing greater cohesion and engagement needs to be the responsibility of all partners across the public, private and community and voluntary sectors.

- **The language of the framework is clumsy at times:** The language of the Framework is not always appropriate (e.g. over emphasis on 'efficiency' in enabling objective 4 is not necessarily appropriate for the community and voluntary sector). In particular, it suggests that voluntary and community sector organisations have the capacity to bid for and deliver public service contracts.

Consultation response: The logic model

Belfast City Council welcomes the use of the logic model in the Framework because it enables project managers to reflect on whether 'what we are doing is working?' This is a well known and understood model for managing projects and programmes. However, the logic model has been presented in the Framework with no tangible outcomes; so whilst the model itself is not problematic, the decision to present the model with no associated outcomes against the Framework's policy objectives certainly makes it difficult to assess the model's long term usefulness. Whilst broadly supportive, Belfast City Council would also like to highlight some of the limitations of the logic model which should be acknowledged in any future guidance^[17]:

- logic models can be overly reliant upon quantitative data which may not always be appropriate to develop a thorough understanding of community development, where qualitative data collection and analysis can be extremely important;
- logic models present an idealised way of understanding how programmes and projects work. They aim to generate positive outcomes but may also result in unexpected or unintended consequences which can only be identified by listening to the real life experiences of community members;
- the forces which change and impact upon communities can be extremely varied and any programme for urban regeneration and community development needs to consider the broader context for the intervention;
- logic models can be extremely difficult and complex to create and monitor. Thought needs to be given as to how this logic model for urban regeneration and community development will be developed for interventions in Northern Ireland. It would be useful if the DSD could provide examples of where the logic model has been used in Northern Ireland and with what success.

Consultation response: Definition of urban

The definition of urban, as set out in the Framework, is restrictive and does not reflect the geographies generally associated with regeneration and community development. A more flexible approach should be taken in the future. The key issues for Belfast City Council are as follows:

- the definition does not make clear how the settlement types set out in Annex A of the Framework relate to the RPA context, (e.g. how will the settlement type relate to resource allocation). In addition, there is no reference to the area based policy of distributing funding (e.g. will future resource be allocated on a per head basis or in relation to levels of deprivation?);
- the definition of 'urban' at a population of 4500 means that the range of urban areas varies enormously. This variation makes generalisation about urban regeneration difficult;
- it would be useful if the DSD could provide greater clarification on their ideas as to how the definition of urban can become more flexible to allow for better integration of funding opportunities;
- whilst the Framework recognises the economic role of Belfast as a key driver for competitiveness, the strategic importance of the city for economic growth, particularly the role of the city centre as a generator of taxes and income, could be given greater consideration within the document. Given the context of low economic growth, it may be more useful for the Framework to work towards greater economic resilience, rather than simply growth.

Consultation response: Definition of regeneration

The term 'regeneration' is a contested and complex activity involving many types of place; it is not only complex but is 'an evolving problem' which develops and changes according to the temporal and spatial context. Whilst the definition of regeneration used in the Framework reflects that used in other regeneration strategies, (e.g. the Scottish Government's regeneration strategy published in December 2011), Belfast City Council are of the opinion that the definition is overly focused on economic outcomes, thereby neglecting the wider social importance of regeneration.

The language used in the Framework's definition is overly negative; the word 'failure' suggests regeneration is about reacting to a problem, rather than a proactive activity which aims to make the most of the current and potential opportunities to create job opportunities and support private investment.

The conceptualisation of regeneration is also narrow and potentially restrictive. This conceptualisation is underpinned by the assumption that the challenges in Northern Ireland are the result of market failure, and that market failure should be the only premise for state intervention. However, in a context of ongoing social unrest, a legacy of conflict and the very physical barriers that still exist between communities, additional blocks to economic growth are created and perpetuated, preventing investment, entrepreneurship and growth. These challenges require more than a standard economic response to supply and demand. In order to build a shared future, economic responses to these issues must be developed alongside social people based regeneration responses, in order to fully address the complex inter-community divisions that still exist in neighbourhoods. This process can only be done through linking regeneration with a community development approach.

To this end, a more appropriate definition of regeneration could reflect the sentiments of the 1999 Urban Task Force definition of regeneration, which instead of focusing on the market, described regeneration as *a 'comprehensive package of regeneration measures to address both the physical regeneration of an area and the economic and social needs of the local population.'* ^[18] Or it might define regeneration as simply about *'reinvestment in a place after a period of disinvestment.'* ^[19] The definition may also want to draw more on the growing interest in the concept of resilience. Resilience is defined as *'the ability of a place to respond to the challenges that it faces.'* ^[20] In the context of the poor economic context, resilience is becoming increasingly recognised as a useful concept which helps policy makers broaden their approach away from a preoccupation with economic growth^[21].

Finally, a definition of regeneration which focuses specifically on the market fails to recognise the role of the state as a provider of services such as health, housing, education, and community safety. These are key services which have a direct link to the delivery of regeneration outcomes; therefore regeneration is not simply about achieving economic outcomes or creating competitiveness. Instead, all departments need to recognise their role within regeneration and the role that public services can play in tackling area based deprivation.

Consultation response: Definition of community development

The definition of community development reflects that of Belfast City Council's own consultation on community development within the city. However, whilst this definition is clear, within the Framework the relationship between community development and regeneration is unclear. There appears to be uncertainty about how community development supports regeneration and vice versa. Community development is a key outcome for regeneration and needs to be more fully woven into the Framework in a way that gives the impression of being more than tokenistic. Belfast City Council takes the view that regeneration and community development are not separate activities but part and parcel of the same agenda. We would suggest that the Framework develops a definition of urban regeneration and community development which illustrates how they operate together and the synergistic effect of both activities for communities. An example of how this could work is presented below.

Box 1: Joint definition of urban regeneration and community development

A comprehensive package of regeneration measures to address both the physical regeneration of Northern Ireland's communities and the economic and social needs of the people who live in areas with high levels of deprivation. Effective regeneration also helps to achieve the outcome of higher place resilience which better equips communities to withstand social, environmental and economic shocks in the future.

Community development is a very successful and effective mechanism for helping to deliver urban regeneration outcomes because it is the main means by which we can better engage with local people and support their involvement in improving the neighbourhoods they live and work in. Community development enables people to come together to:

- influence or take decisions about issues that matter to them and affect their lives;
- define needs, issues and solutions for their community;
- take action to help themselves and make a difference."

- ^[1] From the Urban Regeneration and Community Development Policy Framework: Consultation Document (2012) Page 15, paragraph: 3.2.1
- ^[2] Source: DSD website:
http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/urcdg-urban_regeneration/neighbourhood_renewal.htm
- ^[3] Source: Belfast City Masterplan (draft) Review: 2012
- ^[4] Northern Ireland Executive (2011) Programme for Government 2011-2015 Building a better future.
- ^[5] Charity Bank and Ulster Community Investment Trust (2012) Social Finance in Northern Ireland: Innovative Thinking and Action
- ^[6] More information on Big Society Capital can be found here: <http://www.bigsocietycapital.com/>
- ^[7] A copy of the Community Development Strategy and Support Plan can be found here: <http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/communitysupportplan/cspconsultation.asp>
- ^[8] Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) (2007) Place shaping: a shared ambition for the future of local government. HMSO
- ^[9] EU Commission (2011) Factsheet on Community Led Community Development Cohesion Policy 2014-2020. EU Commission page
- ^[10] Ibid
- ^[11] For example numerous examples quoted by, Imrie, R. and Raco, M. (2003) Urban Renaissance? New Labour, Community and Urban Policy Routledge and Porter and Shaw (2010) Whose Urban Renaissance? An International Comparison of urban regeneration strategies. Routledge
- ^[12] For a copy of the strategy: <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/economic-strategy>
- ^[13] European <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/economic-strategy> Commission (2010) European Commission's Green Paper Unlocking the Potential of the Cultural and Creative Industries. European Commission
- ^[14] Boddy, M. and Parkinson, M. (2004) City Matters Competitiveness, cohesion and urban governance
- ^[15] Belfast City Council (?) *An Integrated Cultural Strategy for Belfast* Belfast City Council
- ^[16] Charity Bank and Ulster Community Investment Trust (2012) Social Finance in Northern Ireland: Innovative Thinking and Action
- ^[17] The Community Tool Box: http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_main_1877.aspx
- ^[18] Urban Task Force Report 'Towards a Strong Urban Renaissance' HMSO
- ^[19] Porter, L, and Shaw, K (2009) *Whose Urban Renaissance?* Routledge, Taylor and Francis. London and New York
- ^[20] Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) (2010) Productive Local Economies: Creating resilience places
- ^[21] Dawley, S. Pike, A. and Tomaney, J. (2010) Towards the Resilient Region? Local Economy 25. 650:"

Chairman