

Document Pack

**Democratic Services Section
Chief Executive's Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**



5th November, 2012

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room (Room G05), City Hall on Friday, 9th November, 2012 at 10.00 a.m., for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

PETER McNANEY

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest

2. Democratic Services and Governance

- (a) Request for the Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality (Pages 1 - 4)
- (b) Notice of Motion - Antrim Ladies' Gaelic Football Team (Pages 5 - 6)

3. **Finance/Value-for-Money**

- (a) Minutes of Meeting of Audit Panel of 23rd October (Pages 7 - 16)
- (b) Tender for the Provision of Window Cleaning Services at Various Council Properties (Pages 17 - 22)
- (c) Tender for Consultancy Services to Undertake Rent Reviews at Balmoral and Duncrue Industrial Estates (Pages 23 - 24)
- (d) Notice of Motion - Online Rates Receipt (Pages 25 - 26)

4. **Asset Management**

- (a) Provision of a Smoking Shelter in the City Hall Courtyard (Pages 27 - 30)
- (b) Acquisition of Former Grove Primary School Site (Pages 31 - 40)
- (c) Provision of Car Parking for Christmas Shoppers (Pages 41 - 46)

5. **Good Relations and Equality**

- (a) Minutes of Meeting of Party Group Leaders' Forum and Historic Centenaries Working Group of 18th October (Pages 47 - 48)

6. **Cross-Cutting Issues**

- (a) Consultation on European Territorial Co-operation 2014-2020 (Pages 49 - 84)

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



Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Requests for the Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality |
| Date: | Friday, 9th November, 2012 |
| Reporting Officer: | Mr. Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager, ext 6314 |
| Contact Officer: | Mr. Gareth Quinn, Senior Democratic Services Officer, ext 6316 |

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| 1. | Relevant Background Information |
| 1.1 | Members will recall that the Committee, at its meeting on 26th September, 2003, agreed to the criteria which would be used to assess requests from external organisations for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality. Subsequently the Committee at its meeting on 7th August, 2009, further amended the criteria so as to incorporate the new Key Themes as identified in the Council's Corporate Plan. |
| 2. | Key Issues |
| 2.1 | The revised criteria have been applied to each of the requests contained within the appendix and recommendations have been made to the Committee on this basis. |
| 3. | Resource Implications |
| 3.1 | Provision has been made in the revenue estimates for hospitality. |
| 4. | Equality Implications |
| 4.1 | N/A |
| 5. | Recommendation |
| 5.1 | The Committee is requested to approve the recommendations as set out in the attached appendix. |

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| 6. | Decision Tracking |
| Officer responsible – Gareth Quinn, Senior Democratic Services Officer | |
| 7. | Key to Abbreviations |
| Not applicable | |
| 8. | Document Attached |
| Schedule of Applications | |

Appendix

| Organisation/ Body | Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests | Request | Comments | Recommendation |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| Survivors of Suicide Support Group and East Belfast Alternatives | Walk for Suicide Prevention and Launch of Short Film 9th December, 2012 Approximately 500 attending | The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits | <p>This event aims to raise awareness of the issue of Suicide in East Belfast and will provide an opportunity for young people who have been affected by suicide to talk about their feelings and to seek support. During the event a short film, made by and starring the young people, will be launched which it is hoped will promote the availability of help and support.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's key themes of 'Better Support for People and Communities' and 'Better services – listening and delivering' 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 £1,250</p> |

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Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Notice of Motion - Antrim Ladies' Gaelic Football Team |
| Date: | Friday, 9th November, 2012 |
| Reporting Officer: | Mr. Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager, ext. 6314 |
| Contact Officer: | Mr. Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager, ext. 6314 |

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| 1.0 | Relevant Background Information |
| 1.1 | <p>At the Council meeting on 1st November, the undernoted Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Mallon and seconded by Councillor Ó Donnghaile:</p> <p>“This Council wishes to express its congratulations to the Antrim Ladies’ Gaelic Football Team who won the TG4 All-Ireland Ladies’ Junior Football Championship on 7th October. Many of the players live in Belfast and their achievement has brought great credit to the City.</p> <p>This Council requests that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee give consideration as to how this achievement should best be marked.”</p> |
| 1.2 | In accordance with Standing Order 11(e), the Motion stood referred without discussion to the Committee. |

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| 2.0 | Recommendation |
| 2.1 | To consider the Notion of Motion and to take such action thereon as may be determined. |

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Audit Panel

Tuesday, 23rd October, 2012

SPECIAL MEETING OF AUDIT PANEL

Members present: Alderman Rodgers (Chairman); and
Councillors Jones and Lavery and Mr. D. Bell.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. M. McBride, Head of Finance and Performance;
Mr. T. Wallace, Financial Accounting Manager;
Mr. A. Wilson, Head of Audit, Governance and
Risk Services;
Mr. A. Harrison, Audit, Governance and Risk
Services Manager;
Ms. C. O'Prey, Audit, Governance and Risk
Services Manager;
Mr. R. Allen, Director, Northern Ireland Audit Office;
Mr. A. Knox, Audit Manager, Northern Ireland Audit
Office; and
Mrs. P. Scarborough, Democratic Services Section.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from the High Sheriff (Alderman M. Campbell), Alderman Smyth and Councillor Mullan.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 18th September were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Northern Ireland Audit Office – Draft Report to those Charged with Governance

The Director of the Northern Ireland Audit Office, Mr. R. Allen, advised the Panel that a Draft Report to those Charged with Governance had been prepared, subject to factual accuracy being confirmed by Council officers. He explained that the process this year had been undertaken earlier than in previous years, and that a final Report, including the Officers' comments in response, would be submitted to the meeting of the Panel in December.

Mr. Allen reminded the Panel that the Local Government Auditor's Strategy for 2010/2011, which had been presented to the Panel at its meeting in March, had identified a number of key risks and the Draft Report to those Charged with Governance for the period 2011/2012 addressed those risks. He advised the Panel that it was anticipated that the Report to those Charged with Governance would contain a clean, unqualified opinion for 2011/12.

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The Audit Manager, Mr. A. Knox, reported that the Northern Ireland Audit Office was currently on target to deliver the Report to those Charged with Governance by 31st October, and he provided an overview of the significant findings and recommendations therein. He informed the Panel that those areas which had been identified included landfill provision; the loans pool; procurement issues; land disposals; the Connswater Community Greenway; data security issues; grant payments to outside bodies; the changing of banking facilities; and the re-valuation of fixed assets. He outlined a number of priority one recommendations, including the procurement of contracts; contract management issues; tender evaluations; the timeliness of economic appraisals; fixed asset re-valuations; and pension contributions. Mr. Knox outlined also a number of priority two recommendations which would be included within the Report.

Mr. Knox advised the Panel that a number of significant adjustments had been made to the financial statements arising from the updating of fixed asset valuations which had impacted upon the balance sheet. He concluded by reporting that a Letter of Representation would be required, to be endorsed by the Council's Chief Financial Officer, confirming that there would be no post-balance sheet events which would have an impact on the financial accounts.

The Director of Finance and Resources reiterated the timescales which had previously been outlined and assured the Panel that a response would be made to the Northern Ireland Audit Office by 23rd November and, subsequently, would be reported to the Panel at its meeting in December. Thereafter, a process would be put in place to ensure that the recommendations contained within the Report to those Charged with Governance would be monitored to ensure implementation. The Director advised the Panel that discussions would commence shortly with the Land and Property Services in regard to the timeliness with which that organisation had provided information in relation to the re-valuation of assets.

After discussion, the Panel thanked the staff of the Northern Ireland Audit Office and the Council's Financial Services Section and agreed to note the information which had been provided.

Independent Review of the Corporate Risks

The Panel considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide assurance to the Audit Panel, on the management of the Council's key risks.**
- 1.2 The management of corporate risks has a direct impact on the achievement of the corporate plan and therefore it is important that Members and management receive reliable assurance on the management of these corporate risks. Assurance can be gained from a number of sources including the Directors' Quarterly Assurance Statements, Senior Managers Annual Assurance Statements, performance reports, and also through independent sources of assurance such as external audit, internal audit, external reviews, etc.**

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1.3 The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2011/12 disclosed seven significant governance issues facing the Council which were based upon the red risks in the Council's Corporate Risk Register, namely risks in relation to:

- Waste management
- Asset management
- RPA
- Rates
- Investment Programme
- Information management – FOI / DPA
- Health and Safety

1.4 Following their review of the AGS for 2011/12 and the Corporate Risk Register (CRR), the Assurance Board and Audit Panel requested independent assurance on the management of the above corporate risks and a mid-year update on the significant governance issues reported in the 2011/12 AGS. This paper reports the results of the AGRS review of 6 of the corporate risks; the 7th risk, relating to health and safety is subject to an ongoing external review with a final report expected to be reported to the Audit Panel in December 2012.

1.5 In providing assurance it should be noted that Audit, Governance and Risk Services can provide a reasonable rather than absolute assurance over the management of the corporate risks.

1.6 The full reports on the review of each corporate risk has been discussed and agreed with the relevant Director.

2 Key Issues

2.1 General Summary

2.1 As a result of our review we can provide reasonable assurance that the key corporate risks are being proactively managed.

2.2 The Risk Owners have put considerable effort into developing action plans to better manage these risks and securing resources that should enable the delivery of these action plans. While acknowledging the work done to date, it is important to recognise that the current risk rating for each of these 6 corporate risks is red and will remain red until these action plans are implemented while continuing to ensure that key controls remain in place and are operating effectively. Emphasis is now required on the timely implementation of these action plans in order to manage these risks 'down' to more tolerable level. Integral to this is

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the need for effective monitoring of the implementation of these risk action plans and the continued operation of key controls and the need to ensure that there is a robust assurance framework around the management of these risks.

- 2.3 The Director who is responsible for each of these risks has considered the current risk rating and has also advised of the target risk rating that could be achieved on the basis of the necessary mitigating action being taken. All of the target risk ratings are either amber or green, i.e. within the council's tolerance levels.
- 2.4 The risk action plans for these corporate risks will be reviewed and updated to reflect these results of this review as part of the quarterly risk review and reporting process. In addition, as each of these risks were declared within the Annual Governance Statement for y/e March 2012, management will also have to provide a progress update to the Audit Panel at the year-end regarding the action taken to manage these risks.

Summary of key controls and proposed actions to manage the 6 corporate risks reviewed

- 2.6 The table below summarises the key controls and proposed actions that management have agreed are required to mitigate the 6 corporate risks reviewed. For further information, appendices 1 – 6 contain the full reports on the reviews of each corporate risk.

| Ref | Corporate Risk / Annual Governance Statement Declaration | Summary of key controls and key actions |
|-----|---|--|
| 1 | <p>Management of the City's waste (non-achievement of NILAS targets)</p> <p>Risk Owner: Director of Health & Environmental Services</p> | <p>The Director has set a target risk rating of significant (amber).</p> <p>A Zero Waste Action Plan, setting out the actions needed to meet recycling targets, has been agreed by Committee and will be overseen by the Waste Programme Board. In addition, the Waste Management Service is working closely with arc21 on major projects and procurement exercises.</p> |

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| | | <p>The key actions proposed to better manage this risk include delivery of the activities in the Zero Waste Action Plan, including the implementation of a robust framework to report and monitor these projects; working with arc21 to ensure that an adequate waste infrastructure is put in place in the long term and; ensuring that appropriate contingency arrangements are in place.</p> <p><i>More detailed information is provided at Appendix 1.</i></p> |
| 2 | <p>Strategic management of the Council's assets</p> <p>Risk owner: Director of Property & Projects</p> | <p>The Director has set a target risk rating of moderate (amber).</p> <p>The role of the Asset Management Board (AMB) is the key overarching control for the strategic management of the council's assets. The recent recruitment of a programme manager and assistant project managers will enable better management of this risk.</p> <p>The key actions proposed to better manage this risk relate to the prompt finalisation of a comprehensive work plan for the AMB and its 5 programmes of work, together with reliable and timely reporting of progress to and monitoring by the AMB against this work plan. <i>More detailed information is provided at Appendix 2.</i></p> |
| 3 | <p>Meeting the challenges presented by local government reform / Review of Public Administration</p> | <p>The Director has set a target risk rating of moderate (amber).</p> |

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| | <p>Risk owner: Director of Finance & Resources</p> | <p>Much work has been undertaken to prepare for RPA, including engagement at various levels, representation on various regional groups; the development and approval of a detailed RPA Delivery Plan and; the recent recruitment exercise which should help ensure that the necessary action continues to be taken to mitigate this risk.</p> <p>Key actions that are necessary to manage this risk include the reinstatement of internal project teams with defined programmes of work; the continual monitoring of implementation of the RPA Delivery Plan including undertaking due diligence reviews and; the reinstatement of formal engagement mechanisms with Lisburn and Castlereagh Councils.</p> <p><i>More detailed information is provided at Appendix 3.</i></p> |
| 4 | <p>Uncertainty of the rate base</p> <p>Risk owner: Director of Finance & Resources</p> | <p>The Director has set a target risk rating of moderate (amber).</p> <p>The ability of the council to effectively manage this risk is strongly influenced by a number of external factors, primarily the economic climate.</p> <p>The starting point for better management of this risk has been the setting up of a MOU combined with relationship building and engagement with the LPS. In addition Council officers have</p> |

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| | | <p>become more knowledgeable in rating issues and have recently been given access to more detailed LPS data which they will analyse and challenge.</p> <p>Key actions to mitigate this risk include further development of KPI's and benchmarking data and reporting and monitoring of same and implementation of actions for maximising the collectible rate and reducing collection losses (as agreed with LPS).</p> <p><i>More detailed information is provided at Appendix 4.</i></p> |
| 5 | <p>The delivery of the Investment Programme and, related to this, management of major Council projects</p> <p>Risk owner: Director of Finance & Resources</p> | <p>The Director has set a target risk rating of low (green).</p> <p>In terms of managing this risk, a programme of work has been agreed comprising 36 projects; a governance structure has been agreed; Member area working groups have been established and key posts have been recruited.</p> <p>The development and implementation of a robust corporate programme and project management methodology is crucial to the successful management of this risk to a low rating and will be supported by the development and implementation of an IT system. The risk action plan also acknowledges the need to secure external funding for projects as required.</p> <p><i>More detailed information is provided at Appendix 5.</i></p> |

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| 6 | <p>Ineffective information management systems and procedures result in non-compliance with legislation and best practice standards e.g. FOI, DPA etc</p> <p>Risk owner: Director of Finance & Resources</p> | <p>The Director has set a target risk rating of low (green).</p> <p>This is a new risk on the corporate risk register and the supporting risk action plan has not yet been fully developed. However management fully recognise that an effective response to this risk is required and to this end have developed, and are in the process of agreeing, a draft action plan which addresses the recommendations arising from recent AGRS and consultancy reviews of DPA and FOPI respectively. The timely implementation of the agreed action plan is central to the management of this risk. As such it is important that management agree the action plan and allocate responsible officers and timeframes to each action, in addition to monitoring whether timely progress is being made.</p> <p><i>More detailed information is provided at Appendix 6.</i></p> |
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3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial
None.

3.2 Human Resources
None.

3.3 Asset and Other Implications
None.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 None

5 Recommendations

5.1 Audit Panel to note the mid-year review of the corporate risks.

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5.2 Audit Panel is asked to note that AGRS will undertake a further independent review of progress to manage these key risks in April 2013 as part of the process of completing the Annual Governance Statement for 2012/13.”

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager provided an overview of the process which had been undertaken to enable the independent assurance on the management of the corporate risks to be completed.

The Panel raised a number of questions in relation to the difference between managing the likelihood of a risk and reducing the impact thereof; the timescales for the monitoring of the departmental risk registers; the appointment of risk champions; and the management by departmental directors of those risks which did not come under their direct control but which impacted upon their responsibility.

After discussion, the Panel agreed to note the contents of the report and noted also that the Audit, Governance and Risk Service would undertake a further independent review of progress to manage those key risks in April, 2013 as part of the process of completing the Annual Governance Statement for 2012 to 2013.

Chairman

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Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Tender for the Provision of Window Cleaning Services at Various Council Properties |
| Date: | 9 th November, 2012 |
| Reporting Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, ext 6217 |
| Contact Officer: | George Wright, Head of Facilities Management Ext. 5206/6232 |

| 1 | Relevant Background Information |
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| 1.1 | Members will be aware that, under the revised Scheme of Delegation, approval must be sought from the relevant Committee prior to inviting tenders for the supply of goods or services. |
| 1.2 | Members will also be aware that, in the course of providing building cleaning services at all Council civic buildings, the Cleaning & Portering unit uses a specialist contractor for window cleaning. The existing contract is due to expire and the unit wishes to let a new contract. The contract involves both standard and specialised window-cleaning at a number of council properties, as follows:- |
| 1.3 | 1- City Hall, 2 - Cecil Ward Building, 3 - Adelaide Exchange, 4 - Lanyon Place, 5 - Learning & Development Centre, 6 - ISB Gloucester Street, 7 – Smithfield market & 8 - St Georges Market. |
| 1.4 | It should be noted that window-cleaning in CWB involves specialist equipment and expertise (as it is delivered using harness and abseiling etc) and that City Hall also involves some specialist-type work. In addition, it is the intention to expand the scope of the contract to take in additional locations (Learning & Development Centre, ISB at Gloucester Street, Smithfield & St Georges Market) in order to maximise the potential economies of scale. The anticipated cost is therefore approx. £35,000 per annum. |
| 1.5 | The unit has given specific consideration to the question of whether or not the work could be broken up into separate specialist and routine window-cleaning work packages. This was done in order to try to assist in giving effect to the commitments set out in the council's Investment Programme in relation to encouraging the use of local companies via the invitation of quotations for smaller packages of work, but it is felt that - given the increased scale and specialist nature of the work - a full tender is inevitably going to be needed. |
| 1.6 | The current contract is carried out by Amber Support Solutions and is approaching the end date. This contract allows for the cleaning of all windows inside and outside the City Hall and Cecil Ward Building and the inside only of windows in the BCC areas of Adelaide Exchange |

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| | <p>and Lanyon Place, although the new contract will be significantly wider in scope as set out above. The various cleans are carried out 3 times per year.</p> <p><i>See attached appendix for contract details</i></p> <p>Detailed specifications will be prepared in order to permit these contracts to be let and, subject to Committee approval, advertisements will be placed in the local press inviting submission of Tenders.</p> |
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| 2 | Key Issues |
| 2.1 | The duration of the contract is to be one year with an option of 2 further yearly extensions at the council's discretion, depending on performance, to a maximum of 3 years. This is felt to provide the optimal balance between regularly testing the local market to obtain the keenest prices and minimising the bureaucracy and administration associated with the procurement process. |
| 2.2 | Submissions will be evaluated in accordance with the following agreed evaluation criteria and in liaison with the Procurement Section where appropriate. |
| 2.3 | <p>The contracts will be evaluated under the following criteria:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Cost b) Quality c) Technical capability d) Technical capacity e) Experience, qualification and ability to execute the works f) Environmental management and impacts g) Ability to work in partnership h) Financial capacity |

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| 3 | Resource Implications |
| 3.1 | <i>Financial</i> -Provision has been made for the contract in the relevant revenue budgets. Regularly testing the market via competitive tendering ensures that we obtain the best possible value for money and standards of service from our external suppliers, which in turn assists us in driving down costs and minimising the rate burden. |
| 3.2 | <i>Human Resources</i> - None. |
| 3.3 | <i>Asset & other implications</i> - It is essential to have an experienced specialist contractor to clean the external windows of the Council's civic buildings. |

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| 4 | Equality and Good Relations Considerations |
| 4.1 | Not applicable |

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| 5 | Recommendation |
| 5.1 | It is recommended that the Committee approve the invitation of tenders in respect of the goods and services as set out in the attached appendix |

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| 6 | Decision Tracking |
| If approved, the tender will be invited by the Head of Facilities Management in line with the schedule and dates set out in the attached appendix. | |

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| 7 | Key to Abbreviations |
| N/A | |

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| 8 | Document Attached |
| Schedule of window cleaning procurement exercise | |

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APPENDIX

Schedule of proposed Facilities Management Window-cleaning procurement exercise 2012

| <i>Goods/services sought</i> | | <i>Estimated annual value</i> | <i>Total duration</i> | <i>Origin (New/Renew)</i> | <i>Tender type</i> | <i>Control type</i> | <i>Anticipated advert. date</i> |
|------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Window Services | Cleaning | £35k | 1 year + 2 optional | Renew | Open tender | Fixed price per clean | November 2012 |
| Total: | | £35k | <i>per annum</i> | | | | |

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Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Tender for the Appointment of Consultancy Services to Undertake Rent Reviews at Balmoral and Duncrue Industrial Estates |
| Date: | 9 th November, 2012 |
| Reporting Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, ext 6217 |
| Contact Officer: | Celine Dunlop, Estates Surveyor, Property and Projects, ext 3419 |

1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 Members will be aware that, under the revised Scheme of Delegation, approval must be sought from the relevant Committee prior to inviting tenders for the supply of any goods or services.

1.2 The Estates Unit has responsibility for the management of a significant leased property portfolio of circ. 280 leases (including the Council's commercial estate at Balmoral, Duncrue and the Gasworks); these are proactively managed to ensure rent reviews and lease terms are adhered to and optimised for the benefit of the Council. The total rental income to the Council (in 2011/12) was approximately £6.7m which represents a marked increase over the past few years.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 The Council's Industrial Estates at Balmoral and Duncrue have been let on long term leases dating from the 1970s and 80s. There are some 250 acres of land let to 131 tenants on various types of lease, all of which require the tenant to pay a rent to the Council in accordance with the terms of the lease, such rent being reviewed periodically, usually on a 5-yearly basis taking into account the terms of the lease. The management of the Industrial Estates and the rent reviews are dealt with by the Estates Management Unit's RICS qualified chartered surveyors with some support from consultants who were previously appointed by way of quotation.

2.2 The Estates Management Unit now requires the engagement of consultants specifically to carry out rent reviews at Balmoral and Duncrue Industrial Estates and undertake other miscellaneous rent reviews as required. The consultants will work

under the direction of the in-house Estate Management Unit.

2.2 The Estates Management Unit proposes to invite tenders from suitably qualified chartered surveyors to complete the current programme of rent reviews including all reviews falling due until the end of FY 13/14.

2.3 The Estates Management Unit would remain responsible for triggering the rent reviews and completing the memoranda recording agreements as recommended. The Estates Management unit would remain responsible for all other estate management issues including approval of settlement offers that go beyond rental assessments e.g. widening of user clauses, consent to assignment/sub-letting etc.

2.4 The rental from Council assets is a valuable income stream for the Council and as such it is important that it is managed effectively.

3.0 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

The resources for this specialist work have been provided for within the Property & Projects revenue budget and fees relating to the rent review work will fall due over a 2-3 year period.

3.2 Human Resources

Staff resource from the Estates Management and Procurement units will be required to complete the tender and evaluation process.

3.3 Asset and Other Implications

The appointment of specialist consultants to carry out the rent review programme will maximise the Council's investment income from the leased assets.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1

- (i) It is recommended that the Committee approve the invitation of tenders and the award of contracts in respect of consultancy services for the completion of the current programme of rent reviews of the Council's leased assets, as detailed above, on the basis of the most economically advantageous offers received and evaluated on cost and quality criteria.
- (ii) The Committee is requested to approve the above recommendation to invite tenders and to delegate authority to the Director of Property and Projects to approve the successful consultant/consultants in line with cost and quality criteria, with the result of the tender exercise being reported back to Committee.

6.0 Decision Tracking

To be actioned by Celine Dunlop and completed by December, 2012.



Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Notice of Motion - Online Rates Receipt |
| Date: | 9th November, 2012 |
| Reporting Officer: | Mr Stephen McCrory, Democratic Service Manager, ext 6314 |
| Contact Officer: | Mr Stephen McCrory, Democratic Service Manager, ext 6314 |

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| 1.0 | Relevant Background Information |
| 1.1 | <p>At the Council meeting on 1st November, the undernoted Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Hussy and seconded by Alderman Stalford:</p> <p>“This Council is committed to transparency in how it spends Rate Payers’ money. Every Rate Payer has the right to know what we spend their money on. This Council believes that the principle of transparency is meaningless unless we present our published financial information in a way that is accessible and relevant to rate payers.</p> <p>To this end; we will provide an online service to every rate payer which will show them, in a comprehensible way, the services and capital projects on which their money is spent. This breakdown will include the pro-rata monetary share of their own rates bill spent on these items alongside the total amount spent by this Council. A comprehensive breakdown of the costs of delivering those services and capital projects will be contained within that breakdown.”</p> |
| 1.2 | In accordance with Standing Order 11(e), the motion stood referred without discussion, to the committee. |
| 2.0 | Recommendation |
| 2.1 | To consider the Notice of Motion and to take such action thereon as may be determined. |

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Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Provision of a Smoking Shelter in the City Hall Courtyard |
| Date: | 9 th November, 2012 |
| Reporting Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, ext 6217 |
| Contact Officer: | George Wright – Head of Facilities Management, ext. 5206/6232 |

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| 1 | Relevant Background Information |
| 1.1 | Members will be aware that there is currently no provision made for a dedicated outdoor sheltered smoking facility at the City Hall. |
| 1.2 | Many of those who do smoke currently use an outdoor area adjacent to the goods lift entrance in the south east corner of the courtyard. |
| 1.3 | Although the number of smokers has reduced in recent years there is still a significant number of staff and visitors, especially those attending wedding and civil partnership services and functions, who do smoke and who frequently congregate at the main access points to the building, especially during inclement weather. |

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| 2 | Key Issues |
| 2.1 | The current Council smoking policy does not preclude the provision of a smoking shelter so long as it does not pose a Health and Safety risk or is close to adjacent doors, windows, ventilation inlets etc. |
| 2.2 | It must also be acknowledged that there have been increasing suggestions recently from a number of staff that making some dedicated provision would be desirable and beneficial for smokers, and it is felt that this could be achieved in a cost-effective and unobtrusive way through the installation of a purpose-built shelter. |
| 2.3 | Having a shelter would allow the main City Hall access points to be kept clear of smokers and it would be a positive development from a passive smoking and aesthetic perspective. |
| 2.4 | An area of the courtyard behind the toilet block adjacent to the goods lift entrance in the south east corner of the courtyard has been identified as a suitable location for the shelter. It is within close proximity to the open air area currently used by some smokers and is not readily visible to people visiting the building (see Appendix 1A). |

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| 2.5 | The proposed shelter (see Appendix 1B) is constructed from steel and perspex glass, with dimensions of 2200mm x 1000mm, and would accommodate approx. 6-8 smokers at any one time. The colour would be in keeping with the Portland stone of the building. |
| 2.6 | If the shelter is approved and implemented, it is proposed that the council seeks to encourage its use by staff and visitors, and also seeks to actively discourage smoking in the other high-profile areas through the use of appropriate signage and other measures. |

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| 3 | Resource Implications |
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| 3.1 | The cost for the smoking shelter and ancillary bins would be approximately £2,500 and provision has been made for the item in the City Hall revenue budget. |
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| 4 | Equality and Good Relations Considerations |
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| 4.1 | The smoking shelter would be available to all smokers and be fully accessible for people with mobility issues. |
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| 5 | Recommendations |
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| 5.1 | It is recommended that a smoking shelter is purchased and located in the Courtyard at the location indicated. |
| 5.2 | It is further recommended that the council seeks to discourage smoking at other main locations through the use of appropriate signage. |

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| 7 | Key to Abbreviations |
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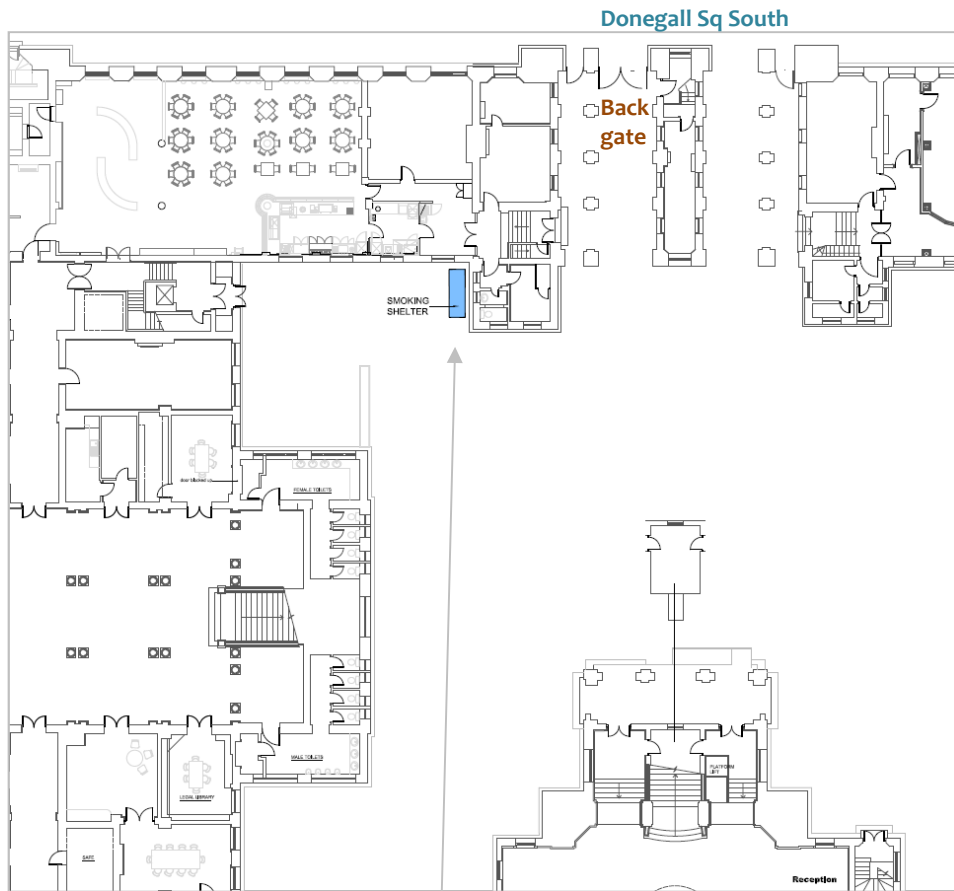
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| | None |
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| 8 | Documents Attached |
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| | <p>Appendix 1A - location map</p> <p>Appendix 1B – sample shelter</p> |
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APPENDIX 1

(A)



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Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. |
| Subject: | Acquisition of Former Grove Primary School Site |
| Date: | 9th November, 2012 |
| Reporting Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, ext. 6217 |
| Contact Officer: | Ruth McClean, Estates Surveyor, ext. 3495 |

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| 1 | Relevant Background Information |
| 1.1 | At its meeting on 23rd March, 2012, the Committee adopted a recommendation to progress with negotiations to purchase the former Grove Primary School site at North Queen Street. A copy of the minute in that regard is attached at Appendix 1. A further report was to be brought to Committee on the proposed terms. |
| 1.2 | The 2.507 acre site adjoins Grove Playing Fields and is opposite the former Grove Baths, as shown on the location map at Appendix 2. The buildings have been demolished and the site is secured. |
| 2 | Key Issues |
| 2.1 | An indicative value of £130,000 provided by Land and Property Services (LPS) was reported in March. This figure has been reduced through negotiations with LPS to £116,250. |
| 2.2 | Due diligence has been undertaken in relation to Planning, title, services and contamination risk and the site is considered suitable for acquisition at the agreed price. |
| 3 | Resource Implications |
| 3.1 | <u>Financial</u> A payment of £116,250 will require to be made this financial year. This represents a saving for the Council of £13,750 from the figure reported previously. No stamp duty is payable on this transaction. |

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| 3.2 | <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>Resource from Estates and Legal Services is required to complete the acquisition. Thereafter Estates staff resource will be required for ongoing management, pending decisions on future use options.</p> |
| 3.3 | <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></p> <p>A 2.507 acre site will be added to the Council's assets. The site will be held in the Council's Corporate Landbank pending decisions on future use options.</p> |

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| 4 | Equality and Good Relations Considerations |
| 4.1 | There are no known equality or good relations issues associated with this report. |

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| 5 | Recommendation |
| 5.1 | Committee is recommended to approve the acquisition of the former Grove Primary School site for the sum of £116,250. |

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| 6 | Documents Attached |
| <p>Appendix 1 – Extract from Strategic Policy and Resources minute of 23rd March, 2012</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Location map</p> | |

Extract from minutes of –

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

23rd March, 2012

**“Former Grove Primary School Site
and Old Grove Leisure Centre**

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

‘1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The former Grove Primary & Nursery School site at North Queen Street was recently declared surplus to the requirements of BELB. The buildings on site have been demolished and the site is currently fenced. The site which extends to approx 2.5 acres directly adjoins the Council owned Grove Playing Fields & is opposite the Old Grove Leisure Centre.**
- 1.2 LPS trawled availability of the site amongst public sector bodies (including the Council) and there was a tight timeframe for responding to LPS. The Council expressed an initial interest in the site given that it adjoins the playing fields and is directly opposite the former Grove Leisure Centre, which the Council were considering in terms of future development options.**
- 1.3 LPS have now provided an indicative value for the site of £130,000. This is however very much an indicative value & will be subject to a further more detailed valuation to take account of any relevant planning, title and site survey issues, and it would also be subject to negotiation.**
- 1.4 In terms of the Old Grove Leisure Centre site (which is located directly opposite the school site) a report was previously brought to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on 21 October 2011 and approval was given to demolition of the building; to undertaking an updated needs analysis report for business accommodation & incubation space in Belfast focusing on this particular location; and approval for officers to take forward discussions with BELB regarding any scope for joint disposal/development options for both the old Grove Leisure Centre site and the school site. A copy of the minutes is enclosed at appendix 2.**

- 1.5** However, at the request of Alderman Browne this decision was taken back for further consideration by the Council on 1 November 2011. The Director of Property & Projects subsequently met with various elected members from the area & the DSD Minister, Nelson McCausland. There were concerns that demolition of the building may lead to problems with anti social behaviour. It was proposed that a workshop be convened in the New Year to explore development opportunities at both this site & other sites in the area, with participants at the workshop to include BCC, DSD, BELB, DRD & NIHE. The Strategic Policy & Resources Committee, on 9 December 2011, agreed to this approach and demolition of the former Grove Leisure Building was to be considered following the outcome of the workshop. The Director of Property & Projects has since met with DSD, who were to lead on the proposed workshop, but to date there had been no workshop.
- 1.6** There remain, however, two potential (unsolicited) interests in the former Grove Leisure Centre site, one from North City Business Centre and the other from the Ashton Centre. North City Business Centre are a local enterprise agency and are considering expansion of their current social economy business park located at Duncairn Gardens and potential redevelopment of a further site. They advise that their current business park is 99% let and has a wide range of businesses located there. They had also enquired about the possibility of the Grove School site being available. The Ashton Centre have also registered an interest in the former leisure centre site and are potentially interested in developing the site to include office, retail and workshop units and a childcare centre.
- 1.7** There are ongoing security & maintenance issues with the Old Grove Leisure Centre building with continual break ins and this has an associated staff and financial resource, as well as potential liability issues for the Council.
- 1.8** In the interim period BELB have progressed with declaring their school site surplus and if there is no public sector interest shown via the LPS trawl process the next stage will be to advertise it for sale on the open market.
- 1.9** If the Council were to now acquire the former Grove Primary School site, subject to further investigation as to the site's development potential and planning status it could potentially also be offered for disposal via a Development Brief process in tandem with the former Grove Leisure Centre site.

Planning will however be key in determining future development potential and this will need to be investigated further. This Development Brief process would essentially offer the sites on the market for disposal/development (often by way of long lease) subject to certain criteria; a development agreement would be entered into with the successful applicant/developer requiring them to develop within a certain timeframe & subject to certain criteria, and on practical completion title would be granted, which could be on the basis of either a capital premium or alternatively a ground rent (as with Balmoral & Duncrue Industrial Estates) or an equity rent (as with the Gasworks Business Park).

- 1.10 The Development Department are currently undertaking an updated needs analysis report on business accommodation and incubation space in Belfast (to also focus on this particular area) and it would inform the Development Brief process.
- 1.11 Demolition & progressing of future use/redevelopment options for the old Grove Leisure Centre site is included within the Council's draft Investment Programme 2012 -2015. Given the delay in DSD taking forward the proposed workshop of the wider stakeholder group and the continued interest by potential parties in the redevelopment of the site it is now being recommended that members give approval to proceed with demolition of the Old Grove Leisure Centre building and thereafter take forward disposal via a Development Brief process.
- 1.12 In addition, it is also being recommended that members grant approval to progress with negotiations to purchase the BELB former Grove Primary School site. This will be subject to further investigations in relation to title; site surveys, planning etc as well as agreement on valuation and a report would be brought back to committee on this. If agreement is reached on the purchase of this land, then subject to further investigation as to development potential and its planning status, it could potentially also be offered for disposal via this Development Brief process.

2 Key Issues

- Proposed purchase by BCC of former Grove Primary School site. Approval is being sought from Members to progress negotiations.
- Demolition and future redevelopment /disposal of old Grove Leisure Centre site is in the Council's draft Investment Programme 2012-2015.

- Members are being asked for further approval to demolish the old Grove Leisure Centre site & progress thereafter with disposal of the site via a Development Brief process. This could potentially also include the former school site.
- Two parties have already expressed a potential interest in the Old Grove Leisure Centre site; North City Business Centre and the Ashton Centre. The recommendation is to openly market the site via a Development Brief process.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Finance

An indicative value of £130,000 has been provided by LPS for the BELB site, but this is very much indicative and is subject to further investigations & negotiations. The Director of Finance & Resources has advised that funding can be made available to purchase.

The Council's uncommitted Capital Programme shows a provisional estimate of £500,000 for demolition of the old Grove Leisure Centre & associated works, although this is subject to a detailed invasive survey of the building. The cost will be offset in part by the ongoing costs of insuring and maintaining the existing building. Any financial return on disposal of the site will reflect that the developer/ purchaser will not have to undertake demolition

3.2 Human Resources

Staff Resource, primarily from Property & Projects in progressing negotiations for purchase of the BELB site & in progressing demolition & future use/disposal options for the Old Grove Leisure Centre site.

3.3 Asset & Other Implications

Future redevelopment should have economic, regenerative & financial benefits.

4 Recommendations

Members are asked to approve that the Council:

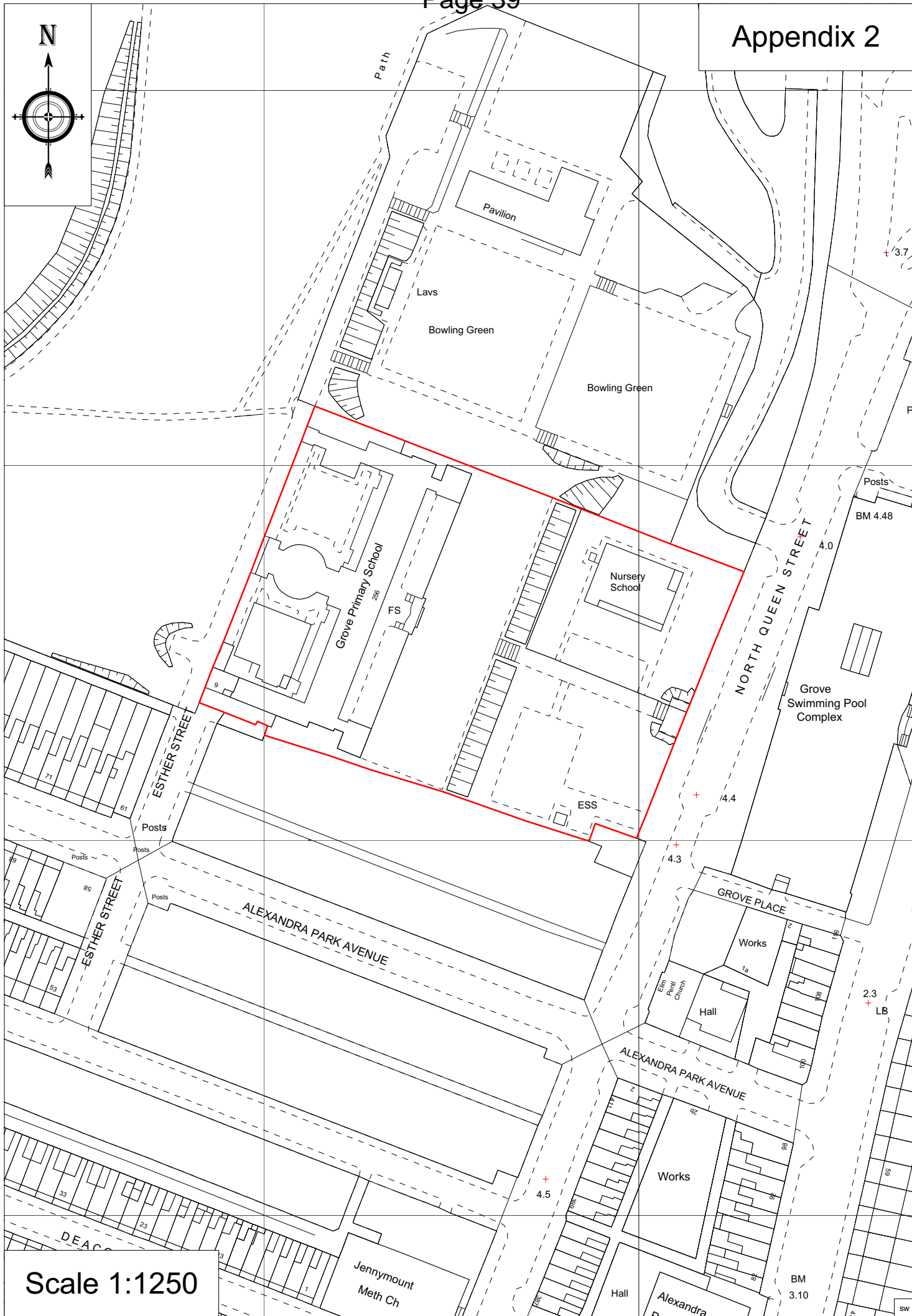
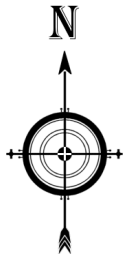
- i) Progress with negotiations to purchase the BELB owned former Grove Primary School site, with a further report to be brought back to Committee on the proposed terms of acquisition and

- 5 -

- ii) Progress with the demolition of the Old Grove Leisure Centre building and proceed with the invitation of tenders for the demolition works and the award of contract to the most economically advantageous offer received and**
- iii) Thereafter progress with disposal via a Development Brief process with a further report to be brought back to Committee with details of the Development Brief criteria and process'**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.”

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Belfast City Council

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| Report to: | Strategic Policy and Resources Committee |
| Subject: | Provision of Car Parking for Christmas Shoppers |
| Date: | 9th November, 2012 |
| Reporting Officer: | Gerry Millar, Director of Property and Projects, ext. 6217 |
| Contact Officer: | Cathy Reynolds, Estates Manager, ext. 3493 |

| 1 | Relevant Background Information |
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| 1.1 | A request has been received from the Belfast City Centre Management Company on behalf of Belfast traders to make use of the Council's staff car park facilities on Ormeau Avenue and Raphael Street (see attached location map) to accommodate shoppers coming into Belfast in the run up to Christmas. |
| 1.2 | The requested period of use is for the remaining weekends over the months of November and December (until Sunday 23 rd December 2012) when there is only a limited requirement for use by Council staff. |
| 1.3 | It is proposed that parking would be made available over the weekends free of any charge to members of the public wishing to park in these staff car parks on a "first come first served basis" |
| 1.4 | It is anticipated that both car parks would require manned security during opening hours provided through the Council external security contract who would open and close the facilities as appropriate. |
| 1.5 | Ormeau Avenue is a secure car park compound with a capacity for 106 vehicles. Spaces are marked out on a tarmac surface with floodlight and CCTV. Normally access is controlled by an automatic gate (personal fob), there is also a second manually secured gate. Access by Council staff to facilitate weekend working is accommodated by the automatically controlled gate. |
| 1.6 | Raphael Street is also a secure car park compound which has an estimated capacity for 180 vehicles. No spaces are marked out as the surface is rough stone with floodlighting and CCTV. Normally access is via secured gate with manned security (weekdays only 7.00am to 7.00pm) There is no staff access facilitated at the weekends. |

| 2 | Key Issues |
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| 2.1 | <p>Previous advice provided by Legal Services has indicated that Council have limited scope to directly operate a public car park and have therefore in the past entered into licence agreements with 3rd parties to facilitate car park provision at both Smithfield (DRD) and the Gasworks Estate (Inislyn Ltd – private developer) It is therefore envisaged that a similar approach would be required to facilitate this request – further advice from Legal Services will be sought in this respect.</p> |
| 2.2 | <p>Provision and use of any type of car parking is regulated by Planning Service. Council currently has the benefit of full planning permission for car parking for both Ormeau Avenue (deemed full planning permission) and also for Raphael Street providing Council with a total of 282 car park spaces. However, the planning permission for Raphael Street restricts its use for Council staff only; therefore use by members of the public, even on a temporary basis, would breach this specific planning condition. Requests to utilise other Council land on the Gasworks Northern Fringe has in the past been resisted given the lack of appropriate planning permissions to properly facilitate these requests.</p> |
| 2.3 | <p>Department for Regional Development (DRD) currently provides both on-street parking and pay and display car parks in the immediate vicinity (Cromac Street, Charlotte Street, Bankmore Street) and at least one private operator runs a commercial short-stay pay and display facility directly opposite the Gasworks Estate (Ormeau Road/Donagall Pass junction) – both of these public and private operators may raise an objection to perceived unfair competition from Council making up to 282 <u>free</u> car parking spaces available.</p> |
| 2.4 | <p>Regardless of the niceties of the planning issues there is simply no time to obtain planning permission. If we went ahead with this proposal Planning Service may seek to prosecute the Council although we are only using the site on a temporary basis. There is also a strong argument that the Council in doing so for charitable purposes and to alleviate city centre business problems as part exasperated by the actions of DOE and DRD in regard to the Moving Ahead scheme.</p> |
| 2.5 | <p>Any use of the Council's staff car park facilities by the general public would require an initial risk assessment and safety audit to be undertaken in terms of public safety, especially in respect of the Raphael Street facility which is unmarked and has an uneven stone surface. Council have already one accident claim arising from use of this facility.</p> |
| 2.6 | <p>Council would require appropriate indemnities for proposed use of these car parks by members of the public and to provide suitable legal protection through erection of disclaimer signage. Further advice would be sought from Council's Insurance Unit to ensure adequate insurance cover in the event of claims following incidents or accidents involving either pedestrians or drivers whilst using the Council's car park facilities.</p> |
| 2.7 | <p>Unlike DRD car parks both of these Council's facilities are fenced and secured at night which may present an issue for people who return late to find the facility closed or indeed intend to leave their vehicles overnight. In the past Council staff have experienced vandalism of cars left overnight.</p> |

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| <p>2.8</p> <p>2.9</p> <p>2.10</p> | <p>Regulation and management of the car parks, especially capacity in Raphael Street in particular where no spaces are marked out, may be an additional duty required of the on-site security staff.</p> <p>Facilities Management would be required to disable the automatically controlled gate to Ormeau Avenue car park each weekend and provide the necessary disclaimer signage for both facilities.</p> <p>By agreement market traders utilise the Raphael Street staff car park on both Saturdays and Sundays to park goods vehicles that facilitate running market stalls on these specific days in St George's Market which is a Belfast City Council function. Whilst these traders can be accommodated on Council's Gasworks Northern Fringe lands they have pedestrian access through the staff car park.</p> <p>Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Council to grant a licence to a 3rd party operator, for example Belfast City Centre Management Company, to manage and operate a free weekend public car park for a limited period in the run up to Christmas. (2) Council to grant a licence to DRD to manage and operate a free weekend public car park for a limited period in the run up to Christmas. (3) Council to directly operate and manage a free weekend public car park for a limited period in the run up to Christmas. |
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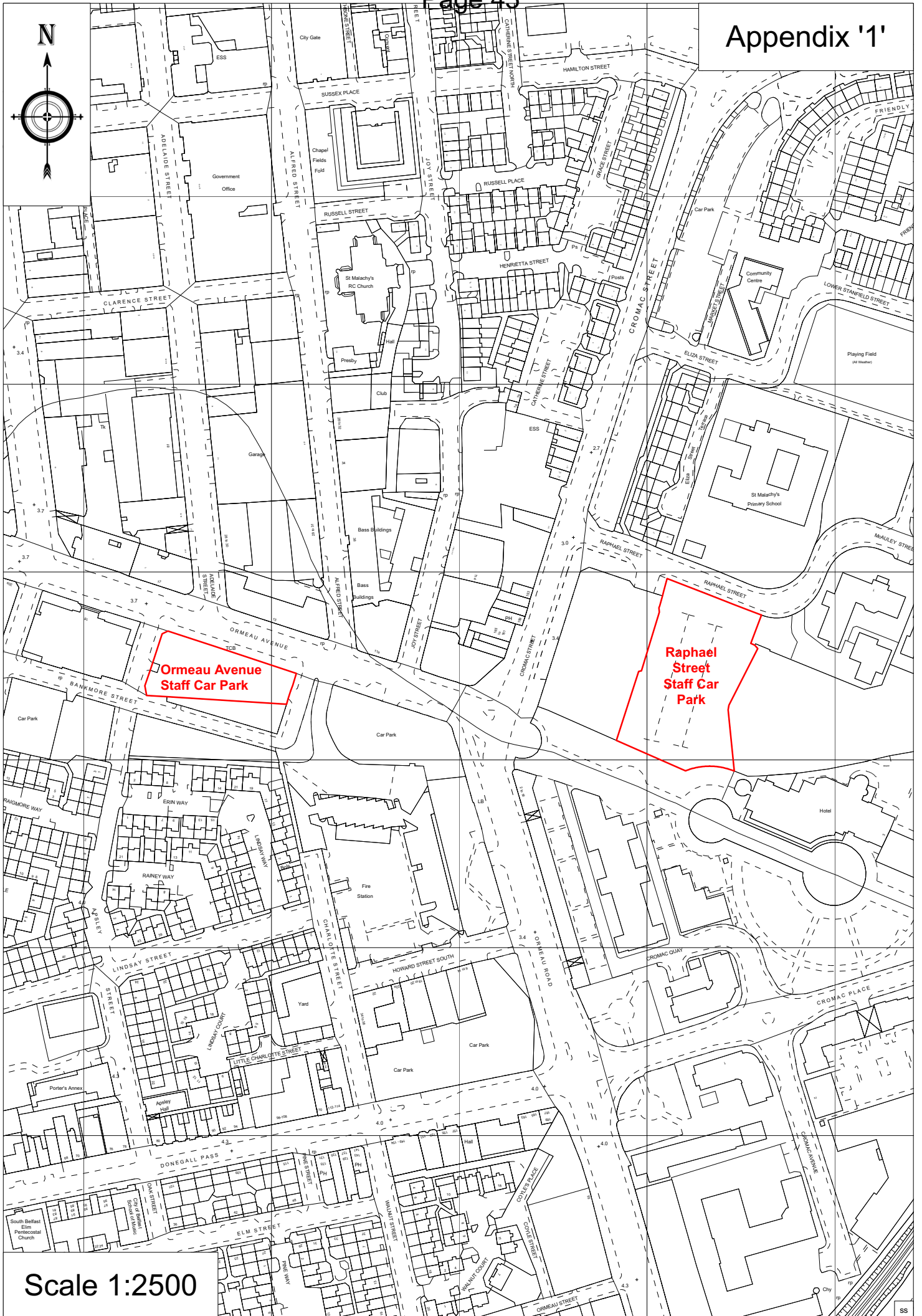
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| <p>3</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> | <p>Resource Implications</p> <p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>There is no significant internal expense for the Council associated with this request, however there may be the cost of providing security provided through the Council's security contract at a current hourly rate of £8.75 per security staff member.</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u></p> <p>Staff resource in the Estates Management Unit, Legal Services and Facilities Management to progress.</p> <p><u>Asset and Other Implications</u></p> <p>The asset and other implications of accommodating this request are as detailed in this report.</p> |
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| <p>4</p> <p>4.1</p> | <p>Equality and Good Relations Implications</p> <p>There are no equality implications to this proposal</p> |
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| 5 | Recommendation |
| 5.1 | The Committee's decision is sought in respect of the request to utilise the Council's staff car parks at Ormeau Avenue and Raphael Street for the purposes outlined in this report and if applicable to select the most appropriate option to oversee the management and operation of this short-term free car parking provision, the most straightforward of which is option 3. |

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| 6 | Decision Tracking |
| Director of Property and Projects will ensure that the requested use is facilitated within the required timeframe. | |

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| 7 | Documents Attached |
| Location map | |



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**Minutes of the Joint Group of Party Group Leaders Forum and Historic Centenaries
Working Group**

Thursday 18 October 2012

Present: Cllr Attwood, Cllr Hendron, Cllr Kyle, Cllr Maskey, Cllr McVeigh, Cllr Reynolds, Ald Rodgers and Ald Stalford.

In attendance: Peter McNaney, Chief Executive, Ciaran Quigley, Assistant Chief Executive and Town Solicitor, Duncan Morrow, independent facilitator, Hazel Francey, Good Relations Manager and Caroline Wilson, Programme Manager (note-taker).

Agenda Item 1 – Routine Matters

1. An apology for inability to attend was reported from Ald Browne, Cllr Hanna, Ald Ekin, Ald Humphrey and Ald Smyth. Ald Stalford was attending on behalf of Ald Humphrey.
2. The minutes of the previous meeting Friday 29 June were agreed subject to an amendment to the minute at Item 3, to read that Sinn Fein opposed all the options presented in relation to Operation Banner.
3. No declarations of interest were made.

Agenda Item 2 – Proposed spring Centenary programme

4. Members considered the report circulated and made a number of comments in relation to the proposed Centenary Programme:
 - To ensure that the list of political women was inclusive of all traditions;
 - Efforts were to be made to facilitate the participation of women from all socio-economic backgrounds in the programme, including access to grant-aid;
 - To seek advice from the Council's Women's Steering Group; and
 - To ensure that value for money was achieved for the concert.
5. H Francey assured Members that the Council was working closely with the women's sector and its own Women's Steering Group to deliver the programme.
6. It was **agreed** to recommend the draft programme to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for agreement.

Agenda Item 3 – Language Policy

Agenda Item 3a – DCAL Strategy for Protecting and Enhancing the Development of the Irish Language

7. Members considered the report circulated. It was raised that there was no clarity on the package that the Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure were proposing to resource the strategy, in particular, those available to local government. H Francey **agreed** to seek further information on this.
8. It was **agreed** that responses to the consultation were a matter for individual party groups.

Agenda Item 3b – DCAL Strategy for Ulster Scots Language, Heritage and Culture

9. It was **agreed** that responses to the consultation were a matter for individual party groups.

Agenda Item 3c – Up-date on the revision of the Council’s language policy

10. Members considered the report circulated. C Quigley outlined the nature of the legal opinion that the Council was currently seeking.
11. A Member highlighted that many of the actions undertaken to date were in relation to the Irish language. It was **agreed** that officers should further engage with the Ulster-Scots sector and other minority language groups to ensure that the future Council languages policy was as inclusive as possible.
12. It was **agreed** that a subsequent report would be brought back to the Joint Group, in the context of legal advice obtained and emerging strategies from the Executive.

Agenda Item 4 – Update on the EQIA consultations and revised timeline

13. Members considered the report circulated and noted the revised timeline for the completion of these two EQIAs.
14. It was **agreed** that the final EQIA reports including recommendations will be submitted to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee for consideration at its meeting on Friday 23 November 2012. In advance of this, it was **agreed** that the Joint Group would consider the reports.
15. It was also **agreed** that the action plan, prepared by Victoria Kingston (external consultant) on City Hall displays would be considered at a future meeting. It was noted that it would be useful to have visual aids for this discussion.

Date of next meeting

16. It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be Friday 16 November.

Chief Executive



Report to: Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Subject: Response to the European Territorial Co-operation Consultation 2014 - 2020

Date: 9th November, 2012

Reporting Officer: John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470

Contact Officer: Laura Leonard, European Manager, ext 3577

1.0 Purpose of report

To provide Members with a Council response to the European Territorial Co-operation Consultation 2014-2020

1 Background

1.1 Members will be aware that 2014 marks the beginning of a new 7 year EU Programming cycle, both for NI Mainstream programmes and the wider competitive EU programmes. Later this year, Members will be presented with draft consultation responses in relation to the evolving ERDF (led by DETI) and ESF (led by DEL) programmes for the period 2014-2020.

1.2 This report outlines the Council response in relation to the evolving Peace IV and INTERREG V programmes together known as the European Territorial Cooperation Programmes 2014-2020.

1.3 On 28th August 2012, the Managing Authority for both emerging programmes, the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), launched a public consultation process which will close on 8th November, 2012. This is the first of two consultation processes which are framed around the following timeline:

- August-November 2012 public consultation1
- November-December 2012 Development of Operational Programmes
- January-March 2013 Formal statutory consultation of Operational programmes
- April-June 2013 Formal statutory consultation of Operational Programmes
- Summer/Autumn 2013 Approval of Operational Programmes by NI Executive/Irish Government/Scottish Government
- Autumn 2013 submission, negotiation and approval of Operational Programmes with EU Commission
- Early 2014 Commencement of new INTERREG V and Peace IV programmes

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 With regards to the current ETC Consultation exercise, both the European and Good Relations Units within BCC have taken the lead with their respective programme responsibilities and stakeholders.
- 2.2 The European Unit held a Comet wide stakeholder workshop in the Ulster Hall on 25th September 2012, attended by 32 delegates. In addition, each Council area of the Comet Councils will gather its own geographical and stakeholder views and respond directly to the SEUPB.
- 2.3 Finally the EU Unit on behalf of the Comet INTERREG Board (attended by the Chair and Deputy Chair of Development) will work collectively with the other 4 INTERREG Cross Border Partnerships to submit a collective view to SEUPB. This will conclude a year long lobby to minister North and South and the EU Commission to return to the model of INTERREG III A, devolving more control and delivery to local authority level for the next programme.
- 2.4 The Good Relations Unit held a workshop with BCC stakeholders on 1st October to gather views on the PEACE IV Programme and held a session with the Good Relations Partnership on 8th October, 2012.
- 2.5 The proposed BCC responses to both the INTERREG V and PEACE IV consultations are outlined in the attached appendix, via the SEUPB Informal Consultation document.
- 2.6 A summary of views within the response is outlined as follows:

i. INTERREG IV A

INTERREG V delivery should be structured around a return of the INTERREG III A model, whereby a proportion of funding is devolved to the Cross Border INTERREG Partnerships of elected members and social partners to deliver on a pre agreed needs based local area strategy. There should be one accountable department providing match funding (if available) to reduce the bureaucracy and remove the long time delay from project application to approval stage. The INTERREG Partnerships should have a role at the early stages of programme development and throughout implementation to the end of the programming period. The eligible area should be extended to include Dublin as a more natural partner for the Comet Urban Centre. The programme content should reflect the real needs of local areas and therefore concentrate on themes

Note: Agreement could not be reached by the stakeholder group on 4 themes out of 11 themes outlined by the European Commission.

The geographical delivery of the programme should reflect the RPA areas and the 11 geographical sets should also be the basis for the other programmes, basically:

- PEACE IV
- Rural Development Programme
- Delivery of ERDF/ESF
- Neighbourhood Renewal
- Social Investment Programme

Note: This confirms the need to push for an Integrated Territorial Investment Programme for Greater Belfast considering all EU Programmes in NI as well as attracting other financial instruments and domestic funding to deliver a pre agreed integrated urban strategy.

BCC should urge Government departments and the SEUPB to consider this model of delivery for Belfast and Derry/Londonderry and not delay due to the lower capacity of other areas to organise and strategise.

ii. PEACE IV

The Council's Good Relations Partnership has successfully delivered both Phases of the Peace III Local Action Plan. It is proposed that this model be continued under Community Led Local Development Delivery model.

It is proposed that the following theme and associated investment priorities should inform the development of Peace IV Programme.

- Employment and supporting labour mobility
- Social inclusion and combating poverty
- Education, skills and lifelong learning
- Institutional Capacity Building and efficient public administration

During the conflict, Belfast was the seat of the most intensive violence in NI and suffered disproportionately as a result. This should be reflected in the development of any new PEACE IV Programme.

Potential activities that could be covered in any PEACE IV Programme include:

- Actions to create and promote use of shared public space, promote mobility within and between communities.
- Actions to develop and deliver integrated interface regeneration strategies. It is essential that local communities are involved in the process of re-developing contested spaces
- Actions to promote inclusive cultural expression and celebration.
- Action to align good relations/ peacebuilding and conflict transformation activities with the processes of existing policy development in areas such as education, regional strategic planning, urban and rural regeneration and community development and culture, arts and leisure provision.

Young people should remain a priority focus for any new Programme.

Match funding should be provided centrally by one accountable department for any future PEACE IV Programme.

The time taken for the project assessment and appraisal process should be reduced.

Reporting and Monitoring arrangements should be streamlined with an enhanced role for local authorities.

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| 3 Resource Implications |
| None |
| 4 Recommendation |
| <p>The Committee is requested to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. approve the attached proposed Council response to the European Territorial Co-operation Consultation; andii. agree that the response be submitted to SEUPB by the 20th November deadline, subject to council ratification on 1st December 2012. |
| 5 Abbreviations |
| <p>SEUPB – Special EU Programmes Body ETC – European Territorial Cooperation</p> |
| 6. Document Attached |
| Council response |



Special EU Programmes Body
Foras Um Chláir Speisialta An AE
Boord O Owre Ocht UE Projects

European Territorial Co-Operation 2014 – 2020

Name: Peter McNaney, Chief Executive

Organisation: Belfast City Council

| What questions did you respond to? | Please tick |
|---|-------------|
| INTERREG IVA (Q.1.a to Q.4.b inclusive) | ✓ |
| PEACE III (Q.5.a to Q.7.b inclusive) | ✓ |
| General Questions applicable to both programmes (Q.8.a to Q.12 inclusive) | ✓ |
| Additional Comments (Q.13 and Q.14) | ✓ |

Consultation Response Document

28 August – 20 November 2012



Consultation questions for consideration

During this consultation period, we really want to hear your views. Have you been involved in INTERREG or PEACE before? Are you not involved but wonder what it is all about? Or even, if it is the first time you have ever heard of EU funding for cross border co-operation - we want to hear from you!

You should refer to the 'Consultation Information Document' at <http://www.seupb.eu/2014-2020Consultation/keyquestions.aspx> which will provide the background information to assist you with answering the consultation questions.

We are asking a total of 14 questions and in providing your answers, please note the general considerations outlined earlier in Part 2 of the Discussion Document. Some of the questions have sub questions, to help ensure all the key points are addressed. There is no requirement to answer all the questions, please respond only to those questions that you wish to do so. Please use your responses to questions 13 and 14 to make more general comments if you wish to do so.

The SEUPB welcomes early responses so that views, ideas and comments can contribute to ongoing developments and debates during the consultation period. Your response will be published on the SEUPB website unless you specifically request that it should not be published.

This document is available to download from the SEUPB website at: <http://www.seupb.eu/2014-2020Consultation/howtorespond.aspx>

We welcome your response by e-mail to: consultation@seupb.eu

While responses by e-mail are preferred, should you may wish to post it, please send it to:

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All responses may be subject to release under the SEUPB's Code for Freedom of Information, a copy of which is available on our website at <http://www.seupb.eu/AboutUs/FreedomOfInformation.aspx>

Note: The Comet INTERREG Partnership held a Stakeholders Consultation Workshop in Partnership with the SEUPB on 25 September 2012. A total of 60 delegates attended from the local Government, Education Business, Research, Community and Voluntary Sectors. Their responses to the INTERREG V Consultation questions are detailed below.

INTERREG V Cross-Border Programme

Learning The Lessons From The Current Programme

Q.1.a. If you are currently involved in INTERREG funding, please share your experiences of the impact of the programme on the cross-border region.

From a COMET perspective, the INTERREG IVA experience has been challenging. The 6 COMET Councils namely Belfast, Lisburn, Castlereagh, Carrickfergus, Newtownabbey and North Down came together in 2005, to form a shadow INTERREG IIIA Partnership.

Supported from technical assistance provided by SEUPB, they set out to develop cross border relationships and foster cross border project ideas in anticipation of the INTERREG IVA Programme 2007–2013. Without going into the chronological detail of the Multi Annual Plan evolution and subsequent separate call application system between 2007–2010, it was only by 22 December 2011 that Comet actually received project letters of offer (3). The Comet experience, like all 5 INTERREG partnerships, was one of huge challenge and difficulty given the prolonged and changing application process driven by SEUPB and accountable departments, and also for the following reasons as highlighted during the Consultation Workshop:

- There is a need to decentralise the programme to have more authority and role at the local government partnership level, as was proven successful in INTERREG IIIA;
- This would also greatly reduce the administration burden on SEUPB who currently handle all administrative aspects of the programme;
- From the Comet perspective, it was very difficult to source partners in the cross border region given that;
 - a) Comet does not have a natural synergy with the border region; and
 - b) the border area contiguous partners have been collaborating for over 30 years;
- It is difficult to source partners and source the right partners;
- The programme content should to be more needs driven;
- Accountable departments have made it difficult to get projects to the starting line and a perception of government already delivering in the areas of incubation and SME Development skewed real local need, where micro businesses and geographical areas need extra and targeted investment;
- The programme is often more regulation driven, than needs driven.
- Impact of the INTERREG IVA programme has been limited in the Comet region by way of securing only 3 projects. However, these are of significant value and will make an impact in the medium term within the business and entrepreneurs sectors. There have also been benefits to Comet stakeholders in terms of developing stronger relations with colleagues both in and across the border region which will be critical for going forward into the new ETC programming round.

Q.1.b. Please share with us your views of what works well in the current programme as well as what could be improved.

- The Cross Border INTERREG Partnerships developed stronger collaborative partnerships during this programme resulting in a more coherent approach to;
 - a) Operational issues and standards sharing
 - b) Joint lobbying and positioning
 - c) Project collaboration for the first time
 - d) Profiling the IVA region during Brussels Open Days, in a now annual seminar and networking event
 - e) Collaborative conferences
 - f) Coherent local authority voice
- The partnerships managed to keep stakeholders on board during difficult and challenging programme circumstances with changing goal posts and systems;
- Improvement could be made around
 - a) a devolved role for the local authority groups, a return to the INTERREG IIIA partnership delivery approach;
 - b) allocating one government department as the accountable department for the groups
 - c) involving the groups (as well as NILGA) in the detail of the development of the new programme – Councils know what the local challenges, needs and gaps are, and how to articulate and then address these
 - d) a proper Multi Annual Plan approval system to be introduced at the Programme outset i.e. now agreeing local area cross border strategic plans at the outset and allocating global grants through the Community Led Local Development model.

Q.1.c. If you have not been involved in INTERREG funding, can you please identify any obstacles to your participation and your views on how can these could be addressed?

There were no attendees who had not already been involved in INTERREG and all experienced frustration and disappointment regarding INTERREG IVA due to the previously documented difficulties.

Themes for INTERREG V

Q.2.a What are the problems / issues /opportunities in the cross border area that are best addressed by the new INTERREG V Cross-border Programme? (Please bear in mind the eleven themes outlined in Appendix 2 of the Consultation Information Document)

Problems/Issues/ outlined by COMET Stakeholders:

A. Problems outlined by Comet stakeholders:

- The long and challenging process experienced by the partnership from multi annual planning in 2007 to a new application process to eventual letters of offer Christmas 2011.
- Over robust assessment and economic appraisal process.
- Involvement of different economic assessors in the same match funding government departments.

B. Issues raised by Comet stakeholders:

- Issue raised around opting for themes 1, 3, 4 as priority themes given DETI must choose these for the mainstream ERDF programme and they are likely to be a match funder?
- Issue raised around the need to find a way to address cultural heritage and tourism, which are not addressed in the themes.
- Need to develop a rationale for combining ERDF/ESF and demonstrating complementarity.

C. Opportunities outlined by Comet stakeholders:

- SME development, theme 3 - particularly micro businesses that do not benefit from INI or ITI programmes. Also there is a necessity to integrate tourism into this theme through business development.
- Opportunity for colleges to play a bigger role in development, research and innovation, through creating business clusters, incubation processes and research and innovation initiatives.
- Opportunity to combine ERDF & ESF to undertake capital investment with locally legacy bearing projects and at the same time targeting softer skills and training investment to complement and provide content for new build, e.g. E3 & Forth river projects in Belfast.
- Opportunity to address environmental problems which are not addressed through themes 4, 5, and 6.

Q.2.b In your view, what type of change should the INTERREG V Programme be striving to bring about in relation to these problems / issues / opportunities?

Comet stakeholders made the following comments on general areas for improvement:

- Faster streamlined, more efficient process is required.
- Need clear direction as to who is accountable.
- NI/SEUPB needs to be much less risk averse.
- Local Government is very well placed to be at heart of delivery and to shoulder responsibility.
- A problem with slow delivery of programmes e.g. the Creative Industries Comet CEED project – 4 years to receive LOO.
- Trilateral Projects – more difficult to manage due to participation of 3 sets of partners. Experience shows that is difficult to find Scottish Partners due to match funding.
- To include Dublin as an eligible area would give greater scope to find cross border partners in line with local need.
- Look at all island needs/challenges before deciding on the priorities, e.g. water quality, economic development, investment in places, waste, IT infrastructure quality tourism offer, environmental issues overall.
- Establish DETI & DEL views as potential match funders - should INTERREG be dedicated to the same themes or totally different?
- Finding a balance between EU/legal/statutory rules and the concept of a genuine community impacting programme.

Q.2.c Bearing in mind your answers to 2a and 2b, from the list of thematic objectives in Appendix 2 of the Discussion Document, which 4 objectives should be included in the new programme?

Comet Stakeholders could not reach agreement on 4 themes specifically but have identified and highlighted themes 1, 3, 4, 6 and 8 as being essential for addressing the regional challenges on a cross border basis.

Comet stakeholders were cognisant of the fact that any devolved programme role will have a bearing on where local authorities have competencies to spend – no point in having local plans with priorities where local authorities have no mandate or where there is one area would swallow up the whole allocated local budget. Eg: waste.

Q.2.d What are your views on including a sustainable urban development dimension and / or an integrated territorial investment option? (see Appendix 3 of the Consultation Information Document)

- I. Comet stakeholders were supportive of Sustainable Urban Development but recognise that any focus on it will be dependent on UK support for it ultimately.
- II. There was common agreement around the need for including a strong sustainable urban development dimension given the level of population living in and the assets based in urban areas.
- III. Comet stakeholders prefer a delivery model combining the use of the Integrated Territorial Investment tool for Urban areas along with the Community led local development model for smaller defined areas. The ITI model is preferred by Comet Stakeholders to be delivered through a vehicle of a Joint Committee of the councils with urban territories within the metropolitan area, aligned to the imminent RPA boundaries. The Integrated Territorial Investment and Community Led Local Development delivery models would ensure that future EU funds are administered in a more integrated, efficient and locally responsive way and more effectively meet the structural needs of local communities. A focused, placed-based budgeting approach to the future allocation of EU funding through for example an ITI provides a greater opportunity to align EU funds with local spending plans and other resources available to the councils; ensuring regeneration, economic development and skills funding instruments meet specific needs and generate greater outcome gains. Comet recognises that accountability for future European expenditure will remain with government departments and that an appropriate accountable framework will need to be put in place to underpin any delegation of funds to Comet or other council clusters. Comet would welcome the opportunity to explore with departmental officials how such assurances and accountability can be developed.
- IV. There was also agreement that Greater Belfast and Dublin be formally included in the eligible area to allow the urban centres to develop cross border investments along the Belfast, Newry, and Dundalk, Dublin corridor, around an agreed number of strategic collaborations around economic development, research, environment and ICT. Comet stakeholder recognise that the legislation allows only for this to happen for additional NUTS level 3 regions adjacent to those currently listed. Although this still allows for Dublin to be involved, though with benefits and impacts solely for the fully eligible area excluding Dublin, Comet still believes there are benefits in working with Dublin.

Q.2.e Do you have any cross-border projects in mind that will contribute to bringing about the type of change that you think is necessary within the region?

- Belfast – Dublin Greenway around renewable energy collaboration
- Cross Border Micro Business Collaboration
- Lagan Canal and all Island Waterways

The Comet stakeholders would welcome the opportunity to undertake strategic planning and project development workshops with Newry and Louth in the coming months and Dublin, if there is a political will for inclusion.

Eligible Area

Q.3. What are your views on the eligible area?

Comet stakeholders agreed that the eligible area should be extended to include Greater Belfast, the Belfast – Dublin corridor and Greater Dublin. Both areas are the key economic drivers for the region. Cohesion cannot be delivered without these 2 city regions. Going forward to RPA including the above areas will ease confusion on eligible boundary areas.

Meetings are underway to discuss this sensitive issue and further commentary will be communicated to SEUPB. The COMET INTERREG Partnership recognises the fact that if Dublin were to be included, all investment MUST be within the eligible area which would be a disincentive for Dublin. However Comet still believes there is huge merit in developing the Dublin links and working with Dublin partners to create prosperity and growth along the corridor to strengthen North Dublin and the eligible area.

INTERREG V Delivery Structures

Q.4.a Bearing in mind the limited number of themes, the need for a strategic approach and the need to ensure delivery of bilateral and trilateral projects, what delivery mechanisms do you consider to be appropriate to implement the INTERREG V cross-border programme?

Comet stakeholders prefer a delivery model combining the use of the Integrated Territorial Investment tool for Urban areas along with the Community led local development model for smaller defined areas. The ITI model is preferred by Comet Stakeholders to be delivered through a vehicle of a Joint Committee of the councils with urban territories within the metropolitan area, aligned to the imminent RPA boundaries. The Integrated Territorial Investment and Community Led Local Development delivery models would ensure that future EU funds are administered in a more integrated, efficient and locally responsive way and more effectively meet the structural needs of local communities.

A focused, place-based budgeting approach to the future allocation of EU funding through for example an ITI provides a greater opportunity to align EU funds with local spending plans and other resources available to the councils; ensuring regeneration, economic development and skills funding instruments meet specific needs and generate greater outcome gains. Comet recognises that accountability for future European expenditure will remain with government departments and that an appropriate accountable framework will need to be put in place to underpin any delegation of funds to Comet or other council clusters. Comet would welcome the opportunity to explore with departmental officials how such assurances and accountability can be developed.

Q.4.b What are your views on using the Community Led Local Development approach and / or Joint Action Plans? (as outlined in Appendix 4 of the Consultation Information Document)

Comet stakeholders discussed at length the ITI, JAP and CLLD models and agreed the appropriate models for devolving the programme to grass roots level are the ITI and CLLD models rather than JAP as they would ensure INTERREG V reaches those areas of need through a locally led community based strategy. As in INTERREG IIIA, the de-centralised approach worked well, processes were speedier and financial spend on target.

Comet found the JAP model to be very vague.

Please see more detail at question 2 d.

PEACE IV Programme

Learning The Lessons From The Current Programme

Q.5.a If you are currently involved in PEACE III Programme please comment on/share your experiences of the impact of the programme?

Belfast City Council's Good Relations Partnership has successfully delivered a range of projects under Phase 1 of the Belfast PEACE III Plan as can be seen from the following summary of the 2009-2011 programming period.

| Indicator | Target | Actual | Commentary |
|--|---------------|---------------|--|
| Programmes developed and implemented. | 1 | 20 | These were programmes led by Belfast City Council and NI Housing Executive. and Belfast Health Trust |
| Organisations in receipt of grant aid | 22 | 51 | A number of organisations led 2 projects in Phase 1. |
| Participants | 2,500 | 36,297 | Includes 15,733 from Festivals programming |
| of which: Male | | 17,786 | |
| of which: Female | | 18,511 | |
| Events that address sectarianism or racism or deal with conflict resolution | 74 | 227 | More events held than originally anticipated due to increased number of projects. |
| Reports/films or other deliverables | 73 | 132 | More reports/ booklets and short films produced than originally anticipated due to increased number of projects. |
| Footfall in city centre at key retail locations after receiving support | - | 62% | 62% of those surveyed never having been into the city centre on the 12th/ 13th July before. |
| Environmental improvement schemes on arterial routes | 4 | 4 | Northumberland St; Ormeau Bridge; Bridge End; Carlisle Circus |
| Area networks promoting community cohesion | 2 | 2 | Inner East & Inner South |
| Network to approve mediation resource | 1 | 1 | Network of Accredited Mediation Practitioners |
| Discussion on changing the physical appearance on 4 interface barriers | 1 | 1 | Includes development of 4 area plans and community toolkit. |

| | | | |
|---|----|----|---|
| Paramilitary murals replaced or removed | 2 | 8 | Eight militaristic murals removed and replaced in participating communities. |
| Organisations working in partnership on Peace III plan | 24 | 73 | |
| New partnerships developed in relation to PEACE III | 4 | 4 | 5732 Migrant & Minority Ethnic Project; 5802 Divercity Project; 5783 Growing Together; 5739 Interfaces Programme. |
| Meetings held | 16 | 34 | Refers to meetings of the Good Relations Partnership. 34 meetings of the Partnership between Aug 08 and Sept 11. |
| Best practice studies | 12 | 15 | Across all themes and delivery mechanisms. |
| Cross border Partnerships established and supported. | 0 | 21 | Across all themes and delivery mechanisms. |

In addition the following outcomes have been achieved due to the PEACE III intervention.

- Increased inter-community contact;
- Increased use of shared public spaces;
- Increased inter-agency collaboration;
- New models of planning and engagement;
- Increased capacity of voluntary & community sector;
- Environmental improvements and creation of new shared spaces – community gardens etc;
- Significant progress on reduction/removal of physical barriers with agreement of local communities;
- Support for positive expression of cultural heritage and shared cultural collaboration;
- Increased capacity within migrant & minority ethnic sector;
- Early years interventions on anti-bullying/ anti-racism/ anti-sectarianism work;
- Resourcing grass roots/ frontline work.

Q.5.b Please share with us your views of what works well in the current programme as well as what could be improved.

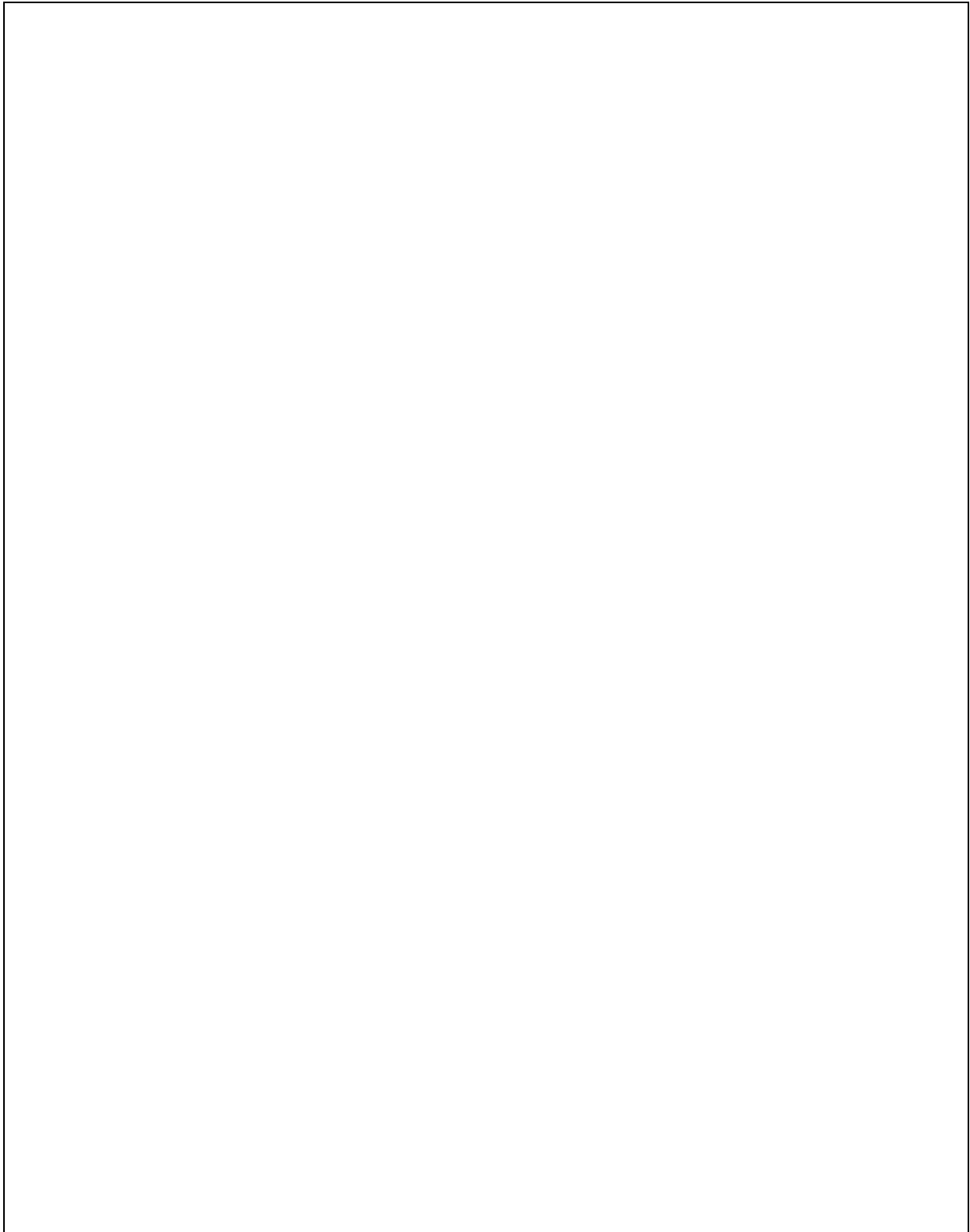
What works well

- The current model of a partnership approach led by Local Authority allows the flexibility to respond to locally identified need and has worked well.
- 100% contribution towards project costs
- Development & Delivery of Strategic plans has worked well
- Flat Rate for overheads has reduced administrative burden.
- Local communications/ engagement and networking activity has resulted in enhanced buy-in and positive feedback process.

What could be improved

- Lengthy assessment and approval process negatively impacting upon timescales for delivery
- Co-ordination with other PEACE III Partnerships
- Need for flexibility in the inspection & verification regime
- More of a focus on outcomes rather than compliance and administrative process.
- Cooperation/ Information Sharing with other funders and agencies

Q.5.c If you have not been involved in PEACE funding, can you please identify any obstacles to your participation and your views on how these can be addressed?



Themes for PEACE IV

Q.6.a What type of change do you wish to see in the Northern Ireland and border region society over the next 7 years?

- Improved health, educational and employment opportunities especially for young people and interface communities.
- Strong leadership role for local government.
- More joined up approach between central and local government, statutory providers, other funders and other EU Programmes e.g. DEL and DETI Programmes.
- Increased engagement from young people and migrant & BME sector. Increased economic, social and political leadership from these groups.
- Greater use of the wealth of content and practice re diversity awareness/ anti-sectarianism and anti-racism work.
- Maximising use of existing community assets e.g. schools, sporting and recreational facilities.

Q.6.b What type of activities should the PEACE Programme fund to bring about this change?

- Youth Engagement & early years interventions.
- Interface regeneration programmes with innovative aspects tackling issues such as renewable energy/ food production etc.
- Leadership development for young people, minority ethnic communities.
- Collaborative peace-building and conflict transformation work between central/ local govt/ statutory bodies and local communities.
- Anti-sectarianism and anti-racism training.

Q.6.c Based on your answer to question 6.a. and 6.b., and from the list of thematic objectives in Appendix 2 of the Consultation Information Document, identify up to 4 thematic objectives that should be included in the new programme.

Themes 8,9, 10 and 11. Specifically the investment priorities highlighted below:

Employment and supporting labour mobility

(a) Development of business incubators and investment support for self employment and business creation.

(b) Local development initiatives and aid for structures providing neighbourhood services to create new jobs, where such actions are outside the scope of the ESF Regulation.

(c) Integrating cross border labour markets including cross border mobility, joint local employment initiatives and joint training.

Social Inclusion and combating poverty

(a) Investing in health and social infrastructure which contribute to national, regional and local development, reducing inequalities in terms of health status, and transition from institutional to community-based services.

(b) Support for physical and economic regeneration of deprived urban and rural communities.

(c) Support for social enterprises.

(d) Promoting gender equality and equal opportunities across borders, as well as promoting social inclusion across borders.

Education, Skills and lifelong learning

a) Investing in education, skills and lifelong learning by developing education and training infrastructure.

b) Developing and implementing joint education and training schemes.

Institutional Capacity Building and efficient public administration

a) Enhancing institutional capacity and an efficient public administration by strengthening of institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administrations and public services related to implementation of the ERDF, and in support of actions in institutional capacity and in the efficiency of public administration supported by the ESF.

b) Promoting legal and administrative co-operation and co-operation between citizens and institutions.

Q.6.d What are your views on including a sustainable urban development dimension and / or an integrated territorial investment option in the programme? (See appendix 3 of the Consultation Information Document)

It is important to acknowledge the key role of Belfast as regional driver and the specific urban agenda. To this end the Council would request that consideration be given to the creation of an '**Integrated Territorial Investment**' funding model for Belfast and/or other parts of the region which would pull together a range of EU funding streams (including the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund) to deliver prioritised activities linked to an agreed Integrated Urban Strategy for the City.

Belfast is a city with a complex mix of organisations with different remits working on various projects, initiatives and strategies. As the democratically elected body within the city, Council is committed to demonstrating civic leadership and working in partnership with a range of public, private, voluntary and community organisations for the well-being of its citizens. This will be of critical importance with the forthcoming changes following the Review of Public Administration, development of community planning and transfer of functions.

Problems of security, crime, community relations and racist incidents, are particularly acute in Belfast and have had a consequent impact on mutual suspicion and fear. During the conflict, Belfast was the seat of the most intensive violence in NI and suffered disproportionately as a result. "*Northern Ireland's Troubles: The Human Costs*"¹ report highlights that out of 2,902 fatal incidents during the conflict 1,352 (47%) occurred in Belfast. There were also 1,216 resident victims of the conflict living in the city.

¹ '*Northern Ireland's Troubles: The Human Costs*' – MT Fay, Mike Morrissey and Marie Smyth (1999)

Q.6.e Do you have any projects in mind that will contribute to bringing about the type of change that you think is necessary within the region?

Actions to create and promote use of shared public space, promote mobility within and between communities. Economic costs of current situation include the policing of numerous interfaces and provision of high security presence; duplication of services; restricted access to core services; little mobility in employment terms / journeys to work via 'hostile areas'; difficulty in attracting investment.

Actions to develop and deliver integrated interface regeneration strategies. It is essential that local communities are involved in the process of re-developing contested spaces, supported through dialogue and training, in order to avoid creating new interfaces and transforming existing interfaces.

Actions to promote inclusive cultural expression and celebration.

Action to align good relations/ peacebuilding and conflict transformation activities with the processes of existing policy development in areas such as education, regional strategic planning, urban and rural regeneration and community development and culture, arts and leisure. For example there is a clear link with the proposed Urban Regeneration and Community Development Framework i.e. the policy objective to develop more cohesive and engaged communities and the key action of strengthening networks and cross interface schemes to develop positive community responses to social, economic and environmental problems.

PEACE IV Delivery Structures

Q.7.a Bearing in mind the specific objectives of the PEACE Programme what delivery mechanisms do you consider to be appropriate to implement the PEACE IV Programme?

The Good Relations Partnership is responsible for managing and administering the funding available through the PEACE III Programme.

The Partnership consists of 21 members - 6 elected members - one from each of the Party Groups on the council; plus representatives from the major statutory organisations and the community / voluntary sector in Belfast.

The independent external evaluation commissioned by SEUPB² found that the Good Relations Partnership included established Peace and Reconciliation policy partners and that models of inter-agency collaboration were very evident from the plan and that it was also successfully encouraging intra and inter community collaboration. It also found extensive evidence of the bottom up approach through the use of community bodies for delivery and community involvement in planning.

Q.7.b What are your views on using the Community Led Local Development approach and / or Joint Action Plans? (as outlined in Appendix 4 of the Consultation Information Document)

Local Authority led CLLD mechanism either as a standalone option or as part of an Urban ITI. More detail would be necessary on the proposed Joint Action Plan mechanism to inform an options appraisal on final delivery mechanism for any future Programme.

General Questions Applicable to both Programmes

Application, Assessment and Approval of Projects

Q.8. Please provide suggestions on how the assessment and approval process could be improved in the new programming period to ensure the timely approval of projects.

Comet Stakeholder comments may be summarised as follows:

- 2 Stage approach was much better for the final Programme call.
- Assessment process needs to be much shorter -26 weeks.
- Process should match delivery structures i.e. bottom up like in INTERREG IIIA where Cross Border panels made calls, assessed projects and made recommendations to Steering Committees.
- Return to system whereby Groups were able to attend Steering Committee meetings and defend projects and answer queries. This would save a lot of time back and forth through economic appraisers and SEUPB staff.
- Economic Appraisal – The use of National rules should be taken out.
- Need for consideration and improvement to the composition of the Steering Committees and Economic Appraisers to ensure that projects are assessed by experts in the field.
- Set guidelines and regulations at the outset and avoid changing goal posts which happened so often in INTERREG IVA.

PEACE IV

Transparency on assessment process.

Consistency of appraisal process – different consultants applying different approaches in appraisal of local action plans.

Need to fit in with local investment strategies and complementary strategies.

Assessment process needs to be much shorter - 26 weeks should be the target.

Project Financing and Match Funding

Q.9.a Please provide suggestions on the arrangements for match funding. Should the current arrangements to source match funding continue, or should some or all of match funding be provided by the applicant (public or private)?

Comet stakeholders feel that match funding

- Should remain the same i.e. 100% but welcome the fact that match funding can come from private sources. If Projects in the next programme are not 100% funded, they would not get completed in this current climate.
- Councils, particularly in the South would find it difficult to provide match funding although the reverse argument is that providing match fund indicates a greater level of commitment and buy in from applicants.
- Look at the Social financing model/community shares. Open up thinking for all sources of finance, Private financing could be used well as an intermediary fund principle.
- Keep all options open – use of government departments plus possible private as match.
- Timescales for spending may be an issue. (Private sector cannot hang around for long assessment processes).
- Need clarification on what money can be matched to different public funds.
- Can staff costs be used as a match?
- Possibly projects to pay a % i.e. 5- 10% towards projects.

PEACE IV

Current arrangements should continue with 25% match funding coming from accountable departments.

Q.9.b What are your views on the use of financial instruments in the INTERREG and / or PEACE programmes?

Comet stakeholders were very open to this and considered different types of instruments as possibilities:

- Recycle/leverage funds – such as holding funds.
- UCIT Cluster Community Investment Trust.
- Finally support other options.
- Grant givers and tenders are **not** giving mixed support. Part grant, part loan. (Social Economy Organisation).
- Community shares (equity finance for the third sector).
- Mechanisms need to be in place to retrieve money and reallocate where it's needed.
- Share Investment.

Reducing the Administrative Burden

Q.10.a What are your views on these proposals to reduce the administrative burden on beneficiaries in the new programming period?

Comet stakeholders welcome the proposals to reduce the administrative burden.

Q.10.b Please provide additional suggestions on how to reduce the administrative burden.

Comet Stakeholders did not address.

Equality and Environment

Q.11. Please describe any actions the Programmes could take in relation to promoting equal opportunities including the integration of a gender perspective, and the prevention of discrimination, during programme preparation and implementation?

Welcome the proposed Equality Impact Assessment of the new Programmes planned for 2013.

Q.12 Please describe any actions that the programmes could take to protect and improve the environment during both programme preparation and implementation.

Welcome the proposed Strategic Environmental Assessment of the new Programmes planned for 2013.

Additional Comments – INTERREG V

Q.13. Please make any additional comments about a future INTERREG V Programme that have not already been included in previous questions.

Comet stakeholders welcomed the opportunity to be invited at this early stage of programming to make comments and recommendations. The stakeholders and COMET INTERREG and Good Relations partnerships appreciate this partnership approach.

Comet would urge SEUPB to have an immediate discussion with accountable departments around their future EU Thematic priorities and whether their choices will have a bearing on the INTERREG V programme.

Additional Comments – PEACE IV

Q.14. Please make any additional comments about a future PEACE IV Programme that have not already been included in previous questions.

Welcome the commitment to a PEACE IV Programme that will build upon the significant progress made under the PEACE III Programme.