

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 21st November, 2014

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Reynolds (Chairman);
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Hendron);
Aldermen Browne, Campbell, R. Patterson
and Robinson;
Councillors Attwood, Campbell, Carson,
Clarke, Corr, Haire, Hargey, Jones, Kennedy,
Mac Giolla Mhín, McCarthy, McVeigh, Mullan
and Newton.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;
Mr. J. Walsh, Town Solicitor; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

(The Chairman, Councillor Reynolds, in the Chair.)

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 17th October were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd November.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

(The Deputy Chairman, Councillor Carson, in the Chair.)

Ulster Orchestra - Request for Funding

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 17th October, it had deferred consideration of a request for financial assistance from the Ulster Orchestra. That request, which had been for an amount of £500,000, had been to assist the Orchestra to address an operating deficit of £400,000 in 2014/2015, which had arisen due to cuts in funding, primarily by the Arts Council and the BBC. The Committee had taken that decision to clarify the Council's legal powers to meet such a request, to enable further information to be obtained and to receive a deputation from representatives of the Board of the Ulster Orchestra.

The Chief Executive reminded the Committee that there had been two elements to the Ulster Orchestra's request, the second aspect being that the Council would consider providing the Orchestra with a rent-free period of five years for the use of the Ulster and Waterfront Halls. Given that such a decision would affect the Council post-

2015, she pointed out that that element of the request would be considered by the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 28th November.

Accordingly, the Deputy Chairman welcomed to the meeting Professor G. Bain, Executive Chairman of the Board of the Ulster Orchestra, together with Ms. A. Sands, Ms. B. McKinley and Mr. T. Green, representing the senior management team of the Orchestra.

Professor Bain outlined the extent of the Orchestra's operating deficit and the factors which had contributed to it. He stressed that any financial contribution which the Council might make would assist the Orchestra in its attempt to lever additional funding from the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure. He outlined the principal aspects of a revised business model which had been formulated for the Orchestra and indicated that the Board would be seeking to attract additional funding from the private sector. He concluded by stressing that the Orchestra had established a five-year plan to enhance its future viability and sustainability and appealed to the Committee to look favourably upon the request as submitted.

In response to a number of Members' questions, Professor Bain outlined the range of measures which the Orchestra would explore to attract additional private funding. He confirmed that he did not anticipate that a further request for direct Council support would be submitted in future years. In addition, Ms. Sands provided an overview of the enhanced community outreach programme which would be introduced. The representatives of the Ulster Orchestra then left the meeting.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor McVeigh,
Seconded by Alderman Robinson and

Resolved – That the Committee agrees, in principle, to contribute a sum of £100,000 to the Ulster Orchestra, subject to that body securing additional funding to meet its operating deficit for 2014/2015, and subject to the Council being satisfied with the longer-term financial viability of the Orchestra and to the receipt of assurances from auditors that the Orchestra was considered to be a going concern.

Investment Programme

Area Working Update

The Committee considered the undernoted update report on the work of the Council's Area-Based Working Groups:

South AWG - Local Intervention

- 2.1 The South AWG made a recommendation for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to Gilpins project which is an emerging BIF project. Members noted that it was highlighted**

that there was a need to build capacity in relation to this project – however although this is an emerging BIF proposal there is no funding available under BIF for this type of project development activity. Capacity building would be a matter for the Development Committee to consider as and when it has the budget and resources to do so.

North AWG

- 2.2 The North AWG made the following recommendations for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their Local Investment Fund

LIF Ref	Project	£	AWG Comments
NLIF051	St Marys Nursery School	£6,596	That an additional £6,596 from unallocated LIF monies is allocated to St Marys Nursery School project. Committee is asked to note that this project has previously received £47,000 and this additional money is to make up a shortfall in funding for the project
NLIF030	Deanby Youth Club		That this project is withdrawn from the process and that the £70,000 which was agreed in principle is decommitted from the project

Following the above decision the North AWG still has approximately £300,000 of unallocated LIF funding. Given realistic concerns that this money could potentially be subsumed into general Council budgets as the new organisation establishes itself amidst very difficult financial circumstances the North AWG held a special meeting to agree allocation of the £300,000.

Officers were not invited to this meeting but have since been provided with a list of 'projects' totalling over £280,000. The estimates against these 'projects' are entirely notional as officers have had no input as yet and we do not know what or where some of these projects are.

More importantly a number of these ideas do not fit within the eligibility criteria for LIF funding. Even if Committee was minded to change the rules around LIF for some of these ideas this may cause audit, legal and reputational issues for Councillors and the Council and potentially jeopardise future funding of this type.

The list of ideas include straightforward top ups of existing LIF schemes but then move to feasibility studies, expenditure on Council assets, small revenue amounts and areas outside the vires of Council and potentially illegal.

Rather than debate these individually at Committee it is proposed that:

- (i) A decision is made by Committee and the Shadow SP&R to ring fence the unallocated LIF monies to give the AWG time to think things through.
- (ii) The Committee asks the AWG to meet with the Directors of Legal Services, Finance and Resources and Property and Projects to refine the current ideas into eligible areas of expenditure.

East AWG

2.3 The East AWG made the following recommendations for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their Local Investment Fund

LIF Ref	Project	£	AWG Comments
ELIF025	Wandsworth Community Association	Additional £8,356	That an additional £8,356 from unallocated LIF monies is allocated to Wandsworth Community Association Committee is asked to note that this project has previously received £25,000 and this additional money is to make up a shortfall in funding for the project

ELIF015	Short Strand Community Association	Additional £6,644	That an additional £6,644 from unallocated LIF monies is allocated to the Short Strand Community Association Committee is asked to note that this project has previously received £94,648 and this additional money is to make up a shortfall in funding for the project
ELIF016	Landmark East – Best of East Centre	-	The current funding agreement for this project is with East Belfast Partnership however the works are being carried out by Landmark East (a wholly owned subsidiary of the EBP) and other funding agreements for the project are with Landmark East. To facilitate this, the East AWG have agreed that the Funding Agreement is assigned to Landmark East – this has been agreed by Legal Services

East – this has been agreed by Legal Services

Capital Project Update

- 2.4 The East AWG also received an update in relation to the Tamar Street proposal which Members are aware is currently a Stage 2 – Uncommitted project on the Capital Programme. This proposal was to refurbish an unused port-a-cabin for community use. This project was originally brought forward at the request of the East AWG. It should be noted that the SOC had previously identified a number of issues including that it went against a previous SP&R Committee decision (April 2012) to demolish the building due to its bad state of repair; none of the groups needed the premises 24/7 and that there were alternative facilities available in the neighbouring area and that

the land is designated as 'white-land' and is therefore free from development constraints. The Council also owns the adjoining land and this may facilitate the wider development of the site.

2.5 On the basis of the OBC that has been worked up the East AWG was advised that –

- a due diligence exercise has failed to identify any potentially suitable tenants from the pool of groups who had previously expressed interest in leasing the port-a-cabin
- there are ongoing concerns regarding displacement and duplication
- that further enquiries had been received since the due diligence exercise was carried out in September – this has included a proposal for using the site on an interim basis for storage.
- BMAP now designates the council owned land at Ballymacarrett as Community Greenway which allows for the Tamar St site's potential incorporation into any planning exercise for this part of the Comber Greenway

2.6 In light of the information presented the East AWG has recommended that this project is rescoped as a wider masterplan for the Ballymacarrett area and is dropped back down to Stage 1- Emerging Project on the Capital Programme. This will help maximise the links with the Community Greenway project and the emerging urban village proposal led by OFMDFM for the lower Newtownards Road area. This proposal also fits with the emerging development proposals by the East Belfast Partnership under the Holywood Arches Development Strategy. Master-planning would also provide an opportunity for any future development plans for the site to reflect wider community need and compliment the adjacent CCG Phase 2 works at C.S Lewis Square.

2.7 As outlined above there is also the potential that the site could be used on an interim basis for storage and Committee is asked to note that a short-term (1 year) lease would temporarily generate income and would not interfere with any planning of the wider site. Members are asked to note that further investigation is required is to whether such a proposal would require the use of the existing port-a-cabin or if a cleared site would facilitate extra interest on an interim basis.

2.8 Members are therefore asked to agree that this project is rescoped as a wider masterplan for the Ballymacarrett area and

is dropped back down to an emerging project on the Capital Programme. Members are further asked to agree to the demolition of the port-a-cabin as previously agreed by Committee in April 2012 if this will help to facilitate an interim use of the site.

3.0 Resource Implications

Financial: As outlined above. **Human:** Officer time in working with groups on developing their project proposals. **Assets:** none at present

4.0 Equality Implications

As part of the Stage approval process, a screening will be carried out on each project to indicate potential equality and good relations impacts and any mitigating actions needed.

5.0 Recommendations

Committee is asked to note the contents of this report: and

South AWG

- note the recommendation from the South AWG as laid out in 2.1 in relation to Gilpin's project regarding the potential establishment of a trust to oversee the project. Members are asked to note that there is no budget available under BIF for this type of project development activity and that if agreed this recommendation will need to be referred to the Development Committee for consideration

North AWG

- agree that an additional £6,596 of LIF funding is allocated to the St Marys Nursery School project (NLIF051) from unallocated North LIF monies
- note the Deanby Youth Club project (NLIF030) has been withdrawn from the process and the £70,000 which had been agreed in principle has now been decommitted
- agree to ring fence unallocated LIF monies and ask the North AWG to meet with Directors as suggested in the report.

East AWG

- agree the additional amounts of LIF funding of £8,356 to Wandsworth Community Association (ELIF025) and £6,644 to the Short Strand Community Centre (ELIF015) from unallocated East LIF monies
- note the change in the funding agreement for the Best of East Centre project (ELIF016) and that this is assigned to Landmark East
- agree that the Tamar Street proposed capital programme project (currently a Stage 2 – Uncommitted project) is rescoped to become a wider masterplan for the Ballymacarrett area and is dropped down to a Stage 1 – Emerging Project on the Capital Programme to maximise the potential of the site. If agreed this will be included in the next Capital Programme update report.”

The Director of Property and Projects outlined the principal aspects of the report and indicated that the West Belfast Area-Based Working Group, at its meeting on 19th November, had been advised that one of the partners involved in the Upper Andersonstown Community Forum’s Community Garden Project, namely, the St. John the Baptist Primary School, could not enter into a ten-year lease agreement for the use of its land, as required under the due diligence process, since it was seeking to build a replacement school within that timeframe. Accordingly, the Working Group had agreed to recommend to the Committee that the project be withdrawn from the Local Investment Fund to enable the pre-agreed funding, that is, £40,000, to be re-allocated to the Sarsfield’s Gaelic Athletic Club’s project to oversee the development of a gravel pitch.

The Committee adopted the recommendations and endorsed the additional request as submitted by the West Belfast Area-Based Working Group.

Waterfront Hall - Future Operating Model

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 **Members will be aware that on 31 March 2014, Belfast City Council received a Letter of Offer from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board offering £18.6m towards the construction of new conference and exhibition facilities at the Belfast Waterfront Hall.**
- 1.2 **The Letter of Offer contains a number of conditions which must be fulfilled in order for the Council to secure payment of the funds by NITB. These conditions include the following:**

- Belfast City Council shall have implemented arrangements for the operation and management of the project going forward which are in substance and in form acceptable to NITB and shall have provided copies of the management contracts for the project to NITB and those contracts are acceptable to NITB.
- Belfast City Council will fully test a range of operating options for the project to ensure the operating model deployed gives the greatest return to the economy in line with the targets outlined within the approved business case. These options are to include (but not limited to):
 - i) The review and potential enhancement of the current status quo operating model
 - ii) Outsourcing the operation to an established private sector operator
 - iii) The creation of an arms length company/non profit distributing organisation wholly owned by Belfast City Council (NDPO/Mutual Company)

1.3 The objectives which the project is required to deliver are as follows:

- Provision of an integrated conference/convention centre by 2015
- A minimum of 2000sq metres exhibition space across one level
- Banqueting space for a minimum of 750 people
- Attract 50,000 annual conference delegates to the city by 2020
- To attract 35,000 (of the 50,000) out of state conference delegates by 2020

2 Key Issues

- 2.1** On 25 April 2014, the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee approved the procurement of consultants to undertake an options analysis for the future operation of the Waterfront Hall, as required by the conditions in NITB's Letter of Offer set out in paragraph 1.2 of this report.
- 2.2** Following a tender exercise, RSM McClure Watters was appointed to undertake the appraisal. Following agreement of the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 22 August 2014, a series of Party Briefings took place in October to make Members aware of the proposed options to be considered along with the assessment criteria to be used.

2.3 There was general consensus at Party Group Briefings that the following options be considered within the options analysis for the future management of the Waterfront Hall:

- a) Do nothing**
- b) An enhanced in-house management model**
- c) An arm's length company wholly owned by BCC**
- d) A Trust**
- e) A Mutual**
- f) A joint venture and;**
- g) A fully outsourced operation**

2.4 There was also broad agreement that the options should be assessed against the following criteria:

- Purpose - will the option be able to provide what is required from the venue? e.g. economic impact, surplus, prestige and publicity**
- Strategy - will the option be able to comply with BCC, venue and funder corporate and strategic objectives?**
- Expertise – would the option have or be able to obtain the necessary skills to deliver excellence?**
- Quality – could the option deliver to the required service standard?**
- Mutuality of operation – could the option deliver synergy between BCC, Visit Belfast and other economic operators?**
- Cost – how cost efficiently could the venue be run? E.g. economy of scale, transference of fixed cost to variable cost, increased revenue, reduced running costs, taxation etc.**
- Civic pride – how well does each option comply with the original strategic intentions of the Waterfront Hall and how will each option contribute to a positive perception of the city and the venue?**

2.5 On 22 August 2014, the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee also agreed to the appointment of a new Head of Sales and Marketing for the Waterfront Hall as it was recognised that the introduction of a Commercial Sales and Marketing Team was essential to achieving the objective of attracting 50,000 conference delegates to the Waterfront by 2020.

2.6 It is planned to commence the recruitment process for the Head of Sales and Marketing in December 2014. Given the importance of this post, it is proposed that the procedure which applies to the appointment of a Head of Service is used for this particular

appointment. It is proposed therefore that the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Development Committee or their representatives sit on the selection panel along with one further representative of the Development Committee from one other party.

- 2.7 In order to ensure access to the widest pool of high quality applicants, it is recommended that a Sales & Marketing recruitment specialist be used to assist in this critical appointment.

3. Resource Implications

- 3.1 It is proposed that the services of a recruitment specialist be used for the appointment of the Head of Sales and Marketing. The cost will not exceed £20,000 and will be met from existing resources.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

- 4.1 Employment of the Head of Sales and Marketing will comply with all fair employment and equality requirements.
- 4.2 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the development of the preferred model following a Council decision in 2015.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 Members are asked to agree:
- i. the options appraisal for the operation of the Waterfront Hall considers each of the options set out in paragraph 2.3 above;
 - ii. that the options be assessed against the criteria set out in paragraph 2.4 above;
 - iii. that the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Development Committee and a third member of the Committee from another party sit on the selection panel for the Head of Sales and Marketing post at the Waterfront Hall;
 - iv. to the engagement of a recruitment specialist for the above post.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Democratic Services and Governance

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

The Committee endorsed the following requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality:

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
St. Mary's University College Belfast	Global Studies Association Annual Conference 2016 30th June, 2016 Approximately 100 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the meeting will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and soft drinks Approximate cost £500
Adapt NI	Adapt Legacy Awards 16th January, 2015 Approximately 75 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	This event will highlight the ethos of better access to premises and promote the various services on offer to organisations. Hosting this event will highlight the socially inclusive nature of the City Hall and present it as a model of good practice for Civic Buildings striving to improve and reconcile accessibility with heritage and conservation requirements. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together', 'Better support for	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits Approximate cost £190

			people and communities' and 'Better services – listening and delivering'.	
Belfast Community Sports Development Network	<p>Sheer SKILL (Sporting Knowledge Igniting Lifelong Learning) Celebration</p> <p>24th March, 2015</p> <p>Approximately 100 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	<p>This event will aim to recognise the opportunity for greater learning through the value of sport and community engagement. Since its inception many of the young people who have graduated have gained full and part-time employment within the sports and youth work sector across the City.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better support for people and communities' and in addition would contribute to the Council's thematic area of Children and Young People.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits</p> <p>Approximate cost £250</p>
Chartered Institute of Personnel Development	<p>Chartered Institute of Personnel Development Northern Ireland Awards 2015</p> <p>14th May, 2015</p> <p>Approximately 250 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception	<p>This event will provide the opportunity to recognise and celebrate outstanding achievements in HR and the impact HR has on business success. Categories include the HR Professional of the Year award,</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>

			<p>the CIPD Chairman's Special Achievement award and the Outstanding HR Student of the Year.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better opportunities for success across the city'.</p>	
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Volunteer Services	<p>Belfast Trust Volunteer Awards</p> <p>2nd June, 2015</p> <p>Approximately 100 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall	<p>The Belfast Trust has approximately 300 volunteers who support existing services in a variety of roles.</p> <p>This event seeks to recognise the contribution made by the volunteers in supporting service delivery in both acute and community settings.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together', 'Better support for people and communities' and 'Better services – listening and delivering'.</p>	The use of the City Hall
Gerry Rogan Initiative Trust	<p>GRIT Achievement Awards</p> <p>8th June, 2016</p> <p>Approximately 400 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea, coffee and biscuits	<p>This event will celebrate the achievements of young people through the Grit Rey programme. Grit Rey aims to support, motivate and encourage young disadvantaged and</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 £1,000</p>

			<p>at risk people in making the right choices for their future.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together', 'Better opportunities for success across the City' and 'Better support for people and communities' and in addition would contribute to the Council's thematic area of Children and Young People.</p>	
<p>City of Belfast School of Music</p>	<p>50th Anniversary of City of Belfast School of Music 21st March, 2015 Approximately 500 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception</p>	<p>This event seeks to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the City of Belfast School of Music and to acknowledge its contribution to the general life and well-being of the city.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City leadership, strong, fair and together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
<p>Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure</p>	<p>DCAL – Outline of priorities and opportunities 18th December, 2014 Approximately 200</p>	<p>Use of the City Hall</p>	<p>This event aims to provide a platform for the Minister and staff of the Department to consider its work over the past</p>	<p>Use of the City Hall</p>

			<p>twelve months as well as focus on the priorities and opportunities for the next twelve months.</p> <p>Much of the event will showcase the vibrancy and ambition of Belfast, by specifically focusing on the legacy of the World Police and Fire Games in 2013; the major capital investment in three Belfast stadia - Casement Park, Ravenhill and Windsor Park; and the opportunities and challenges presented through the Creative Industries Innovation Fund.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better opportunities for success'.</p>	
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Finance/Value-for-Money

Minutes of Meeting of Audit Panel

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Audit Panel of 21st October.

Half Year Finance Report

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant Background Information

1.1 This report presents the financial performance of the Council for the period 1 April 2014 to 30 Sept 2014. As well as reporting the in-year financial performance of the Council, consideration of the Quarter 2 report by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee forms one of the key stages in the 2015/16 rate setting process agreed by Members in August 2014 as it provides the Committee the opportunity to consider the prioritisation and allocation of any forecast in year under spend to proposals for non recurring expenditure developed as part of the service convergence stage of the revenue estimates.

2.0 Key Issues

2.1 Current and Forecast financial Position 2014/15

The financial position for Quarter 2 is a net departmental under-spend of £1.16m (2.0%). The forecast year end departmental position is an under-spend of £1.42m (1.2%). The major reasons for the variance in the year end forecast, relate to reduced expenditure in corporate pension and invest to save budgets as well as additional income in Digital Services, and Building Control.

2.2 Capital Financing

The capital financing budget is £13.37m. This budget is forecast to break even and will be used to finance the capital programme and feasibility work to support the Investment Programme. A detailed Quarter 2 half year capital programme report will be presented to SP&R in December 2014.

2.3 Rate Income

The quarter 2 forecast by LPS is a positive rate settlement of £2.9m. The assumptions around this forecast will form part of the analysis of the 2015/16 EPP for the new Council.

2.4 Investment Programme

Committed expenditure approved by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for the 3 year Capital Programme stands at £30.10m, leaving £44.90m of schemes within the 3 year programme at the uncommitted or emerging project stage.

2.5 Committed expenditure on LIF projects currently stands at £4.75m, with 50 projects worth £4.06m having been through the Council's due diligence process. Actual payments of worth £1.047m have been made to date.

2.6 The amount of levered external funding for the Investment Programme which has been agreed in principal is £69.415m, with £50.290m of these funds confirmed through letters of offer.

2.7 Actual capital expenditure for the period was £4.85m, while non-recurring expenditure was £257k.

2.8 Other Financial Indicators

The percentage of average for debt under 90 days old decreased during the quarter to 53.7% which was below the target of 65%. This mainly related to one significant debt which has since been settled. The percentage of debt collected in 30 days improved to 56.4% against a target of 60%.

2.9 The average number of creditors paid within 28 days for quarter 2 was 84.5%, compared to a target of 85%.

3.0 Resource Implications

Committed Non Recurring Funding Available

3.1 Table 1 below shows the total forecast outturn which the Committee can use to finance one-off expenditure taking into consideration decisions already taken by the Committee to realign under spends at quarter 1.

Table 1
Forecast Outturn Available for Non Recurring Expenditure

Forecast Outturn 14/15	£4,307,000
<u>Less</u> Committed Expenditure	
Waterfront Mobilisation	-£700,000
Innovation Centre Mobilisation	-£130,000
IBF World Title Fight	-£50,000
Other Section 37 Initiatives	<u>-£12,500</u>
Total Available	£3,414,500

3.2 There are two key demands for the available finance:

1. Funding requests
2. Non-recurrent expenditure proposals.

Funding Requests

3.3 Funding requests by external organisations are normally considered by the Committee at the half year position in the context of the forecast outturn for the Council. The Council has

received two such requests for non-recurring funding from the Ulster Orchestra (£500k) and the City of Belfast Youth Orchestra (£25k) which are subject of separate reports on the Committee Agenda. In addition, the Development Committee has recommended to the Committee £13k funding for BCCM. Any in year allocation to these funding requests by the Committee will reduce the amount available for the non recurrent expenditure proposals outlined below.

Non-recurrent Expenditure Proposals

- 3.4 As part of the service convergence revenue estimates process, departments submitted proposals for non recurring expenditure arising from the boundary change aspect of local government reform and other corporate priorities. These proposals excluded non-recurring costs associated with transferring functions, as these will be subject to a separate phase of the estimates process. A summary of the non-recurrent expenditure proposal is included in Table 2 below.

Table 2
Departmental Non Recurrent Revenue Expenditure Proposals

Category	Amount
Asset Related	£2,896,585
Other Costs	£1,000,206
Total	£3,896,791

- 3.5 **Assets Revenue:** An analysis of the £2,896,585 of asset related costs has been included as Appendix 2. These comprise of costs associated with transferring assets from Castlereagh and Lisburn, leisure transformation mobilisation costs and one off repairs to existing leisure centres. This category also includes £140,000 of non recurring costs for Girdwood Creative Hub and £12,000 for new street signs.
- 3.6 **Other Costs:** The £1,000,206 of costs in the 'Other' category includes non asset related LGR costs such as ICT licences, branding and grant support.
- 3.7 In addition to the above, there is also the need to provide one-off funding for expenditure relating to:
- the transfer of functions from central government
 - accommodation and City Hall accommodation works
 - temporary staffing arrangements, for example, temporary staff employed to deliver Investment Programme projects.

- 3.8 Table 1 illustrates that there is currently only £3,414,500 of in year financing available which could be allocated to meet some of the proposed non recurring revenue expenditure of £3,896,791. It should be noted that if the Committee agree contributions to the funding requests from the Ulster Orchestra, City of Belfast Youth Orchestra and Belfast City Centre Management, then this will further reduce the level of financing available.
- 3.9 It is therefore recommended that, subject to the separate funding requests being considered at this Committee, no further in year re-allocations are considered at this stage, but that the non-committed element of the forecast year end under spend of £3,414,500 be earmarked for non recurring expenditure and that specific allocations of this amount be considered at a later stage as part of the rate setting process in order to avoid such non-recurring costs being added to the district rate in 2015/16.

4.0 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the quarter 2 financial report and agree that, subject to the separate funding requests being considered at this Committee, no further in year re-allocations are considered at this stage, but that the non-committed element of the forecast year end under spend of £3,414,500 be earmarked for non-recurring expenditure and that specific allocations of this amount be considered at a later stage as part of the rate setting process to avoid such non-recurring costs being added to the district rate in 2015/16.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Request for Funding - City of Belfast Youth Orchestra

The Committee was advised that a request for financial assistance had been received from the City of Belfast Youth Orchestra towards the cost of undertaking a tour of the United States, which would coincide with the Orchestra's 60th anniversary.

The Director of Finance and Resources explained that, under Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, the Council had a discretionary power to consider exceptional requests for financial assistance. A special expenditure budget (Grants and Subscriptions) which existed within the Finance and Resources Department made provision for such requests providing that the Council had the statutory authority to make such payments, provided that assistance was not available under the remit of another Committee. He pointed out that the request met the criteria agreed previously.

Accordingly, it was

Resolved – That expenditure of £5,000 in respect of the aforementioned request be approved under Section 37 of the Local Government Finance Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, it being the opinion of the Committee that the expenditure would be in the interest of, and would bring direct benefit to, the District and its inhabitants, with the Committee being satisfied that the direct benefits so accruing would be commensurate with the payment to be made.

Request for Funding - Belfast City Centre Management

The Committee was reminded that the Development Committee, at its meeting on 16th September, had agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it approve funding of £13,909 to Belfast City Centre Management to enable that body to meet the costs associated with an increase in staff salary costs. It was suggested that the request should be treated on a discretionary and one-off basis.

Resolved – That the Committee endorses the recommendation of the Development Committee and agrees to allocate £13,909, from within the Council's budgetary underspend for 2014/2015, to Belfast City Centre Management to enable it to meet the increase in its staff salary costs as outlined.

Revaluation - Non-Domestic Rate

The Director of Finance and Resources provided an update on the non-domestic revaluation exercise and advised the Committee that Land and Property Services had published a draft revaluation list. He added that Land and Property Services had provided detailed information to the Council on the impact of the revaluation of over 16,500 non-domestic properties, which was being assessed currently by staff within the Finance and Resources Department. He indicated that a full report in this regard would be considered by the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 28th November.

Noted.

Asset Management

Tenancy Agreement - Botanic Gate Lodge

The Committee was reminded that a number of Council properties, such as the Gate Lodge at the Botanic Gardens, were leased to permanent staff across the Council. Those agreements were subject to the tenant remaining as a Council employee and, in certain cases, assuming responsibilities for the opening and closing of gates, reporting antisocial behaviour and maintaining associated gardens.

The Chief Executive pointed out that the aforementioned Gate Lodge was occupied currently by a member of staff from the Parks and Leisure Services

Department. However, that employee would be transferring from the Council to Greenwich Leisure Limited as part of the Leisure Transformation Programme. Such a move would, therefore, impact directly upon the tenancy agreement.

Accordingly, the Committee was informed that it was proposed that the Council would exercise its discretion with a view to drafting a new tenancy agreement to accommodate the tenant's continued occupation of the property. Such an agreement would be dependent upon an enhanced caretaking arrangement and the tenant remaining in the employment of any strategic operating partner responsible for the delivery of the Council's leisure services. She therefore sought the Committee's authority to amend the tenancy agreement as outlined.

The Committee adopted the recommendation, subject to the drawing up of an appropriate legal agreement.

Lord Mayor's Vehicle

The Committee considered an update report in relation to the proposed replacement of the Lord Mayor's official vehicle which outlined in detail a number of options which might be explored further by the Council in this regard.

The Committee authorised officers to assess further the cost-effectiveness of the Council entering into an agreement for the acquisition of a replacement vehicle on either a sponsored or a part-subsidised basis. It was noted that the Committee would, at the end of that process, evaluate the full range of options which were available for the replacement of the Lord Mayor's vehicle.

Future Use and Management of the City Hall

The Committee deferred consideration of a report which provided an overview of the Council's future options for the use and management of the City Hall. It was noted that a further report would be submitted for the Committee's consideration which would outline in detail the full range of options available to the Council should it wish to promote and enhance the commercial use of the City Hall.

City Hall Grounds - Navratri Hindu Festival

The Committee was advised that a request to host a cultural event in the grounds of the City Hall on 24th October, 2015, had been received from ArtsEkta. The Director of Property and Projects explained that the festival, known as Navratri, was the principal cultural festival as celebrated by the Indian community and, if permitted, would involve approximately 800 participants.

The Director reviewed the event programme and indicated that it would attract approximately 14,000 visitors during the day. He indicated that a detailed event management plan had been submitted to the Council, together with a risk assessment and health and safety plan, and that full consultations would be undertaken with the organisers. Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee accede to the request to host the cultural event in the grounds on 24th October, 2015. In addition, he requested

that the organisers be permitted the use of a number of rooms within the City Hall during the event. It was noted that parts of the grounds would, to enable the set up and dismantling of the stages, be out of limits to the general public prior to and after the event.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Organisational Development

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

This purpose of this report is to update Members on work to ensure the organisation is fit for purpose for its new roles and responsibilities. In particular, the report provides an update on the processes and timeframes for the previously agreed Peer Review and Decision Making and Accountability processes and highlights some immediate organisational development considerations.

2 Key Issues

**2.1 Approach to organisation development and design
Members previously agreed that the Local Government Association (LGA) would help with two key strands of our work to redesign the organisation (the corporate peer challenge process and an analysis of decision making and accountability (DMA)) to ensure it has the capacity to deliver Members' priorities and ambitions.**

An update on each of these processes is set out below.

**2.2 Corporate Peer Challenge
The LGA corporate peer challenge involves a team of external peers who will draw on their experience of local government to provide observations and feedback on our plans and proposals for the future. The review will consider core components and areas that are fundamental to councils' future performance and improvement and exploring them will help provide an indication about the organisation's ability and capacity to deliver on its future plans, proposals and ambitions.**

**2.3 Peer team make-up and roles
The peer team will comprise two elected members, (still to be confirmed) and the following senior local government officers:**

Nicola Yates OBE – City Director, Bristol City Council: Ms Yates was appointed City Director in May 2013 and was previously Chief Executive at Hull City Council between 2009-2012. Prior to that she held the roles of Deputy Chief Executive (2008-09) at Hull and Chief Executive of North Shropshire Council (2005-08). Ms Yates’ professional background is within the housing sector and she has contributed both operationally and academically to the landscape of social housing today.

Sarah Reed – Assistant Chief Executive, Sunderland City Council: Ms Reed’s background is in organisation development and management services. She has been Assistant Chief Executive since 2010, and prior to that she was Head of Strategy, Policy and Performance Improvement. In these roles Ms Reed has led on developing the new operating model for the council and helped to make this happen by re-designing the focus of the council as a community leadership council.

2.4 Neil Hanratty - Director for Economic Development, City of Cardiff Council: Mr Hanratty has worked in the regeneration and inward investment fields for over 20 years, mainly in local government and with public private partnerships throughout the UK. He is currently responsible for Economic Development, Regeneration, Major Projects and Property at City of Cardiff. He has a strong interest in sustainable urban development and economic growth, particularly the opportunities to develop smart cities to attract sustainable inward investment.

2.5 Dates of the peer challenge
The peer challenge team will be onsite at Belfast City Council on 27,28,29,30 January 2015.

2.6 Members’ briefing
Political and stakeholder buy-in is crucial to a successful peer challenge and appropriate communications to ensure the organisation and relevant external stakeholders are aware of the peer challenge, why we are undertaking it and what we hope to get out of the process will take place over the next few months.

As the starting point for this process the LGA will brief elected members at the strategic planning workshop on 26th November 2014.

2.7 DMA (Decision Making Accountability)

The DMA process will help Members to:

- establish the number of layers of management an organisation needs to achieve its purpose effectively
- identify decision rights that managers at different levels require to be empowered
- create an effective organisation and efficient management structure.

2.8 The LGA will review the Chief Executive's Department and the Finance and Resources Department first and it is hoped to have this completed by the end of December 2014 and the whole organisation completed by April 2015 (with a view to having best practice, evidence-based options for a new structure at the time).

2.9 Other issues/immediate actions relating to organisation development and design
While the organisation wide restructuring programme is progressing, work is continuing on previously agreed organisation development and design priorities including:

2.10 Planning

The executive search exercise for Director of Planning and Place will start this month with the recruitment advertisement being placed in the Guardian, the Municipal Journal, the Planning Magazine with premium online listings and the local papers on 20 November 2014. Following preliminary interviews and a full-day assessment centre, the final interviews are scheduled for Thursday 19 February 2015.

A far reaching capacity building programme is in place for shadow planning committee members and a programme for non shadow planning committee Members will be delivered from January 2015. Study trips to Bristol and Cardiff are also being planned for Shadow Planning Committee members to take place by February 2015.

Parks and Leisure

Given the transfer of the Leisure function in January 2015 Members agreed in principle to the deletion of the Director of Parks and Leisure post from the organisation structure. The Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources committee will receive specific proposals this month on the release of the Director of Parks and Leisure by reason of redundancy.

Voluntary Redundancy

Members will be aware that voluntary redundancy exercises have been used in the past to achieve efficiencies and aid organisational restructuring (most recently within Leisure Services to aid the Leisure transformation programme).

The Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources committee will be asked to consider the instigation of an expression of interest (in voluntary redundancy) exercise across the organisation (with the exception of front-line staff). While there is no indication at this stage whether or not there is a need to reduce or substantially alter posts such an exercise may assist with this should it be necessary to do so.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 Costs for the work outlined are included as part of the funding allocation for capacity building.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

- 4.1 All processes outlined will be taken forward within the context of the Council's equality and good relations frameworks.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 The Committee is requested to note on-going work and note in particular the dates for the LGA briefing – 26th November 2014 and the Peer Review Process – 27, 28, 29, 30 January 2015.”

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Human Resources

Standing Order 55 - Employment of Relatives

It was reported that, in accordance with Standing Order 55 and the authority delegated to him, the Director of Finance and Resources had authorised the appointment of members of staff who were related to existing officers of the Council.

Noted.

Good Relations and Equality

Good Relations Partnership

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the Good Relations Partnership of 10th November.

Building Control

Naming of Street

The Committee approved the use of 'Bell's Theorem Crescent' for a street situated off the Queen's Road within the Titanic Quarter.

Chairman