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BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

SUMMONS TO ATTEND THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

TO: THE LORD MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS OF THE COUNCIL

Notice is hereby given that the monthly meeting of the Council will be held in the City Hall on **Tuesday, 5th January, 2016** at 6.00 pm., for the transaction of the following:

1. Summons
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the Special Council of 1st December (Pages 1 - 2)
5. Minutes of the Monthly Council of 1st December (Pages 3 - 8)
6. Minutes of the Special Council of 16th December (Pages 9 - 12)
7. Official Announcements
8. Minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 18th December (Pages 13 - 64)
 - a) To confirm amendments to the Standing Orders re: establishment of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Shareholders' Committee (Pages 65 - 70)
9. Minutes of the People and Communities Committee of 8th December (Pages 71 - 94)
10. Minutes of the Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 3rd December and Monthly Committee of 9th December (Pages 95 - 130)
11. Minutes of the Licensing Committee of 16th December (Pages 131 - 146)
12. Minutes of the Planning Committee of 15th December and Adjourned Planning Committee of 17th December (Pages 147 - 162)
13. Notice of Motion - Climate Change (Councillor Bradshaw to move)

“This Council recognises that States need to act in concert to avoid calamitous, irreversible, and world-changing rises in temperature. The Council recognises also that COP21 is the best, if still imperfect, chance to address these matters and encourages the citizens of Belfast, and beyond, to reflect on the impact our activity has on our planet.

The Council has already taken a lead in tackling climate change, including commitment and actions to reduce CO2 emissions, energy efficiencies, and reduction of energy consumption, but every town and city must play a part in its regional role to tackle climate change.

The Council believes that the passing of a Climate Change Bill would benefit Northern Ireland as a whole, and accordingly the Council agrees to write to the Environment Minister and request that he brings forward a Climate Change Bill.”

14. Notice of Motion - Organ Donation (Councillor Mullan to move)

“In March, 2013 the former Belfast City Council unanimously supported a motion calling for the then Minister for Health to introduce an opt-out organ donation scheme in order to increase the number of organ donors.

This Council welcomes the movement of the Human Transplantation Bill through the Assembly, which is designed save lives by changing the system of consent for transplantation by making it "the societal norm". This new ‘soft opt-out’ system with appropriate family safeguards; a requirement for express consent in certain cases and the ability for people to nominate advocates to affirm their wishes upon death; aims to increase the number of organ donors here.

The Council notes with concern the continuing shortage of organ donors, and agrees to write again to the Minister of Health urging him to support such a scheme, which would help save the lives of the many seriously ill people currently on long waiting lists and who are dependent on the gift of organ donation.”

15. Notice of Motion - School Buses (Councillor Boyle to move)

“This Council agrees to send a letter to the Minister requesting the Minister to bring in legislation to prevent vehicles from overtaking school buses while the bus is stationary and children are departing from it.”

The Members of Belfast City Council are hereby summoned to attend.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Suzanne Wylie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and 'W'.

Chief Executive

Council

SPECIAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Tuesday, 1st December, 2015
at 6.00 p.m., pursuant to Notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor Carson) (Chairperson); the Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Spence); the High Sheriff (Alderman McKee); Aldermen Browne, Convery, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, R. Patterson, Rodgers and Stalford; and Councillors Armitage, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Boyle, Bradshaw, R. Brown, Campbell, Carroll, Clarke, Copeland, Corr, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dudgeon, Garrett, Graham, E. Groves, Haire, Hargey, Heading, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Jones, Kennedy, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McAllister, McCabe, McConville, McDonough-Brown, McVeigh, Mullan, Newton, Ó Donnghaile, O'Hara, O'Neill, Sandford and Walsh.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Bunting and Howard.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the special meeting which had been called in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Transitional, Incidental, Consequential and Supplemental Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) Order 2015, to consider a recommendation of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 20th November to elect and admit the Nursing Service in Belfast as a Freeman of the City of Belfast.

Freedom of the City

Moved by Councillor McVeigh,
Seconded by Councillor Long and

Resolved - This Council wishes to honour the contribution which our nurses have made to the lives of the people of Belfast. Over many decades, our nurses have served the citizens of Belfast without fear or favour. During the most difficult days of the Troubles, our nurses cared for every citizen regardless of circumstances, religious or political belief.

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Tuesday, 1st December, 2015**

Consequently, this Council wishes to award the Freedom of the City to the nurses of Belfast and to the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) on their behalf. It is our hope that, working with the RCN, a single day in the year will be identified when the citizens of Belfast and this Council will thank our hard-working nurses for the care they provide all-year round.

We hope that this 'Nurses Day' will become a popular opportunity for every citizen to express their thanks to these exceptional individuals, who often go well above and beyond what they are paid to do. On behalf of every single citizen, we want to thank each of you, our nurses, for the exceptional care and attention you provide every single day of the year.”

Lord Mayor
Chairperson

Council

MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Tuesday, 1st December, 2015
at 6.35 p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Councillor Carson) (Chairperson); the Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Spence); the High Sheriff (Alderman McKee); Aldermen Browne, Convery, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, R. Patterson, Rodgers and Stalford; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Boyle, Bradshaw, R. Brown, Campbell, Carroll, Clarke, Copeland, Corr, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dudgeon, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Haire, Hargey, Heading, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Jones, Kennedy, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McDonough-Brown, McVeigh, Mullan, Newton, Ó Donnghaile, O'Neill, O'Hara, Sandford and Walsh.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Bunting and Howard.

Minutes of the Council

Moved by the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor,
Seconded by the Alderman Stalford and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 2nd November be approved and adopted.

Disclosure of Family Relationship

The Chief Executive informed the Council that, in accordance with Section 30 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972, she had been advised by the Lord Mayor that Mr Christopher McCall, a nephew of his partner, had been offered an appointment as a part-time temporary cleaner within the Property and Projects Department.

Noted.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 1st December, 2015**

Changes of Membership

The Council was advised that notification had been received from the Democratic Unionist Party indicating that it wished Alderman Stalford to replace Alderman R. Patterson on the South Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership and on the Lagan Valley Regional Park Advisory Committee.

The Council approved the changes.

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor Boyle,
Seconded by Councillor Kennedy,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic and Policy and Resources Committee of 20th November be approved and adopted.

NILGA – Development Programme for Local Government

Moved by Councillor Dudgeon,
Seconded by Councillor Jones and

Resolved - That the decision of the Committee of 20th November under the above-mentioned heading be amended to provide that the Council calls for an early review by the Northern Ireland Assembly of the decision by the DSD not to transfer regeneration powers in April 2016; requests that Council staff do their utmost to work around that decision for the City's benefit; and agrees that a request be made to the Assembly that it agrees that, in the interim period, the City be afforded 'Agency Status'.

Audio Recording of Planning Committee Meetings

Moved by Councillor McAllister,
Seconded by Councillor Long,

That the decision of the Committee of 20th November under the heading 'Audio Recording of Planning Committee Meetings' be rejected and accordingly the Council agrees to delete Section One of the Operating Protocol for the Recording of Committee Meetings, which states that "*audio recording of Committee meetings would apply only to those held in the Lavery Room of the City Hall*" and, accordingly, all future Planning Committee meetings be recorded.

By a recorded vote, twenty-eight Members voted for the amendment and twenty-seven against and it was declared carried.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 1st December, 2015**

<u>For 28</u>	<u>Against 27</u>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Carson); Councillors Armitage, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Bradshaw, R. Brown, Campbell, Carroll, Clarke, Corr, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Jones, Long, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McDonough-Brown, McVeigh, Ó Donnghaile, O' Hara, O'Neill and Walsh.	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Spence); the High Sheriff (Alderman McKee); Aldermen D. Browne, Convery, Kingston, McCoubrey, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, R. Patterson, Rodgers and Stalford; Councillors Boyle, Copeland, Corr Johnston, Craig, Dudgeon, Graham, Haire, Heading, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kennedy, Kyle, Mullan, Newton and Sandford.

Adoption of Minutes

Subject to the foregoing amendments, the minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 20th November were approved and adopted.

Waterfront Hall – Steps Towards Implementation

Arising from discussion on the above-mentioned minute, the Council agreed that a report be submitted to the Committee which would examine the feasibility of a member of staff from the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall being appointed to serve on the Board of Directors.

Advertising Opportunities on Council Land and Property

Arising from discussion in the above-mentioned matter, specifically in respect of the feasibility of the Council operating 'managed poster sites' on some of its properties, it was agreed that a number of reports which had been considered by the Health and Environmental Services Committee in 2013 would be circulated to Members for information.

People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Corr Johnston,
Seconded by Councillor R. Brown and

Resolved - That the Minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 10th November be approved and adopted.

**Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation
(Belfast) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015**

Moved by Councillor Corr Johnston,
Seconded by Alderman Rodgers and

Resolved - That the Council agrees to pass a Resolution to make
The Belfast City Council Traffic Regulation (Belfast) Order (Northern

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 1st December, 2015**

Ireland) 2015, as set out within the minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 10th November, and to be effective from 1st December, 2015.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor Hargey,
Seconded by Councillor Ó Donnghaile and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 11th November be approved and adopted.

Licensing Committee

Moved by Councillor Hussey,
Seconded by Councillor Dudgeon and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 12th November, omitting matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Garrett,
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 17th and 19th November, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Notices of Motion

Support for the Homeless

Moved by Councillor Ó Donnghaile,
Seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown,

"This Council will dedicate itself to tackle the plight of the homeless this winter by scoping out available Council premises that may be made available for evening and overnight accommodation for our city's rough sleepers. We will engage all relevant Council departments on this matter, including the Lord Mayor's Office, and act as convener to ensure all relevant Government Departments with legal responsibilities are round the table as a matter of urgency to make the necessary physical and financial resources ready. We will also work with charities, the community/voluntary sectors and private companies to ensure the proper human resources and management is in place for this purpose."

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 1st December, 2015**

The Lord Mayor confirmed that, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion would be referred without discussion to the People and Communities Committee.

Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland Football Teams

Moved by Councillor Boyle,
Seconded by Councillor Ó Donnghaile,

“This Council wishes to acknowledge the success of both football teams from this island and wishes them every success in the European Championships in France next year. This unique situation, where both teams have achieved international success, has brought happiness to their supporters throughout the whole of Ireland, regardless of football affiliation or geography. To mark this unique sporting occasion, in what has been a period of wonderful sporting achievements for local sport, the Council agrees to host a joint civic dinner for both teams prior to them heading to France next June.”

The Lord Mayor confirmed that, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the Motion would be referred without discussion to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Deposits for Private Tenancies

Moved by Councillor Mullan,
Seconded by Alderman Convery,

“This Council notes that the Department for Social Development introduced legislation from 1st April 2013 in relation to deposits paid in connection with Private Tenancies. From that date, landlords must protect deposits in a Tenancy Deposit Scheme within 14 days of receipt and make sure it remains protected in an approved scheme for the length of a tenancy.

During the course of an investigation, a Council solicitor determined that the wording of the legislation does not make the breach of the legislation a continuing offence. This means that a case must be brought in front of the courts within six months of the offence occurring. Unfortunately, many tenants do not discover that their landlord didn't secure their deposit until they are leaving the property, which would normally be 12 months after paying the deposit. This effectively means that the only redress for tenants is through the civil courts.

Accordingly, the Council agrees to write to the Minister for Social Development urging that this flaw in the legislation is redressed as a matter of urgency and that the scheme is brought into line with England, Scotland and Wales in that there is 30 days from the receipt of the deposit for landlords to comply.”

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 1st December, 2015**

The Lord Mayor confirmed that, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the Motion would be referred without discussion to the People and Communities Committee.

**Northern Ireland Local Government Officers’
Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) – Investments**

Moved by Councillor R. Brown,
Seconded by Councillor Garrett,

“This Council notes the warning from the Bank of England’s Prudential Regulation Authority of a serious financial risk associated with investments in fossil fuels; recognises that, in order to prevent dangerous global warming over two degrees centigrade, three-quarters of fossil fuel reserves must remain in the ground; believes that by investing in fossil fuels NILGOSC is therefore acting contrary to promoting the success of the company for the benefit of its members and employers and calls on NILGOSC to divest from fossil fuels.”

The Lord Mayor confirmed that, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion would be referred without discussion to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson

Council

SPECIAL MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Wednesday, 16th December, 2015
at 6.30 p.m., pursuant to Notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor
(Councillor Carson) (Chairperson);
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Spence);
Aldermen Convery, Kingston, McGimpsey,
L. Patterson, R. Patterson, Rodgers and Stalford;
Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Austin, Beattie,
Bell, Boyle, Bradshaw, R. Brown, Bunting, Campbell,
Carroll, Clarke, Copeland, Craig, Dudgeon, Garrett,
Graham, Groves, Haire, Hargey, Howard, Hussey,
Hutchinson, Johnston, Jones, Kyle, Long, Lyons,
Magee, Magennis, Mallon, McAllister, McAteer,
McCabe, McConville, McVeigh, Mullan, Ó Donnghaile,
O'Hara, Sandford and Walsh.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of the High Sheriff (Alderman McKee), Aldermen Browne and McCoubrey, together with Councillors Corr, Corr Johnston, Heading, Kennedy, McDonough-Brown, Newton and O' Neill.

Military Action in Syria

The Council met to consider the following motion, which was moved by Councillor McVeigh and seconded by Councillor Magee:

“This Council, on behalf of the concerned citizens of Belfast, wishes to express its opposition to the recent decision of the British Government to embark upon an aerial bombing campaign in Syria. This campaign will not make Belfast, Ireland or Britain safer; in fact it may well make the possibility of attack more likely. However, this bombing campaign will most certainly result in the deaths of very many innocent Syrian civilians.

A much more effective strategy would be to have a determined international effort to confront and end the collaboration of states such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey with Dáesh, cutting off the flow of personnel, finance and arms to them. We the civic leaders of Belfast are opposed to this war and wish to see all governments pursue a vigorous and non-partisan peace process within Syria.”

At the request of Councillor Lyons, Councillor McVeigh agreed that his motion be replaced with the following wording:

**Special Council Meeting of Council,
Wednesday, 16th December, 2015**

“This Council affirms its support for the innocent civilian population in Syria, or fleeing it, as they suffer murderous violence and rights abuses by the Assad regime and murder, torture, rape and acts of destruction by Da’esh and its affiliates; opposes the UK government’s decision to undertake air strikes in Syria, worried for civilian life, sceptical of the claimed comprehensive strategy and apprehensive about various military powers becoming mired in civil war with all its complicated consequences; calls for intensive international humanitarian efforts to support and safeguard the people of Syria including those who have fled for refuge; encourages all those involved in the Vienna process to expedite the efforts for peace and a rights-based transition in Syria; and calls for an end to collaboration in terms of money, personnel and arms from Gulf States and elsewhere with Dáesh and its affiliates.”

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Hussey,
Seconded by Alderman Kingston,

“This Council is disgusted by the acts of murder, torture and destruction which have been committed by Dáesh and its affiliates. This Council supports the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2249 (2015), which provides, *inter alia*, that The Security Council: ‘*[Reaffirms] that terrorism in all forms and manifestations constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivations, whenever and by whomsoever committed*’. This Council calls upon Member States that have the capacity to do so to take all necessary measures on the territory under the control of ISIL also known as Dáesh, in Syria and Iraq, to redouble and coordinate their efforts to prevent and suppress terrorist acts and to eradicate the safe haven they have established over significant parts of Iraq and Syria.”

On a recorded vote, 19 Members voted for the amendment and 28 against, with two no votes, and it was declared lost.

<u>For 19</u>	<u>Against 28</u>	<u>No Vote 2</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Spence); Aldermen Kingston, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, R. Patterson Rodgers and Stalford; Councillors Bunting, Copeland, Craig, Dudgeon, Graham, Haire, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle and Sandford.	The Lord Mayor (Councillor Carson); Alderman Convery, Councillors Attwood, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Boyle, Bradshaw, R. Brown, Campbell, Carroll, Clarke, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, Mallon, McAllister, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McVeigh, Mullan, Ó Donnghaile, O’ Hara and Walsh.	Councillors Armitage and Long.

**Special Council Meeting of Council,
Wednesday, 16th December, 2015**

The motion in the name of Councillor McVeigh and seconded by Councillor Magee (as amended by Councillor Lyons) was thereupon put to the meeting.

By a recorded vote, 30 Members voted for the amended motion and 19 against and it was declared carried.

<u>For 30</u>	<u>Against 19</u>
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Carson); Alderman Convery; Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Boyle, Bradshaw, R. Brown, Campbell, Carroll, Clarke, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, Mallon, McAllister, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McVeigh, Mullan, Ó Donnghaile, O' Hara and Walsh.	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Spence); Aldermen Kingston, McGimpsey, L. Patterson, R. Patterson Rodgers and Stalford. Councillors Bunting, Copeland, Craig, Dudgeon, Graham, Haire, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Kyle and Sandford.

Lord Mayor
Chairman

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Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 18th December, 2015

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Boyle (Chairperson);
Aldermen Convery, Kingston,
Rodgers and Stalford;
Councillors Clarke, S.Corr, Graham, Haire, Hargey,
Hutchinson, Jones, Kennedy, Long, McAllister, McCabe,
McVeigh, Ó Donnghaile and Walsh.

Also Attended Councillor R. Brown.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mrs. J. Minne, Director of Organisational Development;
Mr. J. Walsh, Town Solicitor;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apology

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Alderman Browne.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 20th November were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st December, subject to;

- (1) The amendment of the decision under the heading "NILGA – Development Programme for Local Government" to provide that the Council calls for an early review by the Northern Ireland Assembly of the decision by the DSD not to transfer regeneration powers in April 2016; requests that Council staff do their utmost to work around that decision for the City's benefit; and agrees that a request be made to the Assembly that it agrees that, in the interim period, the City be afforded "Agency Status"; and
- (2) The rejection of the decision under the heading "Audio Recording of Planning Committee Meetings" and accordingly the Council agreed to delete Section One of the Operating Protocol for the Recording of Committee Meetings, which stated that "audio recording of Committee meetings would apply only to those held in the Lavery Room of the City Hall" and, accordingly, all future Planning Committee meetings be recorded.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th December, 2015**

Schedule of Meetings 2016

The Committee approved the following schedule of meetings for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee during 2016, commencing at 9.30 a.m:

Friday, 8th January
Friday, 22nd January
Friday, 19th February
Friday, 18th March
Friday, 22nd April
Friday, 20th May
Friday, 24th June
No meeting in July Summer recess
Friday, 19th August
Friday, 23rd September
Friday, 21st October
Friday, 18th November
Friday, 16th December

Restricted Items

The information contained in the following report is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2016/17

The Director of Finance and Resources submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which presented an overview of the Council's revenue budget for 2016/17; the cash limits for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for 2016/17 and which sought agreement to refer the recommended revenue budgets and cash limits of the People and Communities Committee, City and Growth Regeneration Committee and the Planning Committee to the respective meetings of each committee in January 2016; and outlined the next steps in the rates setting process leading to the setting of the district rate by the Council at its meeting in February 2016.

The Committee agreed to:

1. A cash limit for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for 2016/17 of £42,534,608.
2. A capital finance budget for 2016/17 of £18,090,901
3. A cash limit of £75,681,091 to be presented to the People and Communities Committee for consideration at its January meeting.
4. A cash limit of £15,886,293 to be presented to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for consideration at its January meeting.
5. A cash limit of £1,673,308 to be presented to the Planning Committee for consideration at its January meeting.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th December, 2015**

6. Consider a report on the next strand of the Council's efficiency programme and associated targets at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meeting in January.
7. Hold further party group briefings on the district rate and the efficiency programme in January, prior to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meeting on 22nd January 2016.

Matters Referred back from Council/Notices of Motion

Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland Football Teams

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st December, had referred the undernoted Notice of Motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Boyle and seconded by Councillor Ó Donnghaile, to the Committee for consideration in accordance with Standing Orders:

“This Council wishes to acknowledge the success of both football teams from this island and wishes them every success in the European Championships in France next year. This unique situation, where both teams have achieved international success, has brought happiness to their supporters throughout the whole of Ireland, regardless of football affiliation or geography. To mark this unique sporting occasion, in what has been a period of wonderful sporting achievements for local sport, the Council agrees to host a joint civic dinner for both teams prior to them heading to France next June.”

After discussion, it was

Moved by Alderman Kingston,
Seconded by Alderman Stalford,

That this Council:

- Welcomes the attendance of the Northern Ireland Team, manager and coaches and IFA management at the civic reception held at the City Hall on 9th November in celebration of Northern Ireland's qualification for the Euro Championship tournament in France next year;
- And also welcomes the qualification of three other national teams from the British Isles – England, Wales and the Republic of Ireland – and agrees that the Lord Mayor should write to all four national football associations expressing our congratulations and best wishes to them for the Euro 2016 finals.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th December, 2015**

Amendment

Moved by Councillor McAllister,
Seconded by Councillor Long.

That the Committee agrees to adopt the Notice of Motion standing in the name of Councillor Boyle and seconded by Councillor Ó Donnghaile, subject to the substitution of the words 'civic dinner', with the word 'reception' in the final sentence.

On a vote by show of hands twelve Members voted for the amendment and seven against and it was declared carried.

The amendment was put to the Committee as the substantive motion, with twelve Members voting for and seven against and it was declared carried.

**Northern Ireland Local Government Officers'
Superannuation Committee**

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the above matter to enable correspondence to be received from NILGOSC.

Council Resolution re: Cuts to Higher Education

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 2nd November, had received a deputation from Unite the Union outlining its concerns in relation to budgetary cuts at Queen's University and the Ulster University. The deputation had highlighted that those cuts would reduce the number of student places in Belfast and impact upon the range of courses available. The Council had duly passed the following resolution:

"Resolved – that the Council, aware of the positive impact which students play in the City, expresses its concern at the decisions by the Queens's University of Belfast and the Ulster University to cut student numbers and close certain departments and agrees to write to both universities requesting that they review those decisions."

The Committee was advised that correspondence had been forwarded to both universities and a joint response, on behalf of the Vice-Chancellors (Professor Peter Johnston of Queen's and Professor Nixon of Ulster University), had been received on 8th December.

The joint response stated that the budgetary cuts had been "imposed on the universities by the Northern Ireland Executive". In essence, the universities had suffered a 28% cut in the funding over the past four years, which had resulted in a reduction in staff numbers and 500 student places. One of the main impacts of the funding cuts was that local students would be forced to study in other parts of the UK, a figure that was estimated to rise to 40%. The universities are acutely aware of the effect that that would have on the local economy and the ability of Belfast to retain a "highly-skilled, motivated workforce".

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 18th December, 2015**

Both Vice-Chancellors had expressed concern that Northern Ireland was the only part of the UK “actively disinvesting in Higher Education”, and shared the Council’s concerns as set out in the resolution. The final paragraph of the response indicated that the universities would be “delighted” to work with the Council to lobby the Executive for a “sustainable funding model” for the Higher Education sector. To that end, both Vice-Chancellors had expressed a desire to engage with the Council to explore the issue further.

The Committee noted receipt of the correspondence.

Belfast Agenda

Super-connected Belfast Voucher Scheme Update

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 This report provides an update on the close down of the Belfast Connection Voucher Scheme by The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). It also outlines a recent proposal from the Department of Rural Development (DARD) to provide additional funding to businesses for rural broadband connections.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report, and approve the proposal for the Belfast Voucher Team to administer DARD funds for those rural applications that did not receive vouchers due to the speed of closedown of the Belfast Connection Voucher Scheme. This will be operated at no cost to the council.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Belfast Connection Voucher Scheme

The Belfast Connection Voucher Scheme (BCVS) has allowed small businesses and social enterprises within the new Belfast City Council boundary area to apply for grants of up to £3,000, to obtain high-speed broadband connections.

3.2 The first phase of the voucher scheme was launched in December 2013 and was closed on the 31st March 2015. During this phase DCMS set Belfast a target of achieving 690 vouchers. This target was based on the number of businesses located in the Belfast area and on projected demand. The Belfast Voucher scheme easily surpassed their

target distributing 837 vouchers by 31st March 2015 to businesses and charities across all parts of the city.

- 3.3 On 3rd December 2014, as part of the Autumn Statement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a decision was taken to extend the voucher scheme until March 2016 (subject to available funding). The government allocated up to £40 million to extend the scheme and further widened the scheme to an extra 28 cities. Vouchers were made available on a first come, first served basis.
- 3.4 Members will also recall that as part of this extension, Belfast expanded administration of the Voucher scheme on behalf of all councils regionally. Since March, the scheme has proved to be hugely popular and we have more than doubled the number of vouchers issued.
- 3.5 The scheme closed on 12th October when the £40 million fund was fully allocated.
- 3.6 An update of the current project status is outlined in the table below.

Connection Vouchers Scheme	
Vouchers Issued	2000
Vouchers value	£3.8 million
Unsuccessful applications	900

- 3.7 It should be noted that the Voucher Team has repeatedly contacted businesses in an attempt to reduce the number of incomplete applications.

DARD Proposal

- 3.8 DARD operate a scheme called 'Tackling Poverty and Rural Isolation', and have funding available within this scheme to get rural businesses connected to high speed broadband.
- 3.9 DARD are aware that a significant number of rural businesses across NI just missed out on vouchers due to the speed with which the Voucher scheme closed down.
- 3.10 DARD are proposing to cover the cost of those unsuccessful rural applications that were received but could not be fulfilled before the Voucher fund ran out.

- 3.11 DARD has approached BCC to ask if we can use existing processes to distribute funds on their behalf for those unfulfilled rural applications.
- 3.12 For state aid purposes, DARD wish to retain all of the same application criteria used for the original Voucher scheme – with the added condition that businesses must be construed as ‘rural’.
- 3.13 Belfast City Council would then just issue a voucher in the normal way.
- 3.14 It is anticipated that the DARD fund will be for a fixed amount and final approval for each application will be given by DARD. No Belfast-based businesses will be eligible under this scheme.

4.0 Financial & Resource Implications

- 4.1 The Voucher Team will continue to support those businesses who have received vouchers under the Belfast Voucher Scheme through to March 2016.
- 4.2 If agreed Belfast City Council will operate the DARD proposal on a ‘cost-neutral’ basis with DARD covering all costs needed to administer their funding. Costs will be minimal as the applications have already been received and the procedures and controls required to process these claims are already in place.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

- 4.3 None”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Transfer of DSD Regeneration Powers – Contingency Arrangements

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline possible legislative vehicles which would enable the Council to undertake regeneration powers, including Comprehensive Development schemes and Compulsory Purchase Orders, now that such powers are not to transfer to the Council in April 2016.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- note the contents of the report and:
- agree that this forms the basis of the briefing paper to be prepared for the meeting with the Social Development Minister, Mervyn Storey scheduled for 16 December 2015.

3.0 Main Report

3.1 The decision of the Social Development Minister to indefinitely delay the transfer of regeneration powers to local government is disappointing. A huge amount of money has been spent on reducing the number of councils and transferring some functions like planning back out of central government. The aim was to give council sufficient powers and responsibilities so they could deliver local priorities including regeneration.

3.2 This decision brings with it major risks for the Council in terms of impacting upon our ability to deliver the ambitious plans for regenerating Belfast City Centre and the surrounding neighbourhoods; which will grow our economy, create jobs and prosperity and improve quality of life for our citizens. Not having important regeneration levers such as comprehensive development and compulsory purchase powers will constrain the ability of the Council to unlock and progress major investment and development plans through, for example, releasing underused or derelict land and buildings.

3.3 The non transfer will constrain the ability of the council to:

- Create the conditions and opportunities to invest in Belfast, supporting economic growth & prosperity
- Provide the required level of confidence to investors considering developments in Belfast – investors want a one stop shop approach
- Ensure a targeted and holistic approach is taken to addressing blighted areas and development sites across the city including the city centre which is the regional gateway
- Unlock the development potential of major flagship schemes in the city centre
- Ensure public spaces are managed and improved in a coherent way

- Ensure greater alignment of physical regeneration with the emerging local development plan
- 3.4 The stated intention of the NI Executive and central government was to transfer these powers along with the other land use planning powers to local government to provide councils with greater scope to effect improvement and regeneration in their local areas.
- 3.5 Belfast is identified as the regional driver for the NI economy and the Council is now charged with bringing forward local development plans and community plans, setting out a vision for the area in terms of commerce, city centre, housing, accessibility, economic development and improvements in local neighbourhoods. DSD will continue to hold its powers for comprehensive development schemes as well as drawing up masterplans and delivering local projects. With poorly aligned priorities to those of the Council this will cause significant issues in terms of delivery and will not represent value for money in terms of resources and outcomes. There is a clear synergy between those functions that the Council now has, together with its discreet economic development powers, which should act as a pivot enabling a joined up approach to regeneration. This should act as the foundation for an agreement that will allow an agency arrangement to be put in place which is mutually beneficial and which could achieve an agreed approach to the delivery of these functions.
- 3.6 Notwithstanding the recent announcement made by the Social Development Minister, it is clear that it would be in the best interests of both central government and local government, not to mention the NI citizen, that the transfer of such powers takes place as soon as possible. Finding a suitable mechanism through which this could be affected should be a common goal of both central and local government. The Council is of a strong opinion that if there is a willingness on behalf of the Social Development Minister and/or the NI Executive, a viable legal vehicle could be put in place quickly which would be a win-win for all concerned in that it would:
- (i) Enable the extension of specific regeneration functions (e.g. Development Scheme and Acquisition of land powers) to Council(s), who may utilise such functions if they so wish taking account of political and affordability considerations. No statutory obligation for councils.

- (ii) Ensure DSD (and the incoming new Department for Communities) retains oversight and final approval of such schemes;
- (iii) Ensure DSD (and the incoming new Department for Communities) retains statutory responsibility for such powers and can create and progress Development Schemes if they so wish.

3.7 The Council is similarly being pressed to act as a delivery engine for OFMDFM/SIB in respect of Urban Village capital spend and also SIF projects. It makes sense that the Council should have this role given the fact that it is multi-functional in terms of planning, community outreach, procurement, project management and maintenance, with strong supporting mechanisms in regard to finance, legal services and estates. The Council has a more coherent and streamlined delivery service than central government which is being increasingly recognised including DSD in terms of BCC delivering BSC projects.

3.8 Suggested Approach

The Council believes that both parties could enter into an Agency Agreement under Section 104 of the Local Government Act 1972 which would enable the Council to exercise regeneration powers on behalf of DSD (and the incoming new Department of Communities) and access Executive funding to deliver regeneration and development schemes. Attached at Appendix 1 is an initial draft Framework Agreement which could form the basis of detailed negotiations and engagement between DSD and Council. Whilst still at a skeleton stage, this draft framework sets out the types of key areas which would need to be worked through in detail including e.g. clarification of roles and responsibilities, financial arrangements, accountability and resources, potential staffing implications including secondments etc..

3.9 Benefits

Set out below are some of the key benefits for NI Executive and Central Government in taking forward this approach.

- Unlock the regeneration and development potential in the city - overcome recent challenges and difficulties experienced by DSD and central government linked to the rigid nature of Treasury rules and the budgeting treatment of large comprehensive development schemes such as North East Quarter, Northside and

other large CD projects. (see quote below from the then Finance Minister, Simon Hamilton)

- Ability to effectively utilise the strengths of both organisations to support the development and delivery of development schemes
 - Maximise funding - aligning the ability of the Department to access Executive funds with the ability of Council to access funding through prudential borrowing facilities.
 - Enhanced ability of Council to bring forward Compulsory Purchase Orders (acquisition of land) through having greater financial flexibility within the prudential finance regime
- Governance - Any legal agreement would need to be developed and agreed on a joint basis with clear lines of accountability. There would also be inherent in any agreement necessary protections and assurances including the fact that the exercise of functions by the Council would remain subject to departmental oversight and sign-off as would have been the case in the event that the Regeneration Bill had progressed. and any necessary assurances/protections build in
- Ensure greater alignment of physical regeneration with the emerging Community Planning and Local Development Plan processes – applying an outcome based approach.
- Ensure a targeted and holistic approach is taken to addressing blighted areas across the city including the City Centre which is the regional gateway and key investment location.
- Maximise the social impact and benefits of regeneration investment – improving connectivity and access to opportunity.
- Ability of the Council to provide the required level of confidence to investors considering developments in Belfast – position Belfast and Northern Ireland as an investment location and attract significant inward investment
- Ability to adopt a ‘whole system approach’ to taking forward key development and regeneration schemes e.g. Place Positioning / Bring to Market; commissioning, procurement, land assembly, legal support etc.
- Further development/regeneration activity will enhance the regional rates base and allow reinvestment in front-line services (NB. 55% of rates income is regional and 45% is district).

- Foster greater partnership between central and local government and potentially free-up central government resources through greater alignment of both staff and budgets.
- It is also important to recognise the focus across GB on localism and greater devolution of powers and resources to local authorities. Having the ability to access innovative tools, mechanisms and resources, key cities such as Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow have been able to unlock the development potential of city-regions, deliver critical city infrastructure; help rebalance the local economy through job creation and innovation and further enhance regional competitiveness and prosperity.

'The Member is right to highlight the opportunity that is presented by our local councils, particularly after reorganisation and the RPA, which will, of course, create much bigger councils with bigger rate bases. There will also be a change towards better borrowing powers and, importantly, more powers, including a power of regeneration.

.....Into the future, our councils, given their greater powers post-RPA, should be an increasing driver of infrastructure investment in Northern Ireland. I am keen, at these early stages, to use the good offices of the Department of Finance and Personnel to encourage them down that path.'^[1]

[Finance Minister, Simon Hamilton, Statement to NI Assembly on 1 April 2014]

- 3.10 It is important to recognise that an Agency Agreement would require the agreement of the Social Development Minister and it is important that the Council proactively seeks to secure such agreement as it is of mutual benefit to both organisations. It is also important that the necessary political capital and consensus is secured for extending regeneration related powers to the Council for the betterment of the city and its citizens. It is also important that the Council has an opportunity to work alongside DSD.
- 3.11 The Council will also seek to work alongside DSD (and incoming new Department for Communities) and input into any processes put in place to determine the future allocation of both capital and revenue funding within Belfast. The Council would also seek to work with DSD and central

^[1] 57 AQO 5920/11-15: <http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/Assembly-Business/Official-Report/Reports-13-14/01-April-2014/#3>

government to ensure that major development schemes within the city come to fruition.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.12 There will be financial/resource implications attached to the non-transfer of regeneration powers and budgets to the Council given the fact that these were being considered as part of the Council's overall approach & funding towards the delivery of regeneration activity within the city.
- 3.13 Further detailed reports on the financial and budget implications will be brought back to Committee in-line with the budget estimates process and timetable.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

- 3.14 Development of new policies and/or service delivery models will be subject to equality screening and, where required, EQIA process."

The Committee adopted the recommendations and noted that a further meeting with the Minister would be held in February, 2016.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Area Working Update

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

"1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 At its meeting in April 2012, the SP&R Committee agreed to convene Area Working Groups (AWGs) to support effective 'place-shaping' and make recommendations on investment decisions for their local area including LIF and BIF. Given the unique role that they played in allowing Members to shape their local areas it was agreed that AWGs would be reconvened as part of the new Council. The latest round of AWGs has taken place and the recommendations emerging are outlined below:

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to –

Area Working Group Planning Sessions

- note that the AWGs have previously agreed the need for joint planning sessions as a first step towards the development of AWG plans. The first one of these workshops was held with the South AWG at the end of November and focused on highlighting for Members the projects and assets within their areas together with an overview of the key demographics, socio-economic indicators, the wider strategic context and emerging thematic priorities. Members are asked to note that this workshop was successful and the Members who attended highlighted that it was a positive first step towards the development of a wider plan. It is proposed that this format is followed for the workshops for North, East and West which are scheduled for January.

Local Investment Fund proposals

- agree the recommended proposals as set out in 3.5 - 3.7 below from the South, West and East AWG in relation to the Local Investment Fund
- Members are asked to note that these proposals (with the exception of Malone Rugby Club) are subject to the projects going through the LIF process with the project being assessed against the prioritisation matrix – the results of this assessment will be reported back to a future AWG and Committee. All projects will be subject to the full due-diligence process agreed for LIF projects
- Note that 3 projects which had previously been agreed for in principle funding (Malone Rugby Club and Ashfield Girls School – East AWG and Forthriver Tennis and Bowling Club– West) have now been scored - all have successfully met the minimum threshold and it is recommended that these projects proceed to the Due Diligence stage of the LIF process.

Request for Council to act as Delivery Agent for other projects

- Note that the Committee previously agreed in October that the Council acts as the delivery agent for a range of projects funded under external initiatives including

Building Successful Communities and the Social Investment Fund. Since this the Council has been approached to potentially act as the delivery agent for additional projects as outlined below and Committee is asked to endorse if these should be progressed.

- ***Building Successful Communities*** – agree in principle that the Council acts as the delivery agent for the delivery of a further 31 alleygates in the Sufflok/Lenadoon BSC area. Members are asked to note that BSC monies are timebound and to note that this proposed project, along with the other proposed BSC projects, requires DSD business case approval. At the time of writing none of the projects proposed have received this approval which means that it will be very tight to deliver any of the projects within the required timeframe. Council officers have highlighted these issues to DSD and are awaiting a response.
- ***Urban Villages*** – agree in principle that the Council acts as the delivery agent for a range of projects under the Urban Villages initiative which is being managed by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) subject to further discussions with OFMDFM and SIB and ensuring the deliverability of the projects within the required timescale

Resources

- Members are asked to note that if the above projects are agreed then there are 37 LIF 2 projects which have been agreed in principle together with over 15 potential LIF2 projects which Members have asked officers to investigate how feasible they are to progress. Members will appreciate that there is a substantial amount of work in bringing these projects forward and officers are already working at maximum capacity on other Council physical projects including 50 capital projects, over 35 LIF 1 projects which are still ongoing and 20 BIF projects. In addition the Council is now being requested to deliver an increasing range of partnership projects under external funding streams including Urban Villages, Social Investment Fund (SIF) and Building Successful Communities (BSC). Members are therefore asked to note that it will be early next year before project sponsors can be allocated to all emerging LIF 2 projects and follow up with Groups and are asked to liaise with Groups to ensure that they are aware of this.

3.0 Main report

KEY ISSUES

AREA WORKING GROUP UPDATES

AREA WORKSHOPS

- 3.1** As part of the AWGs and looking at future recommendations for investment decisions under LIF and BIF, Members have been presented with physical portfolio updates and noted that there is a lot of work taking place across the city in terms of physical development. However it was highlighted that the impact of ongoing revenue programmes also needs to be taken into consideration as a physical project can be a catalyst for an area but it needs associated programming to make it work. Members also agreed that there was a need to look at other initiatives happening in local areas – e.g. links to Urban Villages, Building Successful Communities pilots, SIF projects etc.
- 3.2** The AWGs have therefore recognised the need to think through the issues and context of their areas and agreed the need for a number of planning workshop sessions per area as a first step towards the development of local area plans and to allow Members to start to consider wider issues in their areas linking with the ongoing work on the Belfast Agenda, the outcomes framework and the forward Committee plans for People and Communities and City Growth.
- 3.3** The first area workshop was held with the South AWG on 27th November. The workshop was facilitated by staff from Property Projects and the Corporate Policy Unit to ensure a link with the emerging Belfast Agenda. The workshop focused on a number of key areas including -
- 1.** Developing a shared understanding of the local area - looking at a statistical evidence base, service delivery in areas, existing public sector and community assets and existing investments;
 - 2.** Starting to identify the specific issues and concerns affecting the area - using an OBA approach, identifying the key outcomes that Members want to focus on in their areas
- 3.4** All the Members agreed that the workshop was very productive and that it should form the first of a series of workshops. Workshops with the other AWGs are due to be

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held in January. A full report on the outcome of the workshops will be brought to a future SP&R meeting following completion

EAST AWG

- 3.5 *LIF Recommendations* - The East AWG at its meeting on 24th November made the following recommendations for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their Local Investment Fund II

Ref No	Project	£ Amount
ELIF2-02	Malone Rugby Club	Additional £93,300 Total allocation - £208,300
ELIF2-03**	Towell House – Sensory Garden	£75,000
	<i>LIF 2 allocation remaining if agreed - £786,700</i>	

****Members are asked to note that this proposal is subject to these projects going through the LIF process with the project being assessed against the prioritisation matrix – the results of this assessment will be reported back to future AWGs and Committee. All projects will be subject to the full due-diligence process agreed for LIF projects. The Malone Rugby Club has been scored – see Appendix 1.**

The East AWG also asked officers to assess a number of other projects for their feasibility (including Eastside Souk and CharterNI) and report back to a future East meeting.

WEST AWG

- 3.6 *LIF Recommendations* - The West AWG at its meeting on 26th November made the following recommendations for in principle funding for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their Local Investment Fund2 monies -

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Ref No	Project	£ Amount
WLIF2-	Woodvale Cricket Club	£26,000
	<i>LIF 2 allocation remaining if agreed - £30,000</i>	

Members are asked to note that these proposals are subject to these projects going through the LIF process with the project being assessed against the prioritisation matrix – the results of this assessment will be reported back to the next AWG and Committee. All projects will be subject to the full due-diligence process agreed for LIF projects. The West AWG also asked officers to assess a number of other projects for their feasibility and report back to a future West meeting.

3.7 SOUTH AWG

LIF Recommendations - The South AWG at its meeting on 27th November made the following recommendations for the consideration of the SP&R Committee in relation to their Local Investment Fund II

Ref No	Project	£ Amount
SLIF2-08	Ballynafeigh Orange Hall	£60,000
SLIF2-09	Ballynafeigh Community House	£80,000
SLIF2-10	Ormeau Boxing Club	£40,000
SLIF2-11	Surestart (Belvoir)	£108,000
	<i>LIF 2 allocation remaining if agreed - £20,000</i>	

Members are asked to note that all the proposals above are subject to these projects going through the LIF process with the project being assessed against the prioritisation matrix – the results of this assessment will be reported back to the next AWG and Committee. All projects will be subject to the full due-diligence process agreed for LIF projects

NORTH AWG

3.8 The North AWG at its meeting on 24 November also asked officers to assess a number of other projects for their

feasibility (North Belfast Alternative and Good Morning North Belfast (Sunningdale Gardens) and report back to a future North meeting.

Projects recommended to be advanced to due-diligence

- 3.9 Members are asked to note that a number of projects which have previously received 'in-principle' commitment have now been scored by officers (Malone Rugby Club and Ashfield Girls School – East AWG and Forthriver Tennis and Bowling Club– West) and all have successfully met the minimum threshold. It is recommended that these projects proceed to the Due Diligence stage of the LIF process.

REQUEST FOR COUNCIL TO ACT AS DELIVERY AGENT FOR OTHER PROJECTS

- 3.10 Members will recall that they were updated in October that the Council has been requested to act as the delivery agent for a range of projects funded under a number of external initiatives including the Social Investment Fund (SIF) and Building Successful Communities (BSC) These requests recognise both the successful track record of the Council as a delivery agent for capital projects and also the uniquely placed role of the Council as a civic leader in the city. This is a sign of confidence in the Council and recognition of the Council's increasing role in terms of regeneration and emerging community planning role. Since this the Council has been approached to potentially act as the delivery agent for additional projects as outlined below and Committee is asked to endorse if these should be progressed.

- *Building Successful Communities* – agree in principle that the Council acts as the delivery agent for the delivery of a further 31 alleygates in the Sufflok/Lenadoon BSC area. Members are asked to note that BSC monies are timebound and to note that this proposed project, along with the other proposed BSC projects, requires DSD business case approval. At the time of writing none of the projects proposed have received this approval which means that it will be very tight to deliver any of the projects within the required timeframe. Council officers have highlighted these issues to DSD and are awaiting a response.
- *Urban Villages* – agree in principle that the Council acts as the delivery agent for a range of projects under the Urban Villages initiative which is being managed by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) subject to further

discussions with OFMDFM and SIB and ensuring the deliverability of the projects within the required timescale

RESOURCES

- 3.11 Members are asked to note that if the above LIF projects are agreed then there are 37 LIF 2 projects which have been agreed in principle together with over 15 potential LIF projects which Members have asked officers to investigate how feasible they are to progress. Members will appreciate that there is a substantial amount of work in bringing these projects forward and officers are already working at maximum capacity on other Council physical projects including 50 capital projects, over 35 LIF 1 projects which are still ongoing and 20 BIF projects. In addition as outlined above in 3.10-3.12 the Council is now being requested to act as delivery agent for a range of partnership projects under external funding streams including Urban Villages, Social Investment Fund (SIF) and Building Successful Communities (BSC). Members are therefore asked to note that given existing work pressures and capacity that it will be early next year before project sponsors can meet with all the Groups and Members are therefore asked to ensure that Groups are aware of this.

3.13 FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- Financial - £4m has been allocated to LIF 2.

AWG	(A) TOTAL LIF 2 ALLOCATION	(B) AMOUNT ALLOCATED TO DATE	(C) PROPOSALS IN THIS REPORT	(D) PROJECTED ALLOCATION (B)+(C)	REMAINING ALLOCATION
North	£800,000	£133,200	-	-	£666,800
South	£800,000	£492,000	£288,000	£780,000	£20,000
East	£1,200,000	£245,000	£168,300	£413,300	£786,700
West	£1,200,000	£1,144,000	£26,000	£1,170,000	£30,000

- Resource - Officers will be required to help work up LIF projects. As highlighted above if the above projects are agreed there are 37 LIF 2 projects which have been agreed in principle together with a range of proposals which Members have asked officers to look at in detail and bring back to future AWGs. There are associated resource implications with working all these projects up and Members will appreciate that

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the Property & Projects Department is already working at maximum capacity on ongoing and emerging capital projects together with LIF 1 and BIF projects.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Asset Management

Slievegallion Drive – Off street car parking

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 5th January, 2015, had agreed to dispose of lands at Slievegallion Drive to the Department of Education. The land was to be redeveloped by De La Salle College to provide a school/community facility comprising a 3G sport pitch and associated changing pavilion.

Planning approval for the development had been granted earlier in the year and, as a condition of the Planning Permission, the development required a public car park to be constructed to replace the on-street car parking being lost at Slievegallion Drive as a consequence of the redevelopment. The Department of Education had sought to have the new public car park, consisting of 17 spaces, adopted by Transport NI. However, following the Review of Public Administration, the responsibility for off street car parking had transferred to local councils in April 2015 and the Department had now referred the request to the Council.

The People and Communities Committee, at its meeting on 10th November, had considered the matter and had approved the adoption of the off street car parking at Slievegallion Drive.

The Committee noted the decision of that Committee.

Mountforde Road – Encroachment by St Matthew’s Housing Association

The Committee was advised that, in the early 2000s, St. Matthew’s Housing Association had developed a site on Beechfield Street to provide sheltered accommodation for the elderly. An extension to provide additional accommodation had been completed in 2010. That extension was known as Mac Airt House and was a design and building project by a local contractor in compliance with the design brief which had been prepared by the St. Matthew’s Housing Association.

The Committee was advised that the development backed on the to Council’s Mountforde Road Playground, which had been refurbished in February 2013. The contractor had erected a new rear boundary but had inadvertently encroached onto Council land, which comprised a narrow strip of landscaped grassland used as part of a common rear garden enjoyed by the ground floor residents of the sheltered accommodation.

During the park refurbishment, the Council’s contractor had replaced the original fence with a new high quality fence along the same boundary. The Council’s Parks and

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Leisure Department had confirmed that it had no requirement for that small strip of land of approximately 45 square metres. St. Matthew's Housing Association had now written to the Council expressing a desire to resolve the encroachment by purchasing the strip of land.

The Committee agreed to the disposal of approximately 45 square metres plot of land to the St. Matthew's Housing Association, subject to a consideration of £1000 to the Council.

**Cregagh Youth and Community Centre – Ulster Rugby
over flow car park**

The Committee was advised that the Cregagh Youth and Community Centre had been transferred to the Council from Castlereagh Borough Council on 1st April, 2015, as part of the Local Government Reform. The site comprised a community centre, a small astro turf pitch and associated on site car parking.

At its meeting on 8th December, the People and Communities Committee had considered a report and had agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee the occasional use of the overflow car park by way of a licence agreement to Ulster Rugby.

Ulster Rugby had previously paid Castlereagh Borough Council a fee of £250 per day for the use of the overflow car park. Discussions with a representative from Ulster Rugby had indicated a willingness to continue with that arrangement and to enter into a licence agreement for an initial period of 9 months paying £250 for each day of use of the overflow car park. At the end of the initial 9 month period, both parties would have the opportunity to assess the initial agreement and renew the licence fee and licence period for a longer term, if so required. It was anticipated that Ulster Rugby would use the overflow car park on approximately 20 separate days during the current rugby playing season. The overflow car park was not currently used on a regular basis by users of the Cregagh Youth and Community Centre.

The Committee approved the recommendation of the People and Communities Committee to allow the occasional use of the overflow car park by way of a licence agreement to Ulster Rugby.

Musgrave Park Pavilion – Licence for meeting Room

The Committee was advised that, as part of its Pitches Strategy, the former Parks and Leisure Committee had agreed that Musgrave Park would receive investment to provide a four room changing pavilion. St Brigid's GAC, which operated under a Facilities Management Agreement (FMA) at Musgrave Park, had requested that a reception room be included in the pavilion. St Brigid's had agreed to fund the cost of that, together with other enhancements which comprised of security fencing and a new path.

The Director of Property and Projects reported that the inclusion of those additional works had been approved by the former Parks and Leisure Committee, at its

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meeting on 14th August, 2014, subject to the cost of the works being met through sources other than the Council and subject to any variation to the FMA being approved by the Parks and Leisure Committee. The additional works were estimated to be in the region of £122,327. The Council had entered into an Agreement for works with St Brigid's GAC to govern this.

Accordingly, a licence for use would be required to regularise St Brigid's GAC's use of the room, which would remain in the ownership of the Council. The licence would run concurrently with the FMA until 8th March, 2024 and would be at a nominal fee, given that the room had been paid for by the licensee. Whilst the licence would not be entered into until the pavilion had been completed, approval for the licence was required at this stage in advance of the building works commencing.

The Committee agreed to the grant of a license to St Brigid's GAC for the use of the reception room at Musgrave Park pavilion, following completion, for a term until 8th March, 2024 at a nominal fee and as such other terms as required by the Town Solicitor and the Director of Property and Projects.

**Rural Tourism Scheme – Access at Black Mountain and
Glencairn/Ligoniel in the Belfast Hills**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting of 14th December, 2012, it had authorised the Council to enter in to Development and Licence Agreements with the Belfast Hills Partnership (BHP) for the construction of paths and related works at the Cave Hill Country Park and Ligoniel Park. BHP had been successful in obtaining funding for those works from the Rural Development Programme under Axis 3 – Improving the Quality of Life in Rural Areas and Diversifying the Rural Economy. The completion of the paths and interpretative signage had helped build linkages across the hills by improving accessibility and encouraging greater numbers of visitors to the area, to appreciate its natural beauty and heritage.

The Committee was advised that there was now an opportunity to build on the strategic approach to the development of the rural tourism product of the Belfast Hills and to mirror those recent developments at Black Mountain and Glencairn/Ligoniel, through the submission of a funding application to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) under the Rural Tourism Scheme. Successful projects would be funded at 75% grand aid, up to a maximum of £500k, whilst the remaining 25% match funding must be 5% cash and a contribution in kind up to a maximum of 20%. Expressions of interest were being invited during January and February as the first stage of the application process.

In relation to the Black Mountain, discussions had initially taken place in 2012 with local Elected Members, community representatives and the BHP regarding the provision of pedestrian access. An informal route currently linked the Whiterock Road to the "Hatchet Field" on Black Mountain and the land was mainly in private ownership, whilst Northern Ireland Water owned the a reservoir in the vicinity. The proposal was to create a pedestrian path which would formalise part of that route but also connect to the National Trust's existing network of paths on Divis, with its agreement.

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Similarly, at Glencairn an informal route existed which linked Wolfhill Road, Ligoniel Dams and Mill Avenue with Ligoniel Park. The formalisation of that route would create valuable linkages in the area for locals and visitors alike. The People and Communities Committee, at its meeting on 13th October, 2015, had granted approval for BHP to apply for external funding to create a path linking the Horseshoe Bend to Carrs Glen in Cave Hill Country Park. If that funding was successful, an extensive path network would link the Belfast Zoo to the Cave Hill Country Park and the Ligoniel Park and contribute to a long distance walking route across the Belfast Hills.

Initial costings had been obtained for the Black Mountain Path in 2012 (which had been £305k) but there was need to revisit that figure to obtain a more accurate costing to include also interpretation/signage costs. Likewise, costings would need to be undertaken for the Glencairn/Ligoniel route. It would be necessary for the Council to negotiate access with each landowner and, in the case of Black Mountain, the Legal Services Section had indicated that a Public Path Creation Agreement would be the most suitable arrangement which would exist in perpetuity. That would entail the Council assuming responsibility for the construction and maintenance of the path and being required to indemnify the landowner from public liability claims.

The Committee agreed to submit an initial funding application, Expression of Interest, to the Rural Tourism Scheme and to undertake further detailed proposals for both projects, including entering into discussion/negotiations with the landowners and to submit a further report on the updated position to the Committee in due course.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Treasury Management – Mid Year Report

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 This report presents the mid year treasury management position for the Council as at the end of Quarter 2, 2015/16.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

3.0 Main report

Local Government Finance Act Northern Ireland) 2011

3.1 The Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011, and the supporting Prudential and Treasury Codes introduced a new capital financing system and legislative framework within which the Council may manage its finances.

3.2 The Council’s Treasury Management Policy, developed in response to the new legislative framework, states that the Council will receive reports on its treasury management policies, practices and activities, including, as a minimum, an annual strategy, a mid-year review and an annual report after the close of the financial year

3.3 This report represents the mid-year review as required by the policy and is structured to highlight key changes to the Council’s capital activity and the actual and proposed treasury management activity.

Prudential Indicators

3.3 The Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 and CIPFA’s Prudential Code require the Council to set and monitor a series of Prudential Indicators (PIs). The key objective of which is to ensure that, within a clear framework, the capital investment plans of the Council are affordable, prudent and sustainable.

3.4 Capital Expenditure Prudential Indicator:

	Original	Revised
Indicator	£’000	£’000
Estimates of Capital Expenditure 2015/16	61,859	52,353

The original estimate reflects the capital budgets that were approved by Council on 20 March 2015, whilst the revised estimate reflects the capital expenditure that is forecast to be spent by 31 March 2016. The decrease in the forecast for this year is mainly due to the re-profiling of the capital programme. As the overall total has not changed this does not affect the financing of the Council’s total capital expenditure.

3.5 Other Prudential Indicators:

	Original Estimate	Current Estimate
Indicator	£’000	£’000
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	92,634	72,743
Borrowing Within CFR	yes	yes

As can be seen above the CFR estimate has reduced. This is due to financing decisions made at the end of the previous financial year and the slippage in the current years capital programme. The Council is forecast to remain within the Authorised Borrowing Limit, and the CFR indicates that over the medium term borrowings will only be for a capital purpose.

Treasury Management

- 3.6 The Council's Treasury Management Policy and Strategy adopt the key principles of CIPFA's Code of Practice and take into account of the guidance issued by the Department of the Environment on Local Government Investments.
- 3.7 Debt Activity: During the first half of 2015/16 the Council has taken advantage of internal borrowing, i.e. cash surpluses, to fund capital expenditure.
- 3.8 In addition, loan principal repayments of £1,461,457.31 have been made during the same period.
- 3.9 The level of external borrowings at 30 September 2015 is £26,148,998. Consisting of loans relating to the City Hall Works, Grove Wellbeing Centre and the Waste Transfer Station.
- 3.10 Investment Strategy 2015/16: The primary objective of the Council's investment strategy is to safeguard the repayment of the principal and interest of its investments on time. Investment return is a secondary objective of the strategy.
- 3.11 The current investment climate is one of overriding risk consideration, particularly that of counterparty risk. As a result, officers continue to implement an operational investment strategy which maintains investments short term with high quality counterparties.
- 3.12 The Council has earned £123,835.85 in interest in the period from 1 April to 30 September 2015.
- 3.13 During this period the Council has placed deposits with Bank of Scotland, Santander UK, HSBC and Barclays. All four institutions meet the council's approval criteria.
- 3.14 The Council's limit for total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days is £2,000,000. As at

30 September 2015, the Council has not made any investments which are for periods longer than 364 days.

3.15 Other Treasury Management Indicators: Two other Treasury Management indicators were set at the start of the year as follows: -

- Upper Limits for Fixed and Variable Rate Borrowing
- Limits on the Maturity of Fixed Rate Borrowing

3.16 Officers can confirm that the limits set have not been breached and no changes to the current limits are required.

Finance and Resource Implications

3.17 All finance implications are detailed within the report.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

3.18 There are no equality or good relations implications associated with this report.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Contracts for Award

The Committee approved the public advertisement and delegated authority to the appropriate Director using pre-agreed criteria, to accept the most economically advantageous tenders, allow month-by-month extensions for contracts under review and approve the extensions of contracts as set out below. The Committee agreed also to accede to Standing Order 62 (a) Exceptions in Relation to Contracts by Direction of the Council acting on a recommendation of the Chief Officer that the exception was justified in special circumstances for the appointment of a contractor for the design and installation of a safety system for the Waterfront Auditorium:

Appendix 1 - Schedule of tenders for consideration

Table 1 - New tenders

Title of tender	Senior Responsible Officer	Proposed contract duration
Tender for implementation of an integrated HR/Payroll T&A and T&S System	Paul Gribben	5 years
Tender for procurement of SQL server	Paul Gribben	3 years

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Tender for commercial support for a programme of tenders	Gerry Millar	1 year with the option to renew on a month by month basis
Tender for concession catering contracts at the Malone House, Belfast Castle and the Zoo.	Rose Crozier	3 years
Facilities Management Agreement for Mary Peters Track	Rose Crozier	1 year plus 2
Mechanical services installation at Prince Regent Road Depot	Gerry Millar	16 weeks
Electrical services installation at Prince Regent Road Depot	Gerry Millar	16 weeks
Building works at Prince Regent Road Depot	Gerry Millar	16 weeks

Table 2 – Tenders justified by special circumstances

Title of tender	Senior Responsible Officer	Proposed contract duration
Tender for design and installation of a safety system for the Waterfront Auditorium	Donal Durkin	3 months

Table 3 - Tenders for extension of contract period on a month by month basis

Title of tender	Director Responsible
Tender for provision of arboricultural services	Rose Crozier
Tender for provision of young tree maintenance, tree planting and minor horticultural works	Rose Crozier
Tender for provision of franchise for Bobbin coffee shop at City Hall	Gerry Millar
Tender for the hire of a telescopic handler and scissor lift	Siobhan Toland

Table 4 - Existing contracts requiring extension of contract period

Title of tender	Senior Responsible Officer	Extension period
Tender for provision of a continental market at City Hall	Gerry Millar	Until 30 June 2016

Community Support Programme

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Members on the proposed expenditure options in relation to the offer of additional income of £275,280 against our DSD administered Community Support Programme grant.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- Agree to accept the offer of additional DSD income of £275,280 as a variation to the existing Community Support Programme grant contract for 2015/16;
- Consider the proposals to utilise the potential additional allocation of CSP funds and prioritise these dependant on the total funds available;
- Agree that, where uptake within any of the proposed elements is under-utilised, officers can reallocate funding based on the committee agreed priorities in order to maximise the uptake of the additional CSP funding allocation.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Council has an annual grant contract with DSD under its regional Community Support Programme: the total value of the 2015/16 contract is £1.404 million.

3.2 The contract is conditional on our making a contribution to the CSP overall aim defined as:

‘To strengthen local communities, increase community participation and promote social inclusion through the stimulation and support of community groups, community activity and local advice services’.

A series of four outcomes, or impacts have been set for the CSP:

- i an active and organised community,
- ii an influential community,
- iii an informed community,
- iv a sustainable community,

- 3.4 On 4 December we were informed that the Voluntary and Community Unit (DSD) has offered Belfast City Council an additional in-year allocation of £275,280 towards general revenue expenditure and subject to the same conditions of grant offer. It should be noted that this allocation is conditional on the additionality of any supported activity and full utilisation by 31 March 2016. There is no requirement on BCC to provide match funding. All of the additional grant allocation will be subject to the normal DSD monitoring and compliance requirements.
- 3.5 The limited timeframe attached to the additional funding will not allow for monies to be administered competitively so it is crucial to find a prompt but robust way in which to allocate the funds in support of projects and service providers for community benefit.
- 3.6 Given this requirement (to allocate and fully expend the additional monies within the current financial year), officers have identified a number of potential in-year funding opportunities. In doing so, we have considered the following;
- DSD Community Support Programme funding criteria and target outcomes
 - The opportunity presented to significantly contribute to the Council's and Service Priorities.
 - Priority needs related to current financial climate
 - Feasibility of proposals to support compliant assessment, committal and expenditure of funds by 31st March 2016
 - Efficiency considerations
- 3.7 The proposed options for expenditure of the in-year allocation are:

i. Community Sector Support - Large Grant Uplift

Under the Community Support Plan, BCC currently provides 82 Revenue grants for Community Buildings and 29 Capacity Building grants to organisations across the city. The Revenue funding is used towards the running costs associated with operating a community building and the Capacity Building grant contributes to the core costs of larger, area based community development support agencies. Officers are aware, via the monitoring process, that funding awards do not currently meet full costs. There is also evidence that, within the current funding environment, a significant number of community organisations are struggling to meet these costs.

Committee is asked to consider an in-year limited offer of additional funds to support programmes in community buildings or those of community development support organisations. The fund could be used to support any verified increase in core costs, for small scale building repairs and maintenance or for programme equipment.

If we are to meet the requirement to allocate and fully expend the additional monies within the current financial year, it is suggested that any agreed uptake of these funds be administered to those organisations currently in receipt of a revenue or capacity grant from BCC in 2015/16.

If agreeable, officers will invite organisations to submit proposals on how they propose to utilise the potential funding of up to £1,500 per organisation. After assessment and confirmation of available budget, recommendations for grant uplift would be presented for the Director's approval via delegated authority. Subject to approval, a letter of variation on existing contracts will be issued and, as per current arrangements, all successful groups will submit monitoring returns to report progress against targets.

If Members agree to the proposal as outlined above, the allocation would be approximately £166,500

ii. Resourcing Girdwood Community Engagement Programme

Committee will be aware that the Girdwood Community Hub Shared Space project will be launched in January 2016. The development is the first step in the wider regeneration of Girdwood Park, a 14 acre site located between Crumlin Road and Cliftonpark Avenue.

The Hub will include a gym and wellbeing area, youth space, multi-purpose rooms and an outdoor piazza with seating, as well as a range of other facilities.

The shared space programme has been developed in partnership with the Girdwood Hub Forum which is made up of over 20 groups from the surrounding area and other key stakeholders. Officers have worked with the Forum to develop plans for the Hub and other regeneration proposals for the wider site and this stakeholder involvement will support the vision of the hub as a safe and welcoming place for everyone.

- The Forum has identified a range of additional equipment which would support the targeted usage of the facility by nearby community groups, as well as other organisations in north Belfast, including statutory bodies and charities. The equipment requested will specifically support the outline programme for the Youth Space and other Community Programming across the building. It is anticipated the total cost will be in the region of £44,780
- A range of activities to support community awareness has been ongoing including a community fun day and tea dances in the autumn and a soft launch programme in the building during December 2015. A week long programme of events, including a Good Relations conference, is planned for January 2016 with the official opening on the 15th. While officers are utilising all our current internal and external communication platforms to publicise the facility, the message could be further extended via a targeted publicity campaign, for example, using adshells, bannering on adjacent arterial routes, social media and Flicker. It is anticipated the likely cost would be up to £10,000
- Given the end spend date, the ability to utilise additional funds to support programming is limited however there is an opportunity to host a mini St Patrick's Day event which would be planned & delivered on a community engagement basis ensuring participation of all local communities: £5,000

iii. Super Connected Cities- Digital Hubs Programme

The Superconnected Communities pilot project set out to animate twelve IT hubs in community centres across the city agreed by the former Development Committee. An outreach (mobile) hub was also set up. The project outcomes are digital inclusion, literacy and skills development - generally engaging people in the community online and teaching them how to surf, email and also learn skills to support their work ambitions. There has been significant progress with all 12 hubs up and running along with 2 further hubs in the new council areas: Sally Gardens and Tullycarnett. We have also expanded the outreach service to meet the needs of all 31 centres and the wider community such as Folds and other community buildings with the delivery of Belfast WIFI. The co-ordination of the project is key and has brought in a vast array of new partners to offer free training or avail of our contacts in the community. This has resulted in 426 new on

liners engaged since November 2014 (9 months) in a significantly short period.

Community Services officers support the project through a working group made up of community development staff who promote the programmes in and around their centres and support delivery and secure small levels of programme investment both internally (eg Age Friendly Belfast) and externally (eg DFP through Go Online; DEL; NI Screen and the US Consulate).

In order to extend the programme offer in support of our core outcomes, we recommend utilisation of £12,000 to support a Digi Programme consisting of courses and classes for new onliners, mature onliners and progression classes for those that want to know more. This allocation will also support a *train the trainer* programme for volunteer champions in order to extend and sustain current programming.

iv. Youth Forum

As one of their current programme priorities, the Belfast Youth Forum is committed to a Shared Space campaign. Youth Forum members have already completed initial research via a survey of young people attending our summer events and interviewing young city centre users during Autumn of this year. The next phase would include a POP UP Youth space which is the mobile youth space / bus owned by T13. This would be operated over 6 weekends during February and March 2016 to engage young people on what any future permanent 'youth shared space' should offer. The total cost of this engagement programme is anticipated as £11,000 including bus hire and development session support and related promotional activity.

v. Play Development Programming

In line with the recently agreed Children and Young People outcomes framework, our Play Development team will work with at least 12 children to design and deliver a competition. The project will build skills through the use of animation techniques in order to translate our new CYP *character images* into an engagement programme. The programme will be ready for launch on 1 April and will encourage all children over the summer to create a new *character*. The total cost is anticipated as £10,000 including skills development training, software, junk art materials and promotion.

vi. Advice Tribunal Service

In August 2013, Council announced two-year funding totalling £430,000 for a Citywide Tribunal Representation Service to help claimants who wish to appeal SSA decisions on benefits including Employment Support Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independent Payment, Universal Credit and any other SSA benefit. This service enables clients to challenge decisions, assisting them through the process and representing them at hearings.

DSD income of £54,000 allowed for a further extension of 3 months and Council has since agreed additional investment of £175,000. The programme is now due to end in June 2016. In order to capture the impact of the programme to date and to make recommendations to inform any future support, committee is asked to agree that officers commission external expertise to complete an independent evaluation (£10,000). The recommendation from the report will be tabled with committee.

vii. Equipment to support incoming Community Centres

Under service convergence, Council now supports a number of additional community centres either via direct or independent management. Officers have identified a need for a small level of additional service equipment to ensure compliant management. The total budget required will be £6,000.

- 3.8 Officers believe the proposals outlined above represent a balanced opportunity to allocate the additional CSP funds given the associated conditions.

Category	Allocation
Large Grant Uplift	£166,500
Resourcing Girdwood Community Engagement Programme	£59,780
Super Connected Belfast: Digital Hubs Programme	£12,000
Youth Forum	£11,000
Play Development Programme	£10,000
Advice Tribunal Service evaluation	£10,000
Equipment to support new CC compliant management	£6,000
Total	£275,280

- 3.9 Given the conditions of offer and the challenge to ensure full spend before 31st March 2016, it is recommended that where

uptake within any of the proposed elements is under-utilised, officers are given delegated authority to reallocate funding based on the committee agreed priorities. This will allow BCC to maximise the uptake of the additional offer of in-year income.

3.10 Financial & Resource Implications

The additional DSD allocation will cover all grant or associated project costs. Related assessment and administration resource requirements will be subsumed into current staff work programmes. There is no requirement for match funding from BCC.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

There are no equality or Good Relations implications.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Equality and Good Relations

Minutes of Meeting of Good Relations Partnership

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Good Relations Partnership of 14th December and adopted the recommendations in relation to the following:

Holocaust Memorial Day

The recommendation of the Partnership for the Committee to approve the hosting of an event in the City Hall to commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day.

Update on Refugee Resettlement

To approve a request from the EMBRACE Organisation for the use of the Reception Room, City Hall to host an event on 28th January, 2016 to support the integration and inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers and approve the expenditure of £200 for refreshments.

Minutes of Meeting of Diversity Working Group

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Diversity Working Group of 18th December and adopted the recommendations in relation to the following:

Belfast Blitz Commemorations

- (1) that Council officers meet with the NI War Memorial representatives to discuss the possibility of them funding a permanent Blitz Memorial in the grounds of the Belfast City Hall; and
- (2) to the purchase of and to give copies of “the Belfast Blitz; the City in the War Years” to each secondary school in Belfast at a cost of approximately £700.

Request to Present, Foras na Gaeilge

That the Committee consider a request, which had been received from Foras na Gaeilge, to present to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee regarding the guidelines that they had produced to support councils when addressing issues relating to the Irish Language and to inform them on issues associated with the context of the formation of the new Council and that the Committee should also consider inviting the Ulster Scots Agency to present as part of the discussion.

The Committee agreed to receive the presentation at a future meeting and agreed also to accede to a further request from Conradh na Gaeilge to present at the same meeting.

Operational Issues

Employee Relations Policies Review

The Director of Organisational Development submitted for the Committees consideration the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the council has a number of human resources (HR) policies and procedures in place to ensure consistency, fairness, legal compliance and best practice in the management of the council’s workforce. The policies and procedures are subject to regular review and consultation with the council’s trade union group, through its Joint Negotiation and Consultative Committee (JNCC).**
- 1.2 Management and trade unions work hard to reach agreement on the content and application of all HR policies and procedures before they are communicated and implemented, and in the vast majority of cases agreement is reached.**
- 1.3 Discussions have been ongoing with trade unions for some time on updating the organisation’s key HR policies and procedures, i.e. the Attendance Management Policy and Guidance, the Disciplinary Procedure, the Grievance**

Procedure and the Guidelines for Dealing with Complaints of Unfair Treatment.

- 1.4 A review of these policies was undertaken to ensure they are in line with best practice and meet business needs. Many of the changes proposed as a result of the review relate to improving implementation and application and the need to streamline employee relations processes rather than material changes to the policy.**
- 1.5 The vast majority of these changes have been agreed with the council's TUs with the exception of some revisions to the Attendance Management Guidance and the Disciplinary Procedure.**
- 2.0 Recommendations**
- 2.1 The committee is requested to agree the revised Attendance Management Policy and Guidance and Disciplinary Procedure, in full, incorporating management proposals on those areas where agreement has not been reached with the Council's trade unions.**
- 2.2 The committee is also requested to agree the revised Grievance Procedure incorporating the guidelines for dealing with complaints of unfair treatment, as agreed with the trade unions.**
- 3.0 Main Report**
- 3.1 It is management's view that the policies set out at appendices one (revised Attendance Policy and Guidance), two (revised Disciplinary Procedure) and three (revised Grievance Procedure) are legally compliant, and represent best practice policy solutions for the organisation in relation to attendance management and disciplinary and grievance matters.**
- 3.2 Revisions to the policies mainly relate to improving implementation and application and the need to streamline employee relations processes rather than significant policy change.**
- 3.3 The vast majority of these changes have been agreed with the council's trade unions with the exception of matters relating to the issuing of letters calling staff to absence management meetings; the manner in which an employee's absence history should be considered; and the timeframe for disciplinary warnings**

- 3.4 Specifically the areas of disagreement are as follows:

Attendance Management Booklet

- 3.5 Firstly, management has proposed that letters requesting staff to attend absence management meetings should be issued on a proactive basis, in advance of an absence trigger point being reached to ensure that employees are not over the trigger point before action is taken. Trade union side, however, believes that these letters should only be issued once the trigger point has been reached.

- 3.6 Secondly, management believes it is reasonable to consider an employee's entire absence history (if necessary) to monitor for patterns and trends and to assess how much discretion has been used in the past. Trade union side believes that a three year absence history only should be used.

Disciplinary Procedure

- 3.7 In relation to the Disciplinary Procedure trade union side has proposed that the duration of the disciplinary process should be taken into account in the setting of the effective date for any warning. Management believes, however, that any warning or sanction can only be effective after a disciplinary hearing has taken place to consider the allegations against an employee, and a determination reached. Management therefore believes that this should not change.

- 3.8 Further, trade union side has proposed that all minutes should be released to the employee within 10 days of an interview or hearing taking place. Management side believes that this may not be possible administratively; that it may not be appropriate in certain cases; and that it may not be necessary to release minutes unless they have been requested. Management side has therefore suggested, that minutes will be released to the employee who was the subject of a meeting or hearing, where they request them, and that, where possible, they will be released within 10 days of the meeting.

- 3.9 All other revisions to these documents and to the Grievance Procedure have been agreed between management and trade unions, as well as the incorporation of the Unfair Treatment guidelines into the Grievance Procedure. Members are asked to agree these revised policies and guidance in full, including management proposals on those areas where agreement has not been reached with trade union side.

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3.10 Financial & Resource Implications

None

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications

These revisions have been screened out.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations and noted that full copies of the policies were available on the Council’s website.

Minutes of the Meeting of Budget and Transformation Panel

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

Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meetings of the Audit and Risk Panel of 19th November and 7th December.

Request for the use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality

The Committee approved the undernoted requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality:

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
Political Studies Association of Ireland	Annual Conference 2016 Dinner 8th October, 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 Congress 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
Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum	What a Difference One Community Can Make 22nd January, 2016 Approximately 70 attending	The use of the City Hall	This event will showcase the positive impact of the work of organisations in the Crumlin/ Ardoyne area to making a safer and	The use of the City Hall

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			<p>healthier community while displaying how working together will bring the communities together.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Theme of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.</p>	
Digital DNA/Sentinus NI	<p>Digital Futures Showcase and Graduate Careers Fair</p> <p>5th and 6th December, 2016</p> <p>Approximately 700 attending over the two days</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits on day one</p>	<p>This event will provide the opportunity to inspire young people to have a stronger understanding of consumer and business needs before applying technology to provide a delivery solution. In previous years this event has catered solely for 13-16 year olds and this year it will evolve to include participants from the 16-19 years range therefore the event will be spread over two days.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together', 'Better opportunities for success across the city' and 'Better support for people and communities' and in addition would contribute to the Council's thematic area of Children and Young People.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits on day one</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
Girlguiding Belfast	<p>Belfast County Girlguiding Awards Ceremony</p> <p>23rd May, 2016</p> <p>Approximately 250 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event seeks to recognise the achievements of Guides and their Leaders. Awards being presented include Queen's Guide, Duke of Edinburgh, Baden Powell Award for Guides and Long Service Awards for</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 £625</p>

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			<p>Leaders.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better opportunities for success' and in addition would contribute to the Council's thematic area of Children and Young People.</p>	
<p>Michaela Foundation</p>	<p>Volunteer Recognition Event</p> <p>17th February, 2016</p> <p>Approximately 120 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event will celebrate the work of the Foundation volunteers in providing camps for young girls which allow them to participate in carefully planned activities.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better opportunities for success' 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 £300</p>
<p>Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Volunteer Services</p>	<p>Belfast Trust Volunteer Awards</p> <p>3rd June, 2016</p> <p>Approximately 100 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall</p>	<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>	<p>The use of the City Hall</p>

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Belfast Pride	<p>Launch of Pride 2016 and Awards Presentation</p> <p>23rd July, 2015</p> <p>Approximately 300 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception</p>	<p>This event will be the first official event of 2016 Belfast Pride Festival. The Festival will promote awareness of the arts, cultural heritage, history and experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered communities in Belfast and advance equality by offering a diverse and inclusive Festival open to all citizens of Belfast.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
Youth Initiatives Northern Ireland	<p>Youth Initiatives 25th Anniversary Partner Breakfast</p> <p>3rd March, 2016</p> <p>Approximately 70 attending</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits</p>	<p>This event will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Youth Initiatives. It will highlight the work undertaken by the organisation and their continued contribution to youth provision and community relations work in areas of social deprivation .</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Support for People and Communities' 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 £175</p>
Provincial Grand Lodge of County Antrim	<p>150th Anniversary of the Provincial Grand Lodge</p> <p>26th May, 2018</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-</p>	<p>This event will celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the formation of the Provincial Grand Lodge and acknowledge its</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of wine and</p>

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	Approximately 400 attending	dinner drinks reception	<p>contribution to the general life and well-being of the city through its charitable work and donations.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>soft drinks</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>
Barnardos	<p>PATHS Plus Celebration Event</p> <p>6th June, 2016</p> <p>Approximately 120 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 positive impact the programme has had on both schoolchildren and teachers over the last three years. The programme provides the opportunity to support children in the development of pro-social skills while encouraging professional development for teachers, principals and assistants.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better opportunities for success' 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 £300</p>
Organisation of Malayalis in Northern Ireland	<p>'Ponnonam 2015' Celebration Event</p> <p>23rd August, 2015</p> <p>Approximately 500 attending</p>	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of tea/coffee and biscuits	<p>Ponnonam 2015 is the celebration of the various cultures within the Indian community for people from the state of Kerala.</p> <p>This programme consists of a series of events which include children's entertainment activities, a special vegetarian lunch and a stage programme showing the talent of the community through</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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			<p>song and dance.</p> <p>The aim of the event is to promote cultural diversity and also to forge closer relationships between the Indian community and the citizens of Belfast.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's key themes 'City Leadership - strong, fair, together' and of 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	
National Police Memorial Day	<p>National Police Memorial Day Reception</p> <p>22nd September, 2018</p> <p>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 is held once a year, rotating in a four yearly basis. This event will seek to remember Police Officers who have been killed or died in duty, demonstrate to relatives, friends and colleagues that their sacrifice is not forgotten and recognise the dedication and courage displayed by officers.</p> <p>This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership, Strong, Fair and Together' and 'Better support for people and communities'.</p>	<p>The use of the City Hall and provision of hospitality in the form of red/white wine and soft drinks</p> <p>Approximate cost £500</p>

Energy Transition – Notice of Motion Update

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

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The following Notice of Motion was considered by Council on 2 November 2015:

At the meeting of the Council on 2nd November, it was proposed by Councillor R. Browne and seconded by Councillor Heading, that:

“This Council:

- *recognises the serious challenges presented by climate change but also the significant economic benefits which are created through the development of an energy efficient economy;*
- *believes that the council must take a lead in planning for an energy transition and for energy transition to be a central aspect of the Belfast*
- *agrees to become fossil fuel free by 2050 and to set an interim target date for the city to become carbon neutral; and*
- *agrees to implement an energy transition action plan which includes a timeline of actions to be taken and policies to be implemented by the council to support renewable energy”*

1.2 Committee on 20 November 2015 asked for a report that might determine potential action in relation to the Notice.

1.3 In terms of actions proposed under the Notice of Motion –

- 1) The Council has recognised the challenges of climate change and the fact that economic benefits are created through an energy efficient economy and has taken considerable action as outlined below.
- 2) At present the Council does not have resources to implement all the aspects of this Notice of Motion. The Committee would need to agree to re-prioritise and re-align resources from elsewhere to enable this to happen. However it is recommended that a feasibility study should be carried out first to give the Committee a clearer understanding of what would be required.

2.0 **Decisions required & Recommendations**

2.1 The Committee is recommended to:-

- Agree to a feasibility study on development and delivery of a City Energy Strategy, including resource implications, by Autumn 2016, in time for the next budget round. This will include a review of any external funding available.
- Note and endorse the current approach to the management of energy and CO₂ pending the development of any energy strategy.

3.0 **Main report**

Key Issues – Actions to Date

- 3.1** Members will be aware that for a number of years the council has sought to implement a pragmatic, business-oriented approach to the related issues of securing efficiencies and cost reductions in relation to energy consumption and management on the one hand and the management of CO₂ emissions on the other. This approach has consciously sought to identify and action schemes and policies which minimise capital outlay and maximise revenue savings, while also offering some tangible element of CO₂ emissions reduction.
- 3.2** This approach has proven to be robust and beneficial to the organization and to its rate-payers and indeed to the environment, as the following summary of recent projects illustrates:-
- Ozone Tennis Centre – LED court lighting. Annual estimated revenue saving of £15,000 together with an estimated 62 Tonnes of CO₂ emissions avoided;
 - Templemore Baths – New boiler upgrades. Annual estimated revenue saving of £55,000 together with 275 Tonnes of CO₂ emissions avoided;
 - Boiler replacements (e.g. Ballysillan, Whiterock and Avoniel). Annual estimated revenue saving of £18,000 together with 83 Tonnes of CO₂ emissions avoided;
 - LED floodlighting system at City Hall. Annual revenue savings of £12,500 together with an overall reduction of 70% in energy consumption and consequent CO₂ emissions.
- 3.3** Other projects successfully completed include the following:-
- Insulation Upgrades – Cavity wall insulation improvements carried out to a number of community centres and leisure centres.
 - Lighting upgrades – LED re-lamping at Belfast castle and Malone house. LED refurbishment at Cecil Ward Building.
 - Combined Heat and Power Units (CHP's) – Installed in all leisure centres and the Waterfront Hall using grant funding from DFPNI. Due for replacement in 2016 using an ESCO contract.
 - North Foreshore – Electricity generation using recovered methane.

- **Boiler upgrades – Boilers replaced at various sites based on condition survey reports. Oldest and least efficient boilers take priority.**
- **BEMS controls - 42 of the council's civic, community and leisure sites have their internal environments controlled centrally via a building energy management system.**
- **Belfast Bike Share Scheme – could also potentially contribute in a limited way to CO₂ reduction if fewer car journeys are made although this is difficult to quantify**
- **Girdwood – Utilisation of an earth heat source instead of a traditional heating system**

- 3.4 It can be seen from the above that the various actions and projects have had a number of financial and environmental benefits. Substantial cost savings in excess of £100,000 per annum have been achieved thus far, and this has been further enhanced by the council's decision to enter into a managed energy contract with an external provider (Schneider Ltd) which has resulted in an additional saving in excess of £80,000 from the procurement of energy for the year 2014/15.**
- 3.5 In terms of CO₂ emissions, members will be aware that in 2008 the UK Government introduced the UK Climate Change Act which set into law national targets for the reduction of CO₂ emissions. The end goal is to reduce CO₂ output from 1990 levels by 80% by 2050. As an interim target the Northern Ireland Executive has set its own target of 35% reduction by 2025.**
- 3.6 In July 2015 the energy management team commissioned the Carbon Trust to carry out an independent, external analysis of BCC energy consumption data collected since 1992 for comparison with the current 2014/15 levels.**
- 3.7 The results of this analysis show that, since 1992, the council's CO₂ emissions have reduced by 39%, thereby already exceeding the full NI Executive 2025 target and also the national target on a pro rata basis. This has been achieved through energy efficiency projects of the type highlighted above, better consumption management, fuel switching (oil to natural gas) and de-carbonisation of the electricity network (although it should be noted that while the council continues to source 'green' electricity the government has removed the climate-change levy (CCL) exemption for this meaning that there is now no financial benefit in doing so).**

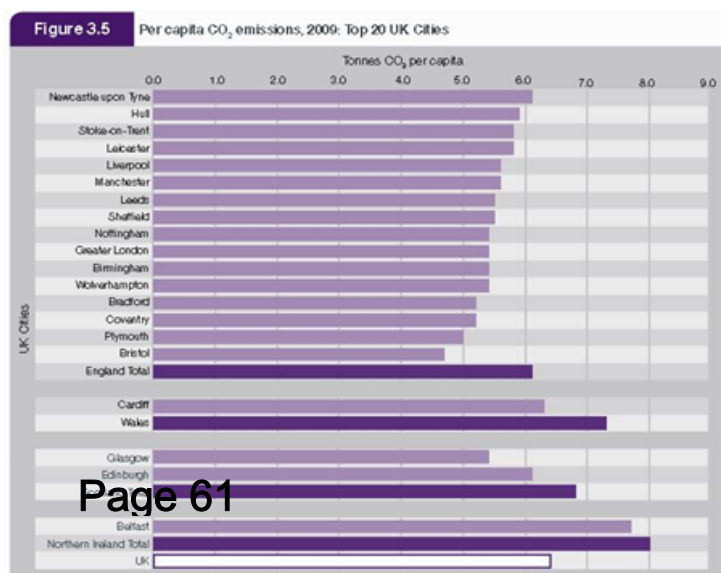
- 3.8 Most recently, the council was joint winner (together with QUB) of the Sustainable Ireland Energy Efficiency Award 2015 on the basis of much of the above.
- 3.9 Hopefully all of the above illustrates that the council is actively and successfully managing its energy and CO₂ responsibilities so far as possible with the resources available. The pragmatic, business-oriented approach to these matters has produced significant financial and environmental benefits to date and it may be appropriate to continue with the current approach at least until a comprehensive energy strategy has been produced (see below).

Resources

- 3.10 Going forward, it must be pointed out that for many years funding for most BCC energy projects was provided externally in the form of fully or part-funded grants. Most notable is the £1,025,134 obtained from the DFPNI's Central Energy Efficiency Fund (CEEF). Unfortunately, however, these funding streams have now largely disappeared, thus forcing many organisations including BCC to find alternative means of funding energy projects. The reality for the council is therefore that the level of funding required to make a meaningful contribution to the reduction of consumption and CO₂ needs to be found internally. In the past few years this funding has been delivered solely via the planned maintenance budget, which offers only very limited scope.
- 3.11 Without a dedicated energy budget for projects there is no guarantee of funding from year to year, and more innovative and integrated solutions will therefore need to be explored in the future. The achievements set out above are notable, but it should be noted that these have been accomplished despite the absence of an over-arching council energy strategy or funding. Projects with short to medium-term paybacks have been and should continue to be carried out, but it should also be noted that these types of projects are getting harder to identify and indeed harder to finance.

Future Options

- 3.12 To continue to make energy and carbon improvements the focus of future projects will inevitably mean a need to shift emphasis largely to renewables. However there would clearly be issues in adopting a totally CO₂-centric approach in this regard, as renewables tend to have high initial capital costs and very long payback periods etc. If the current, business-oriented approach were to be changed to one in which we solely prioritise reducing CO₂ emissions there is no clear correlation that doing so will in turn reduce consumption or costs, e.g. the replacement of existing gas fired boilers (which are low CO₂, clean, efficient, and low maintenance) with biomass boilers will certainly result in a further CO₂ reduction (as biomass is deemed to be carbon neutral) however the initial capital outlay is significantly higher, the fuel cost is not significantly cheaper than gas and in some cases can be more, there are limited fuel sources available locally and the maintenance costs are significant.
- 3.13 Renewable technologies are certainly not an automatic no-cost or low-cost option, and this must obviously be borne in mind. Funding for these high capital cost schemes is also an issue which must be addressed as part of any strategy.
- 3.14 From a strategic point of view there is a real and growing need for the council to implement an Energy Strategy with accompanying action plan which will map out the route to compliance with the 80% reduction target and beyond.
- 3.15 Such a strategy should not only seek to address BCC issues around energy and CO₂ management but should also provide a platform and be a catalyst for a city-wide approach to these issues, which would be very much in line with the Belfast Agenda.
- 3.16 For example, it is notable that, despite the demonstrable progress made by BCC as set out herein, the city itself is not moving in the same direction, or at least not at the same speed. A recent study produced by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors



(RICS) has found that Belfast ranks last in terms of the top 20 UK cities studied in terms of CO2 emissions per capita. As can be seen opposite, Belfast is the worst-performing city in the UK while Northern Ireland is the worst-performing region, so clearly there is scope for improvement. In fairness, it should be noted that a significant proportion of these emissions are in fact from domestic sources and that adjusting for this moves Belfast to a middle-low ranking but the situation is still clearly a difficult one and illustrates the opportunity for Belfast not only to develop its own internal strategy but to provide leadership and direction to the city as a whole in the medium term.

3.17 Opportunities do exist, including incentives to public and private sector organisations in order to meet government targets. For example, Renewable Obligation Certificates (ROCs) are available for Wind, Landfill Gas & Solar Panels. Some existing BCC examples of this are the ROCs paid to council for electricity generation from Landfill Gas produced at North Foreshore and for example the solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on the roof of the new Girdwood Hub which will be entitled to ROC payments. Other opportunities also exist, for example:-

- nearly-zero Carbon Buildings (public sector need to be building exemplar buildings by 2018, and private sector by 2020)
- deep building retrofit (bringing about 60% reduction in energy consumption)
- Smart Cities and communities initiatives
- developing innovative finance vehicles for energy efficiency and renewable energy schemes.

3.18 Hopefully all of the above demonstrates that (a) BCC has made excellent progress in terms of both energy and CO2 management to date on the basis of the pragmatic, business-oriented approach, but (b) that a more difficult period is on the horizon characterised by falling grant and financial support for energy/CO2 projects coupled with more stringent government targets for CO2 management in particular, and (c) that what is now needed is the development of a comprehensive energy strategy for the council and indeed the city to deal with the emerging issues in an innovative, coherent and integrated way.

3.19 Financial & Resource Implications

A feasibility study is likely to cost between £10,000 - £20,000, depending on the scope of the work. There will clearly be

implications should any revised policy or strategy be developed as a result.

3.20 Equality or Good Relations Implications

There are no direct equality implications arising from this report.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations

Attendance at Events

**National Association of Councillors –
National Executive Meetings**

The Committee was advised that it had eight Members on the National Association of Councillors – Northern Ireland Region. Two Members, namely Councillor Jones and Sandford, had been appointed to represent the Northern Ireland Region on the National Association which would require attendance at a number of National Executive Meetings in Waterloo, London during the year. The next four meetings were scheduled to be held on 18th January, 9th May, 12th September and 26th November 2016.

The Committee approved the attendance of Councillor Jones and Sandford at the meetings of the National Executive of the National Association of Councillors and authorised the payment of the appropriate travel, costs and subsistence associated therewith.

Chairperson

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SECTION 2

STANDING COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEES

36 The following shall be the Standing Committees of the Council:

- (a) Strategic Policy and Resources
- (b) City Growth and Regeneration
- (c) People and Communities
- (d) Licensing
- (e) Planning
- (f) **Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd Shareholders' Committee**

DUTIES OF COMMITTEES

37 The Standing Committees shall be responsible to the Council for the matters described hereunder and shall control the various Departments which carry out the functions of the Council, that is to say

(a) Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee will be responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Council through the development of its corporate plan and other key corporate and cross cutting strategies and policies. It will also ensure effective use of resources and value for money for ratepayers, and oversee the Council's relationship with a number of key agencies and partners.

This includes:-

- working with partners to lead the development of the community plan
- Supporting the development, implementation and monitoring of the Physical Investment Strategy
- Developing and implementing the organisation's Good Relations & Equality Strategies
- Allocating resources based on the corporate and city priorities
- Managing and monitoring performance against the achievement of the council objectives and those agreed in the community plan
- Developing the council's finance strategy and all matters relating to its implementation including; all revenue and capital financing and borrowing, the annual revenue and capital budgets and the rate to be levied, monitoring of financial performance
- Developing the council's organisational development strategy and all matters relating to its implementation including; governance and organisation structures, organisational improvement initiatives, member and officer capacity building and monitoring of organisational performance
- Developing the internal strategies to ensure the smooth running of the council including; asset management, procurement, grants, human resources, ,diversity, communications and accommodation

- Managing and maintaining the corporate land bank and city assets, including the City Hall
- Agreeing the Local Development Plan with the Planning Committee
- Overseeing the delivery of the internal council services listed below;

Human Resources; Corporate Communications; Legal Services; Democratic Services; Corporate Policy and Strategic Planning; Finance and Performance; Digital Services and Audit Governance and Risk Services. Property and Projects will also report on Procurement; Contract Management; Programme Management; Estates Unit and Facilities Management . Good relations will also be the responsibility of this committee.

(b) City Growth and Regeneration Committee

The City Growth and Regeneration Committee will be responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects directed to the regeneration and growth of the city in the context of the outcomes agreed in the community and corporate plans and other corporate strategy.

This includes:-

- Influencing and contributing to regional regeneration and growth strategies and activities
- Developing and implementing city-wide economic strategies and policies
- Managing and maximising the impact of major physical developments in the city
- Coordinating and promoting major city wide events
- Sourcing and providing support to attract and utilise European and other grants which contribute to the growth of the city
- Providing support for economic development initiatives
- Supporting the development of culture, heritage and the arts
- Working with other agencies to promote Belfast as a key investment and tourism opportunity
- Developing programmes and actions to support local businesses and attract inward investment
- Managing the Council's markets and maximising their benefit to the city
- Influencing and contributing to strategies and policies affecting skills, employability, transportation and energy in the City
- Overseeing the delivery of the following services

Economic Development, Urban Development, Tourism, Culture and Arts, European and International Relations, **Waterfront and Ulster Halls**, City Markets, City Events, Belfast Castle, Malone House, Belfast Zoo and the transferring car parks

(c) People and Communities Committee

The People and Communities Committee will be responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects aimed at improving life at a local level in the context of the outcomes agreed in the community and corporate plans and other corporate strategy. This includes

- Developing and delivering programmes, events and activities to promote health, safety and well being at a local level
- Administering and enforcing the Council's powers and duties under the Public Health Acts and all environmental health and building related legislation and regulations
- Securing and providing adequate provision for the recycling, treatment and disposal of commercial and domestic waste including bulky waste and the collection and disposal of abandoned motor vehicles.
- Exercising the Council's powers for improving local environmental quality in relation to housing legislation, Managing controlled waste, emergency planning and community safety and anti-social behaviour, clean neighbourhoods and other environmental or regulatory issues not falling within the remit of any other Committee.
- Managing, maintaining and maximising the benefit of the Council's parks, pitches, playgrounds and other public spaces as well as community centres and other indoor facilities
- Developing and implementing activities to ensure the delivery of corporate strategies and initiatives in respect of the promotion of health and physical activity, environmental protection, community safety and other such areas under the domain of this Committee.
- Overseeing the delivery of the Council's frontline services and associated community assets including;
- Overseeing the delivery of the Council's frontline services and associated community assets including;

Environmental Services; Cleansing; Waste Management; Parks and Cemeteries service (excluding zoo, Malone House and Belfast Castle), Neighbourhood and Development Services; Community Services, Community Safety and Emergency Planning.

(d) Licensing Committee

The Licensing Committee shall be responsible for the consideration of all matters pertaining to policy and legislation in relation to licensing issues. The Licensing Committee shall have delegated authority for determining the following matters:

- (i) The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985

Entertainment Licences

Applications for the grant of outdoor licences

Applications for the grant, renewal, transfer or variation of licences where objections are received
Suspension and revocation of licences
Applications for a waiver to permit entertainment involving striptease or nudity.

Sex Establishments

Applications for the grant of licences
Applications for the renewal, transfer or variation of licences
Revocation of licences

- (ii) The Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended by the Betting and Gaming (Northern Ireland) Order 2004).

Applications for the grant of amusement and pleasure permits
Applications for the renewal of amusement permits where adverse representations have been made
Registration of Societies in relation to the running of lotteries.

- (iii) Street Trading Act (Northern Ireland) 2001

Designation of streets or part thereof
Applications for the grant of licences
Applications for the renewal, transfer or variation of licences where objections are received
Revocation of licences
Setting of licence fees

- (iv) administration of the provisions of the Licensing (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 and the Registration of Clubs (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 relating to entertainments and liquor licensing in licensed premises and registered clubs.

- (v) such other licensing matters as the Director of Health and Environmental Services considers appropriate to be addressed by the Licensing Committee.

Whilst the Committee has full delegated authority in relation to licensing decisions it may reconsider any decision referred to it by the Director of Health and Environmental Services in consultation with the Director of Legal Services.

(e) Planning Committee

The Planning Committee shall be responsible for all the Council's planning functions, excepting those matters which are expressly delegated to officers or reserved to full Council.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Exercising the Council's powers and duties in relation to local planning policies, plan strategies, the statement of community involvement and any other development plan documents in conjunction with the Strategic Policy and Resource Committee who will consider all of the said policies and plans to ensure that they are consistent with the broader strategic objectives of the Council;
- Reconsideration of local planning policies, plan strategies, the statement of community involvement and any other development plan documents in respect of which the Strategic

Policy and Resource Committee considers to be inconsistent with the broader strategic objectives of the Council;

- Deciding applications for planning permission and whether to impose any condition, limitation or other restriction on an approval, consent, licence or permission;
- Revoking, amending, modifying or varying any approval, consent, licence or permission;
- Determining any matters related to the exercise of permitted development rights as set out in the Planning (General Development) Order (NI) 1993 or any other legislation relating to such rights;
- Exercising the Council's powers and duties in relation to development control;
- Determining applications for the display of advertisements and whether to impose any condition, limitation or other restriction on such advertisements;
- Determining applications for planning permission or consents for listed buildings and exercising any related powers and duties; including the revocation or modification of such a consent;
- Exercising the Council's powers in relation to the preservation of trees;
- Dealing with any other planning related matter that a meeting of Council or any other Committee considers appropriate to be referred to the Planning Committee;
- Responding to consultations on local planning policies, plan strategies the statement of community involvement and any other development plan documents in adjoining authorities;
- Responding to consultations issued by the Department of Social Development, or any other Department, in relation to planning matters;
- Responding to consultations in relation to regionally significant or major applications to be determined by the Department of Social Development

(f) Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd Shareholders' Committee

The Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd Shareholders' Committee will make the decisions required by the Shareholders' Agreement and ensure that the Company complies with the contract for the operation of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Halls. This includes

- Holding the Belfast Waterfront & Ulster Hall Ltd Chairperson and Managing Director to account on contract and business performance issues;
- Scrutinising the quarterly finance and performance reports, ensuring a social and financial return on the Council's and other funders' investments;
- Controlling and make decisions on reserved matters on behalf of the shareholders, as set out in the Shareholders' Agreement (*e.g. authorising the company to take out a loan*);
- Authorising the annual business plan, ensuring alignment with Council's economic, social and environmental objectives;

- Agreeing and monitoring performance framework targets, including decreasing dependency on Council subsidy;
- Agreeing distributions of available profits in relation to its shareholdings;
- Recommending the appointment of the Chairperson and non-executive Directors to the Board of the BWUH Ltd and agreeing remuneration;
- Acting in the interests of the shareholders in the removal of non-executive Director/s, where there is evidence of under-performance or failure to comply with legal duties;
- Considering business improvement requests for investment in the Council's assets, for recommendation to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee or agreement under delegated authority.

In practice, the Committee will be responsible for:

- Agreeing the annual business plan;
- Agreeing the annual financial plan, in line with the budget allocation from the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee;
- Setting performance targets and monitoring quarterly reports;
- Agreeing any amendments to the Council's specification at review periods;
- Authorising any capital investment proposals which enhance the asset portfolio of the Council;
- Agreeing in-year service improvement plans (*in the scenario where there is under-performance*) ;
- Agreeing distribution of surpluses/reduced deficits

MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING COMMITTEES

38 The membership of the Standing Committees shall be made in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 2 to the 2014 Act.

QUORUM

39 The quorum of every Committee shall be five, with the exception of the Planning Committee and the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd Shareholders' Committee where the quorum shall be four.

People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 8th December, 2015

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Corr Johnston (Chairperson);
the High Sheriff (Alderman McKee);
Aldermen McCoubrey and Rodgers; and
Councillors Austin, Beattie, Bradshaw,
Brown, Copeland, Corr, Garrett, Jones,
Lyons, McCabe, Newton, O'Neill and Sandford.

Also attended: Alderman Kingston; and
Councillors Boyle, McDonough-Brown and
Ó Donnghaile.

In attendance: Mr R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director of Parks
and Leisure;
Mrs. S. Toland, Lead Operations Officer/
Head of Environmental Health; and
Miss. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillor Heading.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 10th November were taken as read and signed as correct.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Brown declared an interest in respect of Item 5(b) in so far as representing the Council on the board of Groundwork NI.

Dates and time of Committee Meetings 2016

The Committee approved the following schedule of meetings for the People and Communities Committee during 2016:

- Tuesday, 12th January;
- Tuesday, 9th February;
- Tuesday, 8th March;
- Tuesday, 12th April;
- Tuesday, 10th May;
- Tuesday, 7th June;

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- No meeting in July;
- Tuesday, 9th August;
- Tuesday, 13th September;
- Tuesday, 11th October;
- Tuesday, 8th November; and
- Tuesday, 6th December.

Request to present to Committee - Christians Against Poverty

The Committee agreed to invite the Christians Against Poverty to present to the Committee at its meeting on 9th February, 2016 to provide information on their Debt Centre, Job Clubs and the Release Group services they provided.

Request to present to Committee - Age Sector Platform

The Committee agreed to invite the Age Sector Platform to present its Belfast City Pensioners Parliament 2016 proposal and their request for funding to the Committee at its meeting on 12th January, 2016.

Presentations

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Ms. S. McCauley, Director Regional Services, Mr. T. Waide, Affordable Warmth Manager, Mr. L. Kinney, Homelessness Manager, and Mr. P. Isherwood, Director of Asset Management, representing the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE).

Ms. McCauley indicated that the purpose of the meeting was to update the Council of its Homelessness Strategy and Rough Sleeping Audit, the Affordable Warmth Programme and Cavity Wall Insulation.

Ms. McCauley and Mr. Kinney provided Members with a presentation on the NIHE Homelessness Strategy 2012-17 and pointed out that the NIHE aimed to eliminate long term homelessness and rough sleeping across Northern Ireland by 2020. They reminded the Committee that their objectives were homelessness prevention; to reduce the length of time households experience homelessness; to remove the need to sleep rough; and to improve services to vulnerable households. They advised the Committee of the work that was being undertaken to tackle those issues, which included:

- comprehensive housing advice;
- regional good practice guidance for young people;
- private rented access scheme: Smartmove;
- evaluating housing first pilot;
- street outreach;
- day centres;
- street needs audit;

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- realignment of services ;
- domestic violence and sexual abuse helpline; and
- young people: enhanced services; accommodation and support.

They outlined the facts and figures surrounding homelessness along with key trends and pointed out that, over the last five years, Northern Ireland had had a 3 percent decrease in individuals presenting themselves as homeless. They advised that, in regards to funding for Homelessness, £13 million had been directed to Homelessness Services in Belfast and that £3.3 million of the Supporting People Programme and NIHE Homelessness funding in Belfast had been directed to low threshold emergency homelessness services.

They reported that initiatives introduced in Belfast since the 2006 Rough Sleepers Strategy included street outreach teams; 20 emergency crash beds and a night time reception centre; a day centre for the homeless; a wet hostel; Dispersed Intensively Managed Emergency (DIME) Accommodation; and a Multi Disciplinary Homeless Support Team.

They summarised the Belfast Street Needs Audit which had been commissioned in 2015 in order to establish a clear and factual picture of current street activity. They advised that it took place over a 12 week period from May to July 2015 between 10pm and 8am in collaboration with Belfast City Centre Management, the Council and PSNI. They advised that the results showed that:

- there were 42 entrenched individuals frequently engaging in street activities – occasionally Rough Sleeping;
- there was a wider visible group observed primarily street drinking and begging;
- all 42 individuals were now being case managed by NIHE's Housing Solutions team;
- the average number of actual Rough Sleepers per night was found to be 6 individuals; and
- many of the group of 42 individuals had accommodation of their own or hostel accommodation.
- that a Multi-Agency approach, led by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, was required to address the matters raised during the Belfast Street Needs Audit and meet the requirements of all stakeholders; and
- an action plan would be developed and jointly implemented;

Mr. Waide provided the Committee with a presentation on the Affordable Warmth Scheme and Cavity Wall Insulation. He advised the Committee of the progress of the Scheme to date which included:

- by the end of December, 3,500 approvals (£13m) would be completed, of which £9 million would be spend by the end March;
- the NIHE had received 12,000 referrals from the Councils, of which, 10,000 had been processed; and

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- 1116 Belfast Referrals had been received, of which 454 were not proceeding; 224 were awaiting applicant response; and 438 were formally approved, leading to 166 currently completed.

It was reported that the measures which had been undertaken to deal with the delays in the process included Shortening the applicant processing time; Councils to take on the role of obtaining eligibility documents at the front end of the process; and the use of NIHE staff to assist applicants after approval to get an installer, start works on site, and produce documents.

Mr. Waide referred to the complexities of the scheme. He explained that approximately 40 percent of the referrals were not eligible and that there were issues arising from the targeted nature of the scheme of fuel poverty areas and the use of multiple installers. He informed the Committee, however, that the NIHE would continue to try to reduce the lead times and overall costs of the scheme.

Mr. Waide outlined that wall insulation was available as part of the Affordable Warmth Scheme and that 15% of those households that had been approved through the scheme had required some sort of cavity wall work.

During Members' questions, the Committee was apprised of the difference between the Affordable Warmth Scheme and the Warm Homes Scheme, 'no-fines' properties insulation measures, assessment costs of the Affordable Warmth Scheme, how areas in fuel poverty would have been identified and the potential for future cavity wall insulation and inspections.

During discussion, the Committee drew the attention of the officers to the delay in payments to contractors and the affordability of households to pay out at the start of the Affordable Warmth process. Ms. McCauley advised that this would be looked at as part of the review of the scheme.

The Chairperson thanked the Northern Ireland Housing Executive officials for attending and the Committee noted the contents of the presentation, in particular:

- that a Multi-Agency approach, led by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, was required to address the matters raised during the Belfast Street Needs Audit and meet the requirements of all stakeholders; and
- an action plan would be developed and jointly implemented;

The Committee also agreed that the process of how the Council currently identify households to refer to the Affordable Warmth Scheme be submitted to the Committee for information.

Braniel Community Group

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Miss. D. Dawson and Mr D. Parks representing the Braniel Community Group.

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Miss. Dawson provided the Committee with a presentation on the proposed future development of a new community facility at a new site close to the Braniel Primary School. She gave an outline of the community survey which had been undertaken to identify the needs of the residents in the area and summarised the responses that had led to the development plan for the new facility. She reported that the proposed new facility would preferably be a manned site and would include a community sports facility, 4G indoor facility, meeting rooms and a kitchen, dining and multi use room. Miss Dawson advised that the Group would require help to develop the proposal further and would wish to work in partnership with the Council.

During discussion, the Committee noted that the current Braniel Community Centre would undergo agreed planned maintenance, in line with compliant practice, as outlined at the last Committee meeting and that, as part of the Community Centre Strategy, Deloitte MCS Limited were undertaking research into the Community Centre provision across the city.

After discussion, the Committee agreed that the Council would establish the feasibility and capacity of the outlined proposal regarding the development of the Braniel Community Centre and update the Committee in due course.

Matters referred back from Council/Notices of Motion

Motion - Support for the Homeless

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st December, had considered the following Notice of Motion, which had been moved by Councillor Ó Donnghaile and seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown, that:

"This Council will dedicate itself to tackle the plight of the homeless this winter by scoping out available Council premises that may be made available for evening and overnight accommodation for our city's rough sleepers. We will engage all relevant Council departments on this matter, including the Lord Mayor's Office, and act as convener to ensure all relevant Government Departments with legal responsibilities are round the table as a matter of urgency to make the necessary physical and financial resources ready. We will also work with charities, the community/voluntary sectors and private companies to ensure the proper human resources and management is in place for this purpose."

Following on from Item (3.a) - the presentation from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) regarding Homelessness - the Committee agreed that the issues of the Motion would be referred to the intended Multi-Agency Forum to be dealt with under the wider strategy of the NIHE following the Belfast Street Needs Audit.

Motion - Deposits for Private Tenancies

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st December, had considered the following Notice of Motion, which had been moved by Councillor Mullan and seconded by Alderman Convery, that:

“This Council notes that the Department for Social Development introduced legislation from 1st April 2013 in relation to deposits paid in connection with Private Tenancies. From that date, landlords must protect deposits in a Tenancy Deposit Scheme within 14 days of receipt and make sure it remains protected in an approved scheme for the length of a tenancy.

During the course of an investigation, a Council solicitor determined that the wording of the legislation does not make the breach of the legislation a continuing offence. This means that a case must be brought in front of the courts within six months of the offence occurring. Unfortunately, many tenants do not discover that their landlord didn't secure their deposit until they are leaving the property, which would normally be 12 months after paying the deposit. This effectively means that the only redress for tenants is through the civil courts.

Accordingly, the Council agrees to write to the Minister for Social Development urging that this flaw in the legislation is redressed as a matter of urgency and that the scheme is brought into line with England, Scotland and Wales in that there is 30 days from the receipt of the deposit for landlords to comply.”

The Committee agreed to raise the issue of redressing the legislation regarding 'Deposits for Private Tenancies' at the planned meeting of an all-party deputation from the Council and the Social Development Minister, Mervyn Storey MLA, on 16th December.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development – Update

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meetings of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group of 5th and 18th November.

Children and Young People – Update

(Mrs. C. Taggart, Community Development Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

With the permission of the Chairperson, the Community Development Manager tabled an additional appendix regarding the Children's Services Co-operation Bill. She summarised the report on key developments in the Children and Young People

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environment, which included an update on the Children's Services Co-operation Bill; the Regional Children and Young People Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) extended action plan up to 2017; and Safeguarding Board Northern Ireland mandatory audit.

She advised the Committee of the additional improvements that would be implemented to engage Children and Young People and invited each party to nominate a Children's and Young People's Political Champion (formerly known as Youth Champions) to help shape the outcomes framework and related activities.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed to seek one nomination from each Party to be a Children's and Young People's Political Champion.

Physical Programme & Asset Management

Review of Grass Pitch Allocation

The Committee considered the following report:-

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the situation in relation to the allocation of the grass soccer pitch in the Waterworks (Westland end) and the process that will be undertaken to review the allocation of grass pitches.

2.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to note

- The update provided in relation to the allocation of the grass soccer pitch in the Waterworks (Westland end) and the process that will be undertaken to review the allocation of grass pitches.**
- That it is anticipated that the review will commence in early January and the recommendations will be brought to this Committee in April 2016.**

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 Members will be aware that a paper was brought to the August meeting of the People and Communities Committee regarding an issue over several requests for the use of the pitch in the Waterworks (Westland end). It was agreed that officers would meet with stakeholders to reach a mutual agreement on the use of the Westland pitch. It was also agreed 'that a review would be undertaken in respect of the allocation of playing pitches, in consultation with the Belfast Leagues, ready for implementation by June 2016, in due course.'**

- 3.2 Officers have met with league secretaries and representatives of various teams who wish to use the pitch in the Waterworks. It was agreed unanimously by all teams that a ground sharing arrangement should be in place and that one of the weeks should be used by a Westland team. As all teams wished to use the alternative week there was no consensus reached. There were suggestions on the process for allocation such as an expression of interest based on agreed criteria.**
- 3.3 The current soccer pitches allocation policy was approved by Committee in September 2003 and involves the Council allocating 66 grass soccer pitches to nine Leagues at the start of the season. The leagues are then responsible for allocating the pitches to their teams for Saturday and Sunday matches in the winter season. The one exception to this is the Down Area Winter Football League (DAWFL) who declined to comply with the Council's policy and pitches were therefore allocated directly to two of their teams, due to LGR this has now increased to five teams.**
- 3.4 Due to a number of changes as outlined below it may now be an opportune time to review our process:**
- the introduction of Local Government Reform which resulted in an increase in the number of teams and pitches;
 - general under usage of pitches identified within the previous season;
 - requests received for use of pitches from Leagues outside of Belfast; and
 - we are receiving competing requests for recently upgraded facilities such as the new pitch in the Waterworks (Westland end).
- 3.5 Officers are currently in the propose of procuring consultancy support to undertake a review using the following staged approach:**

Stage 1a – Supply and demand analysis

This stage will include consultation with relevant stakeholders including leagues and governing bodies and will analyse the demand for our grass pitches from all users.

Stage 1b – Appraisal of management options

This stage will look at the various options that are available for the allocation of our pitches and include the cost and resource implications for the Council for both the allocation of soccer

pitches and the subsequent management of fixtures throughout the season.

Stage 2 – Recommendation of option and process to be used for allocation

Using the findings of stages 1a and 1b a recommendation will be made around the preferred option for the allocation of pitches. It will also provide a process of how the allocation should work including criteria that should be applied: if there is more than one request for a site/pitch; where there is spare capacity; where there is under usage of pitches during the season and where there is displacement as a result of the closure of facilities.

It is anticipated that the review will commence in early January and the recommendations will be brought to this Committee in April 2016. It is also proposed that information sessions would be held during May 2016 with key stakeholders to present the preferred option and to ask for their comments on the implementation and management process.

Financial & Resource Implications.

Based on previous experience it is estimated that the cost of the consultancy support would be in the region of £5,000 - £7,000 and this can be met through existing departmental budgets.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

The policy will be screened in line with the Council's process and the consultant will be asked to provide a preliminary equality screening to identify any potential differential impacts and possible mitigating action and also any potential good relations impacts. An EQIA was also carried out on the Playing Pitches Strategy which is the overarching strategy to which this piece of work relates."

The Committee noted the contents of the report, in particular:

- an update in relation to the allocation of the grass soccer pitch in the Waterworks (Westland end) and the process that would be undertaken to review the allocation of grass pitches; and
- that a review was anticipated to commence in early January and the recommendations be submitted for consideration in April 2016.

Outdoor Classroom - Alexandra Park

The Committee was reminded that the Alexandra Park Steering Group presented their proposal for an outdoor classroom at Alexandra Park to the North Area Working Group, at its meeting on 23rd November. The Assistant Director advised that the Group sought approval to undertake a public consultation exercise in relation to the creation of the outdoor classroom which would require the reduction or removal of a section of the interface barrier.

She confirmed that the proposed consultation would involve consulting with key stakeholders in the area and local residents through the holding of several public meetings which be independently facilitated, at different times and locations to maximise attendance. She advised that the independent consultant would be expected to deliver a report outlining:

- feedback on the development of the park to date;
- emerging priorities for the Council to consider in its planning cycle with the Steering Group;
- options on community engagement in the park; and
- a position on the outdoor classroom, and any mitigating actions.

The findings of which would be report to the North Area Working Group and the Committee for consideration.

She pointed out that the consultation would also provide an opportunity to review and refresh the terms of reference for the Steering Group as per the recommendations from the Harrison report in February, 2014 and an opportunity to re-connect with local residents and revitalise the broader plan for the park, in-keeping with the Council's standards for community engagement and outreach work.

The Committee approved the outlined public consultation exercise which would take place on the development of an outdoor classroom in Alexandra Park and noted that a maximum of £6,000 had been set aside from existing departmental resources for this.

Finance, Procurement and Asset Management

Parks Events - Small Grants Scheme

The Committee was reminded that approval had previously been granted to transfer the responsibility for the Parks Events Small Grants Scheme to the Central Grants Unit, with the Assistant Director being granted delegated authority to approve applications for funding.

It was reported that, out of the 19 applications which had been received for support within the current tranche, 8 had met with the criteria.

The Committee noted the contents of the report regarding the decision taken by the Assistant Director, under delegated authority regarding the applications received in

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Tranche 2 for events taking place in parks between 1 October, 2015 and 31 March, 2016, a copy of which was published on the Council's website.

Community Development Grant Programme 2016/17

The Committee considered the following report:-

1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain approval from members for a one year extension of the 15/16 large grants awarded under the Community Development Grant Programme.

1.2 The budget for the current contracts is made up of the following sources of funding, including; £1,404,000 from the Department for Social Development under the Community Support Programme, £1,050,483.00 from Council and an additional investment of £635,523 from Council in 15/16.

2.0 Recommendations

The committee is requested to approve the following;

- (i) To extend the current large grant contracts for a further one year period up to the 31st March subject to a review and submission of the 16/17 programme.**

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

Members were advised in an update report on the Transfer of Urban Regeneration and Community Development in June 2015 that the DSD budget transferring included £1.4million funding towards the Council's own £2.5 million Community Development Grants Programme which covers General Advice Grants, Capacity Building Grants and Revenue Grants for Community Buildings. In preparation for the transfer of Urban Regeneration and Community Development in April 2015, and to align with transition and transformation, Council held an open call for the three large Community Development Grants in June 2014.

As part of the process applicants were invited to submit proposals for a 2 year period (2015-2017) and were assessed on that basis. However, as the transfer of regeneration powers was delayed until 2016, and the associated financial support package was not yet agreed, contracts could only be awarded for a one year period up to March 2016.

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- 3.2** In order to facilitate effective engagement with the sector and to enable timely notification to groups in line with the Public Account Committee's 'Code of Conduct and Addressing Bureaucracy report in Grant Making' which was launched earlier this year, it is recommended that current contracts should now be extended until 31 March 2017. The extension would be subject to a review of performance and the submission of a programme for 16/17.
- 3.3** Officers also recommend that those organisations which failed to meet the grant threshold and who Council agreed to fund for a one year period are offered the same contract extension.
- 3.4** Any decision to extend would facilitate funding for 29 Capacity Building grants, 82 Revenue for Community Buildings grants, and support the 5 Generalist Advice Consortia. Project and summer scheme grants would be subject to an open call for applications.
- 3.5** The proposal to extend these 3 large grants is subject to Council receiving the same level of grant income of £1,404,000 from the DSD Community Support Programme 16/17 given the postponement of the Transfer of Regeneration and Community Development.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 4.0** The additional resource required from Council to extend the existing grants for 2016/17 is £635,523.00. This was agreed by the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 20th November 2015.

5.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications

There are no equality or Good Relations implications."

The Committee approved the extension of the current large grant contracts for a further one year period up to 31st March, 2017 subject to a review and submission of the 16/17 programme.

Operational Issues

Amateur Boxing Strategy – Update

The Committee considered the following report:-

1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on ‘the eligibility of clubs which were affiliated to the Northern Ireland Boxing Association, as opposed to the Irish Amateur Boxing Association, to apply for funding under the Council’s Amateur Boxing Strategy’ as requested at the November Council meeting.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the update provided.

3.0 Main report

3.1 As advised in the October 2015 report to the People and Communities Committee, a process has begun to establish a governing body for boxing in Northern Ireland. Boxing is currently governed on an all island basis and the recognised governing body is the Irish Amateur Boxing association (IABA) based in Dublin. The Northern Ireland Boxing Association (NIBA) has now been established as a separate entity and whilst it is not yet a recognised governing body several clubs have now affiliated with it.

3.2 The total fund allocated to the Amateur Boxing Strategy is £200K per annum for a three year period. Under the strategy there is only one fund to which clubs can directly apply for funding. This is the ‘Start up Fund’ of £10k per annum which newly established boxing clubs can apply for a grant of £2,500. One of the criteria as agreed by Council is that the club must ‘be established as a boxing club (not Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) or other activities) and be working towards IABA or Nation GB recognition’. As the NIBA is not currently a recognised governing body, newly established clubs which are affiliated to them are not currently eligible to apply for this funding.

3.3 A key element of the Boxing Strategy is the promotion of boxing across the city through events such as the Belfast Day of Boxing and Try it events. Clubs that take part in events such as these will be reimbursed for expenses such as facility hire and coaching time. The Council will only use clubs that

are affiliated to a recognised governing body and where possible clubs that have 'Clubmark'. Affiliation to a recognised governing body gives the Council assurance that a club is operating to a high standard and that they have the correct policies and procedures in place around areas such as:

- Health and safety
- Child protection
- Governance and management
- Coach education and vetting
- Training and vetting of volunteers

This is particularly important in a high impact sport such as boxing to ensure that any risk of injury is mitigated. Affiliation to a recognised governing body also gives us assurance that the correct insurance is in place which is important if we are to use a club and/or its coaches for an event that is open to the public.

3.4 Coach education and development is one of the key strategic challenges of the Strategy and the Council has funded a number of coaching courses. Generic courses such as child protection and first aid are open to coaches from any club including those affiliated to the NIBA. However boxing specific qualifications such as Level 1 and 2 have to be delivered through a governing body that is recognised by the AIBA (International Boxing Association) and currently the only body recognised to deliver these courses in Northern Ireland is the IABA.

3.5 Club support and development is another key strategic challenge and one of the key actions under this was the introduction of a Sports Development Officer and two community based boxing coaches. The Sports Development Officer works with all boxing clubs across the city irrespective of affiliation advising and assisting as required around issues such as Club Development Plans, good governance and funding.

The Council has also recently commissioned a boxing club development support programme which will be offered to 15 clubs on a first come first serve basis. This will provide a mix of training sessions on topics including funding, facility development, event management and governance and 1-1 mentoring support for clubs on areas they have identified for development. This programme will be open to all clubs across the city whether affiliated to the IABA or NIBA. If demand exceeds the number of places available we will explore the potential of rolling it out again in the next financial year.

3.6 There are other Belfast City Council grants available including a range of Support for Sport grants. The eligibility criteria for both the large and small development grants is that an organisation must: Be a club or a constituted community group with a current membership affiliated to a governing body that is recognised by Sport NI or Belfast City Council (National Governing Bodies are not eligible to apply).

3.7 Financial & Resource Implications.

£200,000 per year for a period of 3 years was agreed for the implementation of the strategy.

3.8 Equality or Good Relations Implications

The strategy has been equality screened in line with the Council's equality process. The screening showed that there were potential adverse impacts on a number of groups including females and people with a disability and mitigating actions were added to the strategy."

Noted.

Use of Sports Pavilions by Stakeholders

The Committee was reminded that, following the transfer of Tullycarnet Park in April, as part of Local Government Reform, it had been established that a number of groups and clubs used this facility, namely:

- TAGIT Boxing Club;
- Gilnahirk Men's Bowling Club;
- Gilnahirk Ladies' Bowling Club;
- Gilnahirk Bowling Veteran's Club; and
- Royal British Legion, Tullycarnet Branch.

The Assistant Director reported that those groups had had an informal key holding arrangement with Castlereagh Borough Council, and approval was being sought to formalise those arrangements as the Park was now part of the Council's remit. She pointed out that, while the pavilions would not be normally staffed, it was intended that key holding arrangements could be put in place to support better use of the facilities. She explained that these partners would open and close the facilities in line with the club or user requirements, under a legal agreement with the Council, and that bookings would be handled by the Outdoor Leisure Unit. She confirmed that Groups at Tullycarnet would be paying customers and would continue to pay for all such bookings.

She explained that, as part of the key holding arrangements, users would receive an induction in relation to all health and safety issues related to the management of the pavilion as well as requirements for safeguarding children, young

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people and vulnerable adults and key holders would be required to sign up to a binding legal agreement, outlining their responsibilities.

She advised that, in addition, a request had been received from East Belfast Partnership for key holding and free use of the pavilions at Orangefield and Victoria Parks for community events and initiatives, some of which would be undertaken in partnership with the Parks outreach team.

The Committee agreed that permission be given to formalise key holding arrangements by means of a legal agreement with appropriate terms of use with the groups using Tullycarnet Pavilion.

It was also agreed that the East Belfast Partnership be granted free use of the Orangefield and Victoria Park Pavilions on a three month trial basis and that a review of the trial be reported to the Committee for consideration.

Street Naming - New Street Proposals

(Mr. T. Martin, Head of Building Control, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee approved the undernoted applications for the naming of new streets, in respect of which the Royal Mail had offered no objection:

<u>Proposed Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Applicant</u>
Harberton Park Gardens	Off Harberton Park, BT9	Dimensions Architects
Harberton Crescent	Off Harberton Park, BT9	Dimensions Architects
Harberton Green	Off Harberton Park, BT9	Dimensions Architects
Harberton Lane	Off Harberton Park, BT9	Dimensions Architects
Harberton Square	Off Harberton Park, BT9	Dimensions Architects

The Committee refused the proposed naming of Glenalina Court, Off Glenalina Road to allow the developer to submit a further proposed name.

Proposed Naming of CS Lewis Square

It was reported that, as part of the Connswater Community Greenway (CCG) that was currently being delivered by the Council as part of our Investment Programme, a civic square was being constructed at Hollywood Arches adjacent to the Newtownards Road which would be capable of hosting outdoor performances, markets and local celebrations.

The Assistant Director advised that the square was being themed in honour of the locally born author C.S Lewis and would be home to a series of public art pieces inspired by his classic children's novel – The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.

The Committee agreed to name the civic square being constructed at Hollywood Arches as part of Connswater Community Greenway - the 'C.S. Lewis Civic Square'.

**Court of Appeal Hearing Update - Dual Language Street Sign
at Ballymurphy Drive**

(Mr. T. Martin, Head of Building Control, and Miss N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the following report:-

“1.0 Purpose of report or summary of main issues

1.1 To update the Committee on the recent Court of Appeal hearing in relation to the application for the erection of a dual language street sign at Ballymurphy Drive. The Committee is also asked to determine this application.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the Committee:

- note the determinations made in both the legal proceedings connected with this application, and
- consider whether to exercise its discretion on the application to erect a second street nameplate in Irish at Ballymurphy Drive.

3.0 Main report

Background

3.1 An application was received on 23 May 2013 from Glór na Móna to erect a second street nameplate at Ballymurphy Drive, showing the name of the street expressed in a language other than English. The second language was Irish. The Council’s Street Naming Policy requires two thirds of the persons on the street appearing on the electoral register to respond in favour of the application. However, the policy does permit the Council to depart from that policy in exceptional circumstances.

3.2 Despite the extension of the time within which responses could be submitted, the applicant failed to meet that threshold. No exceptional circumstances were provided by the applicant as to why the Council should depart from its Policy and the application was not placed before Committee for recommendation for approval.

3.3 Subsequently a resident of Ballymurphy Drive, Ms Eileen Reid, of 13 Ballymurphy Drive (the Applicant), judicially reviewed that decision. That judicial review

primarily sought to challenge the validity of the Council's Policy itself. This case was subsequently heard on 5th September and 10th November 2014 before Mr Justice Horner.

- 3.4 The decision of Mr Justice Horner was delivered on 4th December 2014 and a copy of this Judgment is attached at Appendix 1. As appears from that Judgment, the Judicial Review failed on each of the five grounds advanced.
- 3.5 The decision was reported to the Heath Environmental Services Committee in January 2015.
- 3.6 Ms Reid then sought to appeal the decision of Mr Justice Horner to the Court of Appeal. The appeal was opened before the Court of Appeal on 17th November 2015.
- 3.7 In the early exchanges at the hearing it became clear that a key consideration for the Court was the discretion which exists within the policy. Although it was accepted by the appellant that this application had not received the required support, the appellant asserted that exceptional circumstances existed in this application and the Council should consider exercising its discretion to depart from the policy.
- 3.8 The Council's case – accepted by Mr Justice Horner – was that, as the policy operates, the Head of Building Control considered in the first instance whether there were exceptional circumstances which warranted an application which does not meet the usual requirements of the policy being put before the then Health and Environmental Services Committee ('the Committee') in order for it to consider whether it wished to depart from the policy. In this case, no such purported exceptional circumstances had been raised at the time of the application – although the appellant's lawyers raised a number of matters in the course of the judicial review proceedings themselves which they claimed amounted to such exceptional circumstances.
- 3.9 However, given that the Council accepted that it had a discretion to depart from the policy but that the Council had not at any time, in advance of the proceedings brought by the appellant, considered the issues belatedly raised by her as a basis for it departing from the policy, the Court of Appeal questioned whether it would be more appropriate, at this juncture, for the matter to be sent back to the Committee for consideration of those issues now.

- 3.10 After consideration and consultation Council officers agreed to the application being referred to Committee to allow consideration of the exceptional circumstances now relied upon by the appellant. The appellant was agreeable to this course of action and the appeal was therefore disposed of on this basis, without further order and without costs.
- 3.11 This means that the judgement of Mr Justice Horner dated 4 December 2014, dismissing the challenge to the policy and to the purported refusal by the Council to consider the proposal to erect an Irish language name-plate at Ballymurphy Drive, remains in place.
- 3.12 The decision in this case will hopefully reassure the Council, not only in relation to the process it carried out in this decision but also in the legality of its policy especially in accordance with its obligations under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

Key Issues

- 3.13 The power for the Council to consider applications to erect a second street nameplate in a language other than English is contained in Article 11 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1995.
- 3.14 The subject application relates to Ballymurphy Drive, Belfast and it is to erect a second street nameplate showing the name of the street in Irish – which is Céide Bhaile Uí Mhurchú. The Application was lodged by Glór na Móna.
- 3.15 The translation was authenticated by Queens University, the approved translator for Belfast City Council.
- 3.16 In accordance with the Council's policy for the erection of dual language street signs surveys of all persons appearing on the Electoral Register for the above street were carried out.

Survey outcome

- 3.17 52 people (57%) are in favour of the erection of a second street nameplate;
- 1 person was not in favour and 39 people (43%) did not respond to the survey.

It is worth noting that this survey was carried out over 2 years ago and therefore Officers are concerned that these figures may not represent the current views of the residents.

- 3.18 The Council's policy on the erection of a second street nameplate requires that at least two thirds (66.6%) of the people surveyed must be in favour of the proposal to erect a second street sign in a language other than English. There is however discretion within the policy to dispense with its requirements where the applicant can demonstrate that exceptional circumstances exist which would warrant departure from the policy.
- 3.19 The circumstances which were relied upon by Ms Reid were as follows:
- 1) The survey carried out demonstrated clear support for the above proposal.
 - 2) The Council is now aware, if it was not before, that Ballymurphy Drive derives its name from the Irish language townland name of Baile Uí Mhurchú.
 - 3) The Council is now aware, if it was not before, that there is widespread use of and popular support for the Irish language in this area and that such is recognised as part of the council's tourism strategy for the city.
 - 4) The council has an obligation to promote the use of Irish in public life under the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages.
- 3.20 The Head of Building Control has also written to Ms Reid asking her to submit the exceptional circumstances upon which she wishes the Council to exercise its discretion in respect of this particular application. At the time of writing this report no further circumstances have been provided by Ms Reid.
- 3.21 In relation to the circumstances set out at point 1, Members are referred to the decision of Mr Justice Horner and in particular paragraphs 32-34. Points 2, 3 and 4 are broadly discussed in paragraphs 35-41 of the Judgement.
- 3.22 The tourism strategy which was referred to is understood to be the 'Integrated Strategic Framework for Belfast Tourism 2010-2014' as a skeleton argument lodged on behalf of Ms Reid stated that this street is in the Gaeltacht Quarter as described in that document. Members are advised that this street was not in the original boundary as established by the Dutton Report under the Framework but is within the

Extended Gaeltacht Quarter Boundary that was agreed by Council on 1 November 2012.

- 3.23 The Committee is therefore requested to consider whether the circumstances which are set out above are such that it wishes to dispense with the requirement for the applicant to demonstrate that two thirds of those surveyed were in favour of the proposal.**

Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.24 There is a cost of approximately £250 covering the cost of the manufacturing and erection of the dual language street signs. The cost for these street signs has been allowed for in the current budget.**

Equality or Good Relations Implications

- 3.25 There are no direct Equality implications.”**

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Corr,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the Committee agrees to use their discretion and approve the application to erect a second street nameplate in Irish at Ballymurphy Drive.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Jones,
Seconded by Alderman Rodgers,

That the Committee agrees that a further survey be undertaken regarding the application to erect a second street nameplate in Irish at Ballymurphy Drive.

On a vote by show of hands seven Members voted for the amendment and six against and it was declared carried. Accordingly, the amendment was put to the Committee as the substantive motion and passed.

The Committee also noted the determinations made in both the legal proceedings connected with this application.

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'Live Here Love Here' Campaign

The Committee was reminded that the Live Here Love Here (LHLH) Campaign Programme was being managed by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful to create a movement in Northern Ireland communities which focused on Civic Pride and encouraged residents to take action in their local communities through volunteering activities.

It was reported that the Project had engaged with 94,542 volunteers during 2015/16 and would be expected to exceed its target in this area by the end of year three.

The Committee was reminded that the original agreement was for three years funding, however, the commencement of the project had been delayed by a year. It was suggested that the council supported the funding for an additional year 2016/17 at the cost of £41,000.

The Committee adopted the following recommendations:

- I. note the progress made with the LHLH campaign to date and the benefits in collaborating in a wider behavioural change campaign.
- II. commit to Belfast City Council continuing to support the campaign for a further year during 2016/17 at a maximum level of £41,000 from within the existing Cleansing Services anti-litter campaign budget, following a review of the project at each year end. This would ensure that the campaign still meets with the aims of the Belfast Agenda. Funding would also be dependent on other contributors maintaining funding at levels which make the programme viable.

Winter Warmth Packs – Update

The Committee was reminded that over the past three years the Council and the Public Health Agency (PHA) had provided over 3,000 winter warmth packs to vulnerable households in the city and was given an update on the plans for the provision of packs for the coming winter.

The Lead Operations Officer reported that the PHA, through the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP), would link with 'Engage with Age' to procure and distribute packs to those over 65's most at risk. It was pointed out that, as was the case in previous years, the PHA would be funding children's packs and had asked the Council to procure them on their behalf.

She confirmed that, as the Council also had a number of packs in reserve, it was proposed that these would be used to support vulnerable adults or groups and to assist the Council's response in the event of an exceptional cold spell.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 8th December, 2015**

The Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed to the proposals for the use of its own stock of Winter Warmth Packs.

The Committee also agreed that the potential to distribute Winter Warmth Packs on a wider scope than the eligibility criteria outlined in the report would be investigated.

Volunteering Charter Update

(Mrs. C. Taggart, Community Development Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee was reminded that Community Services had been working in partnership with Volunteer Now to develop a Volunteering Charter for the Council and an implementation plan which would embed the Charter principles in the practice of those departments involving volunteers. The Community Development Manager advised that the results of a scoping exercise had highlighted the need for the Council to develop a policy on Volunteering which would enable strategic direction and enable consistency in the approach of managing and recruiting volunteers.

She reported that a draft Policy would be presented to the Strategic Policy and Resource Committee in early 2016 and an action plan developed to support the launch of the Policy in April, 2016.

The Committee noted the progress with the implementation of the Volunteer Charter and agreed to the development of a Volunteering Policy for Council.

Request for use of BCC Premises

Barnett Demesne

The Committee agreed to the request from the County Grand Lodge for the use of Barnett Demesne on the 12th July, 2016, subject to an appropriate legal agreement being prepared by the Town Solicitor.

Ulster Rugby - Use of the Overflow Car Park at Cregagh Youth and Community Centre

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, the occasional use of the overflow car park by way of a licence agreement to Ulster Rugby, subject to detailed terms to be agreed by the Estates Manager and Legal Services.

Chairperson

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Thursday, 3rd December, 2015

SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairperson);
Aldermen Kingston and McGimpsey; and
Councillors Attwood, Beattie, Craig,
Dudgeon, Graham, Howard, Kyle,
Magee, McAteer, McDonough-Brown,
Ó Donnghaile, O'Hara and Walsh.

Also attended: Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors Boyle, Brown, Copeland
and Johnston.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

BCCM – Request to Present

The Committee agreed that Belfast City Centre Management be invited to present at the meeting on 9th December.

Presentations

Transport NI – Autumn Report

The Chairperson advised the Committee that Mr. K. Monaghan, Eastern Divisional Manager, Mr. B. O'Neill, Belfast North Section Engineer, and Mr. G. McKibbin, Belfast South Section Engineer from Transport NI were in attendance and they were admitted to the meeting.

Mr. Monaghan provided an overview of the main strategic transportation issues for the city, namely the York Street Interchange and Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT). He outlined that a public inquiry had taken place, between 10th and 12th November, on the York Street Interchange. He advised the Committee that inspectors were now considering the issues raised and that a report would be due by the end of January 2016.

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He then provided the Committee with an update on the progress of the Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT) scheme, where work had taken place in both the east and west of the city. He reminded the Members that Transport NI had implemented a temporary embargo on work over the Christmas period to refrain from causing any unnecessary traffic disruption but that work would recommence in January.

During discussion, a Member had raised a query regarding residents parking schemes. In response, the representatives from Transport NI advised that they would like to see them introduced in a number of areas as they would integrate into the city's overall transportation strategy but that, despite considerable efforts, it had not been possible to secure community consensus to implement a scheme in any of the proposed locations yet. In response to a further Member's question in relation to the Belfast City Centre Ring - South Section, Mr. Monaghan explained that the scheme would be reduced in scale from what had previously been proposed in the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP). He explained that it would focus on the needs of public transport, pedestrians and cyclists, as well as general traffic, and take cognisance of potential redevelopment opportunities.

Another Member advised that a number of the streetlights were no longer working on the Sydenham bypass, between the Connsbank Road and the Belfast City Airport, and there had been three accidents in the last few weeks. The Transport NI representatives advised that they were aware of this and that it was a Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) issue. They advised also that there were 15 lights which needed repaired and that they had been programmed for repair but that they would liaise with NIE again to see if the repairs could be expedited.

A further Member outlined to the Transport NI representatives that he had been in contact with Transport NI in relation to a number of accidents at the pedestrian crossing at the junction of the Ravenhill Road/My Ladys Road. Mr. Monaghan advised that Transport NI would carry out an inspection and that it could be repainted if it was deemed necessary

A number of Members raised the following issues with the representatives from Transport NI:

- budget cuts;
- issues with a number of speed humps;
- plans to widen the Sydenham by-pass;
- plans to expand the safe cycle network into residential areas outside of the city centre;
- a number of unadopted alleyways in the city;
- proposed new pedestrian bridge at the Gasworks (different branch in the department – will come back to you)
- visual improvements for the bridge at Finaghy Road North;

Before the representatives retired from the meeting Mr. Monaghan advised the Committee that Mr. O'Neill would be retiring from his position in

**Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
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Transport NI at the end of January 2016 and a number of Members paid tribute to his work with the Council over the years.

Translink – Transport Hub

The Committee was advised that Mr. C. Conway, Group Chief Executive of Translink, Mr. L. McComb, Programme Director for the Belfast Hub, and Mr. F. Panayides, Project Architect from John McAslan and Partners were in attendance to present on the new Belfast Transport Hub and they were admitted to the meeting.

Mr. Conway advised that the current Great Victoria Street Bus and Rail Station currently handled 12million passenger movements per year and that that was expected to double in the future. He outlined that the Belfast Hub, on the same site, would be a transport led regeneration project which would seek to support sustainable economic growth. He explained that the Hub would act as a gateway not only to Belfast but to Northern Ireland as a whole and that the aim for the architect was to create a high quality arrival experience into the city.

He explained to the Committee that Translink had been working closely with the Council during the proposals for a Transport Hub and that it was keen to continue to work together to make the most of such an opportunity for Belfast. The Members were also reminded that, in order for the Hub to be a success, policy decisions in support of public transport would be required.

Mr. McComb explained to the Members that new transport hubs which had been built in large cities had played a valuable part for city investment and had played a significant role in the growth of the economy. The Committee was advised that there was wide evidence to show that new stations similar to the one proposed for Belfast had acted as a catalyst for broader development and regeneration.

During discussion, a Member asked how the Sandy Row area would be affected by the new Hub. In response, the Translink representatives explained that they would work with the local community and, through the layout of the regeneration scheme, were seeking to encourage footfall to Sandy Row. In response to a further Member's question, Mr Conway stated that Translink did not intend to sell off any assets in order to pay for the Hub.

Mr. Panayides outlined the three options for the design of the new Hub and explained that all options included:

- double the number of rail platforms;
- an increased number of bus stands;
- the Enterprise service relocated from Belfast Central;
- integration with Belfast Rapid Transit (BRT);
- an attractive arrival experience; and
- a mixed use regeneration scheme
- impact on the retail offer in the surrounding area

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A number of Members suggested that they would like to see a joined up public transport network, with connections between the two Belfast airports and Dublin airport, an extension of the rail network across the city and a new rail station to service the Ulster University in York Street.

In response to a Member's question, Mr. Conway advised that Translink was investigating an integrated ticketing system for all public transport and that a tendering process would be undertaken in the next few weeks.

Members were supportive and could see the benefits of Option 1 in linking the arrival point to Great Victoria Street, opening the regeneration project up to the surrounding communities and maximising the commercial attractiveness of the regeneration land.

After further discussion the representatives from Translink retired from the meeting.

SONI

The Chairperson advised the Committee that Mr. R. McCormick, General Manager of SONI, and Mr. S. Brennan, North South Interconnector Project Manager, were in attendance and they were admitted to the meeting.

Mr. McCormick explained to the Members that the role of Systems Operator Northern Ireland (SONI) was to organise and develop the transmission network, enabling large amounts of electricity to be moved from one area to another and ensuring that there was adequate power to meet demand. The Committee was advised that this role had formerly been undertaken by Northern Ireland Electricity (NIE) but that SONI had now been licensed to carry out this critical function. The representatives from SONI outlined the locations of the generators throughout Northern Ireland and explained that the increasing number of wind farms on private land had ensured a decrease in the wholesale price of electricity.

Mr. Brennan explained that a large number of businesses, especially those involved in renewable energy, were keen to see a second interconnector between the north and south of Ireland, because the northern grid was often overloaded. Members were advised that, at present, cross-border electricity suppliers were not able to share electricity at peak times in the volumes that they would like and that a second North South Interconnector would allow cheaper surplus energy generated on one side of the border to be shared by customers on the other side. The Committee was advised that the Interconnector would cost around £204million but that it was vital given Northern Ireland's low surplus.

After a number of questions from Members, the Committee was invited to visit the SONI headquarters at a future date and the SONI representatives outlined that they would appreciate a letter of support from the Council in relation to the timely establishment of a second North South interconnector as outlined.

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The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation and they left the meeting.

Water Infrastructure

The Director of Property and Projects outlined to the Committee the Living with Water Programme (LWWP) which aimed to protect the city, enhance existing drainage infrastructure and allow the city to grow in economic terms. He explained that the DRD was fully aware that the Belfast drainage infrastructure was inadequate in terms of dealing with flood risk, pollution of the Belfast Lough which could lead to contravention with EU standards and a lack of capacity in the main Waste Water Treatment plant at Duncrue.

The Committee was informed that, in order to address these issues and to ensure that the city could grow both in terms of business and residential development, the DRD had developed the LWWP which aimed to create a Strategic Drainage Infrastructure Plan.

The Director explained that there were a range of key stakeholders addressing water related issues, including the DRD, Rivers Agency, the DoE as well as subsidiary organisations such as NI Water and Transport NI. The Committee was advised that the Council also had a key role given that it would produce the Local Development Plan, it owned large areas of open space which were suitable for drainage relief, and it was the direct point of contact for a large number of citizens through the elected Members.

The Members were advised that a group of officers from across these organisations had been working to produce a coherent plan and that, currently, estimates to undertake a suitable programme of works ranged from £350m to £750m and would take an estimated 10 years to deliver. The Director highlighted to the Members that, not only would the funding have to be found for the significant upgrades to the infrastructure, reminding Members that water charges were payable in England, there would also be a period of disruption when these works were being undertaken and that clear communication would be vital throughout the process in order not to have a significant impact on the city's economic growth.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to invite NI Water to a future special meeting in order to discuss the City's infrastructure.

Chairperson

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 9th December, 2015

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairperson);
Aldermen Kingston, McGimpsey and Stalford; and
Councillors Attwood, Beattie, Craig,
Dudgeon, Graham, Howard, Lyons,
Magee, McAteer, McDonough-Brown,
Ó Donnghaile and O'Hara

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. D. Durkan, Interim Director of Development;
Ms. L. Toland, Head of Economic Initiatives and
International Development and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillor Kyle and Councillor Walsh.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 11th November were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st December.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Dates and Times of Future Meetings

The Committee agreed to the schedule of monthly meetings for the period from January to December, 2016, commencing at 5.15p.m.:

- Wednesday, 13th January;
- Wednesday, 10th February;
- Wednesday, 9th March;
- Wednesday, 13th April;
- Wednesday, 11th May;
- Wednesday, 8th June;
- No meeting in July;
- Wednesday, 10th August;
- Wednesday, 14th September;

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- Wednesday, 12th October;
- Wednesday, 9th November; and
- Wednesday, 7th December.

The Committee also noted that additional special meetings would be scheduled when required.

Request to Present to Committee – NI Water

The Committee was advised that a request had been received from NI Water to attend a future meeting. The Chief Executive reminded the Members that it had previously agreed to hold a special meeting to discuss the city's water infrastructure in response to the presentation from the Director of Property and Projects at its last special meeting. The Chief Executive also suggested that the Committee might invite the Belfast Public Hire Taxi Service to the same meeting to discuss recent issues.

The Committee agreed to invite both NI Water and the Belfast Public Hire Taxi Service to a special meeting which would be scheduled for January.

**Request to Present to Committee – Ulster University
Centre for Economic Policy**

The Committee agreed to receive a presentation from the Ulster University's Centre for Economic Policy at its meeting on 13th January.

Request to Present to Committee – the MAC

The Committee agreed to receive a presentation from The MAC at its meeting on 13th January.

Presentation

Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) – Future Resource Request

The Committee was advised that Mr. B. McGivern, BCCM Chairman, Mr. A. Irvine, City Centre Manager, Mr. H. Black, President of the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce, and Mr. C. Sutor, Chairman of the Belfast One BID were in attendance and they were admitted to the meeting.

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- **Introduce the presentation to this committee by Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM), setting out their proposed priority actions for the financial year 2016/2017**

- Outline the associated financial contribution requested from the Council towards the operational costs, in line with Council priorities for city centre regeneration.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that Members:

- Note the proposed future role for BCCM, as set out in a recent independent review
- Agree the priority actions for the organisation for the coming year, in line with Council priorities for city centre regeneration, and agree that Council officers should work with BCCM staff to agree specific activities to deliver on these priorities
- Agree the financial contribution of £190,000 for core funding for the financial year 2016/2017, subject to approval of the requisite budget in the estimates in January 2016, and subject to agreed actions being undertaken and targets met
- Agree a contribution of £30,000 towards the employment of a BIDS Development Officer from Economic Development Unit estimates, subject to BCCM finding the match funding from other sources.

3.0 Key issues

3.1 Members will be aware that the Council has supported BCCM since its establishment. The organisation performs a range of operational functions that contribute towards City Centre vibrancy, safety and security and public space management.

3.2 BCCM is funded from a range of sources, but its key funding partners are Belfast City Council, Department for Social Development and the Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce.

3.3 BCCM provides services within a defined boundary in the City Centre area, stretching from Shaftesbury Square to the end of Royal Avenue/York Street. A section of that area is now part of the boundary for the Belfast One Business Improvement District (BID), which will be operational from April 2016. The BID focuses on providing additional services to businesses located within the agreed boundary. Work is currently underway to define the services the BID will support. However, it is important to note the BID services must be additional to those already provided by

statutory partners, as established by defining a baseline of current service delivery. BID partners are of the view that Council support for BCCM – although a discretionary activity – would constitute existing baseline services and therefore, there is an expectation the Council would continue to resource a similar level of service provision in the City Centre. The BID will then plan its activities to operate in addition to these core services. This approach is consistent with how BIDs are developed in other areas.

3.4 At present, BCCM's work is focused round three key themes, namely:

- **Economic Performance:** addressing issues such as reducing vacancies, supporting additional city animation and liaison with traders on key city events
- **Safer City:** this work includes the City Centre Beat initiative and the retail crime scheme
- **Public Space Management:** involves activities to maintain high quality public realm such as liaison with Belfast City Council's Cleansing Services on City Centre street cleansing regime and services, representing business interests on transport issues and working to address access barriers into the City Centre.

3.5 In recognition of the need to look at their future operating strategy with the introduction of the BID, BCCM recently commissioned an independent review of the organisation. The report looked at how similar City Centre management services operated in those cities that also had Business Improvement Districts. It suggested that BCCM should focus on the following priority areas:

- 1. Lead on the strategic development of the City Centre, liaising with partners such as Belfast City Council, DSD and private sector partners**
- 2. Promote and assist with BIDs in the City Centre**
- 3. Provide ongoing operational support to established BIDs on a contractual and non-contractual basis, acting as a co-ordinating forum as well as providing an evaluation framework**
- 4. Provide support and services for other non-BID and partnership organisations such as the Chamber**
- 5. Identify areas of the City Centre outwith the defined BID area and develop proposals for the continuation of services in these areas such as**

business liaison, festive lighting and promotional banners.

- 3.6 The BCCM Board has recently endorsed this approach and on this basis, the organisation is currently working on its business plan for the coming financial year. It is in the process of working with partners to secure the resources to deliver key services in line with the priority areas identified above.
- 3.7 Given the success of the Belfast One BID, BCCM considers there are opportunities to develop additional BIDs. In particular, it considers that a BID would support the development of the main office area to the rear of City Hall – the Linen Quarter. This is in line with Council plans to support additional investment in that area through the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (CCRIS). BCCM is, therefore, asking that the Council provides support towards a dedicated member of staff for the coming year to undertake this activity. It is recommended that the Council provides up to £30,000 towards the costs in the coming financial year, subject to BCCM finding the match funding from other resources.
- 3.8 In recognition of the ongoing operational support role for BCCM in the delivery of City Centre support services, and taking account of the BID requirement to focus on additional activity, it is also proposed that the core funding for BCCM should remain at £190,000 for the coming financial year, subject to approval of the requisite budget in the estimates in January 2016 and subject to agreement with BCCM on activities to be undertaken that will help deliver on council priorities for city centre regeneration.
- 3.9 Members have already been advised that the BID intends to focus over half of its efforts and resources on city marketing. While this is not an area in which BCCM is operational, it may align with some of the activity currently undertaken by Visit Belfast. In this context, it will be important to consider how these activities can be complementary, in order to avoid duplication and maximise the impact of the investment. These discussions will be undertaken with both the BID and Visit Belfast in the coming months.
- 3.10 Resource Implications

It is proposed that core funding of £190,000 is provided to BCCM for the coming financial year, along with £30,000 one-

off support towards BID development activity in other areas of the city. This funding has been set aside by the Council within its Economic Development Unit budget estimates for the coming financial year.

3.11 Equality and Good Relations Implications

No specific equality or good relations implications. BCCM's work will include activities to support access to the city centre for all."

During discussion, Mr. Irvine explained to the Committee that BCCM acted as a one stop shop for interaction between businesses within the city and local authorities and that it was currently working on its business plan, in conjunction with council officers, which would contribute towards the council's overall regeneration plan for the city. He advised the Committee that BCCM was currently working on 23 projects which fell into three key themes, namely, the city's economy, managing the public space within the city and making Belfast safer.

The Members were advised that 84% of businesses had voted yes in favour of investing a total of £6million over 5 years into the Belfast One BID, which had a focus on the retail core of the city. He explained that BCCM now wanted to develop a second BID, focusing on the commercial district behind the City Hall. Mr. McGivern advised the Members that "BID Two" would be aimed at the business traveller and highlighted the Colmore district in Birmingham which demonstrated the improvements which could be made to a business district by taking into account the entire journey from arrival into the city through to the business district itself. The BCCM representatives stated that they would therefore seek to connect BID Two with the new Transport Hub in Great Victoria Street.

A number of Members pointed out that the proposed BID Two was the same area as the Council led "Linen Quarter" framework and sought assurances that the BCCM would engage with the Council, particularly its City Centre Regeneration Team, to ensure that the work on the BID complemented the Council's own objectives. The representatives from BCCM thanked the Committee for its consideration and retired from the meeting.

The Committee noted the request from Belfast City Centre Management in respect of a longer term financial commitment but the Chief Executive explained that the Council must consider the amount of this funding each year during its rate setting process.

The Chief Executive also provided some clarity to Members, after which the Committee:

1. noted the proposed future role for the Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM), as set out in a recent independent review;

**City Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 9th December, 2015**

2. agreed the priority actions for the organisation for the coming year, in line with Council priorities for city centre regeneration, and agreed that Council officers should work with BCCM staff to agree specific activities to deliver on those priorities;
3. agreed the financial contribution of £190,000 for core funding for the financial year 2016/2017, subject to the approval of the requisite budget in the estimates in January 2016, and subject to agreed actions being undertaken and targets met; and
4. agreed a contribution of £30,000 towards the employment of a BIDS Development Officer from the Economic Development Unit estimates, subject to BCCM finding the match funding from other sources.

Business and Economy

Cathedral Quarter BID – Update and Request for Support

The Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development advised the Members that a funding request had now also been received from the Cathedral Quarter Trust (CQT) to support the development of a Business Improvement District (BID) in the Cathedral Quarter.

She outlined that work was now under way to create a BID which would cover the Cathedral Quarter area of the city, involving around 600 properties. The Members were advised that the draft business plan for “Destination CQ” had been launched in late November 2015, with the ballot opening on 3rd March 2016 and closing on 14th April 2016. If the ballot was to be successful, it was anticipated that the Destination CQ BID would generate an annual income of around £300,000 from the levy. The draft business plan contained a range of priority actions under four themes of Create, Celebrate, Invite and Inspire. The Members were advised that the main driver would be to maintain and develop the vibrancy of Belfast’s cultural district.

The Committee was reminded that, in September 2015, the CQT had asked the Council for a sum of £29,000 towards resourcing the development of the Destination CQ BID but that the Council had not been in a position to provide that level of funding at that time. The Trust had now submitted a request for £10,000 towards the development work, and was seeking match funding support from both the Department for Social Development (DSD) and Tourism NI (£30,000 in total being sought). The Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development advised that this funding was available within current budgets.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. noted the request for support which had been received from the Cathedral Quarter Trust for resources towards the development work on the “Destination CQ” BID;

2. agreed to allocate £10,000 from existing budgets towards the activity, in the current financial year, subject to CQT attracting match funding from other funders; and
3. agreed that the bid ballot should be run by a third party, Electoral Reform Services, and noted that all costs associated with the ballot will be paid by the BID.

Start-Up and Social Enterprise Support

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to:

- Update Members on the transfer of local economic development functions from DETI/Invest NI to the Council under Local Government Reform (LGR)
- Provide an overview of the proposed way forward for the delivery of business start and social entrepreneurship support

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that Members:

- Note the work undertaken to date to develop a regional business start programme and secure ERDF funding for this programme
- Approve the recommendation to extend the delivery of the Regional Start Initiative until October 2016, or until the new regional business start programme is operational, whichever is earlier
- Note the work undertaken to develop a pipeline of support from start up through to business growth, incorporating specialist support for social entrepreneurship
- Approve the proposal to develop a programme of activity for social enterprises start-up support, to be met through the transferring budget.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Transfer of functions update

As Members will be aware a number of economic development functions transferred from DETI/INI to councils in April 2015. These included:

- Enterprise awareness (with a particular focus on under-represented groups and targets of areas of disadvantage)
- Start a business activity (referred to as Go For It programme)
- Social enterprise (referred to as the Social Entrepreneurship Programme - SEP)
- Youth enterprise.

- 3.2** As a result of this transfer, councils are now responsible for the associated job creation targets identified by the Northern Ireland Executive. For the current financial year this equates to a target of 325 jobs promoted for the Belfast City Council area. The primary mechanism for the council to achieve these targets is through the Go For It programme. There are currently no additional targets for councils in relation to social entrepreneurship and enterprise awareness. The budget transferred to council to deliver the associated functions and targets is £411,984 in the current financial year. This allocation will be used in its entirety for the delivery of the transferring functions.
- 3.3** To allow for a period of transition, it was agreed that Invest NI would develop a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with all councils to continue the delivery of the Go for It and Social Entrepreneurship Programmes (SEP) until the conclusion of their contracts. Since April 2015, there have been over 330 business plans created and 264 jobs promoted in Belfast through the Go for It programme.
- 3.4** Whilst there was no opportunity to extend the SEP beyond its contract end date of July 2015, there has been a level of flexibility with the Go For It programme, with potential for an extension until October 2016. Currently the contract has been extended until March 2016, pending a decision from councils as to the content and format of a regional business start programme to replace this initiative.
- 3.5** The eleven councils recently commissioned an appraisal and business case to inform future business start support. The recommended approach was the creation of a single regional contract building upon the existing Go for It programme with some enhancements such as additional workshops and 1-2-1 mentoring. It may be possible to secure ERDF funding for this programme, and, if successful, this will lever up to 80% of match funding towards eligible costs associated with this programme. Councils are collectively developing a funding application to Invest NI to support this new programme; however it is expected that the

decision on this funding will not be made until April 2016, at the earliest.

3.6 If the funding application is successful, a subsequent procurement exercise would need to be undertaken to appoint a delivery organisation for the new programme. The timescale for this means that a new council-led business start programme is unlikely to be operational until summer 2016, at the earliest. In the interim period, it is proposed that councils continue extending the current RSI contract until the new programme is operational. The benefit of this approach is that it will ensure continuity of service provision pending the implementation of the new programme.

3.7 **Social Entrepreneurship**

The social economy sector is strong in Belfast and the city is home to over one third of all social enterprises across the region. Social enterprises contribute towards the overall economic performance of the city, as well as helping achieve wider social and environmental objectives. Social enterprises operate on a similar business model to private businesses; however the principal difference is how these organisations use their resources to address societal and/or environmental inequalities and challenges as opposed to an operating for a profit motive alone.

3.8 Whilst responsibility for social entrepreneurship has transferred to councils through LGR, the development of social economy policy and a number of key initiatives aimed at developing the sustainability and growth of the sector has been retained by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI). Initiatives supported by DETI include support for Social Enterprise NI (SENI), the representative body for the sector.

3.9 DETI, in partnership with DSD and Invest NI, also manage a £4million pilot project, funded by the Northern Ireland Executive's Delivering Social Change Framework. Through this programme, 11 social enterprise hubs have been developed in the 9 Social Investment Fund (SIF) zones, of which 4 are located in Belfast. The hubs offer support for new and emerging social enterprises, providing locations where social economy businesses can operate on a 'test-trading' basis, with capacity building and training support also provided. The timeframe for the pilot project is 2 years and it is understood that funding for these projects is expected to conclude between April and June 2016, with no

opportunity for extension at this stage. There has been some work done to evaluate the impact of these links, but this information is relatively limited at this point.

- 3.10** Over the past number of years the Social Entrepreneurship Programme (SEP) has been the regional support initiative to support the creation of new social enterprises. The programme recognised the need to develop early stage social enterprises by building their start up capacity and their operating models. In the period 2012-2014, 98 groups from the Belfast area accessed support. Since the conclusion of the SEP in July 2015, start up support for social economy sector has been mainly provided through the social enterprise hubs project detailed above.
- 3.11** In recent years, a growing number of community and voluntary organisations have been transitioning or developing social enterprise trading arms. This situation is reflective of a changing funding environment where levels of grant funding are diminishing with a move towards service commissioning. This changing environment is driving increasing levels of demand for social enterprise start up support, with groups keen to explore whether this model can work for them.
- 3.12** To support the needs of the social economy sector, it is proposed that council efforts should focus on supporting new and emerging social enterprises within the city. This can be achieved through the development of a specialist support programme, specifically aimed at the pre-start and start-up stage of a social enterprise's life cycle. The proposed intervention will aim to stimulate levels of early stage social entrepreneurial activity through awareness raising events and will also provide tailored 1-2-1 support for new social entrepreneurs and transition groups – those moving from a funded model towards greater sustainability. The types of support available will include ideas generation, development of governance structures, business planning and social impact measurement. It is expected that up to 50 social entrepreneurs or groups will be supported through this activity through 1-2-1 and group based workshops/events each year.
- 3.13** Recognising that, once established, social enterprises operate as per normal commercial models, it is proposed that support for existing social enterprises will be delivered through mainstream economic development provision. However it is acknowledged that specific marketing and

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promotional activities will need to target this sector and encourage engagement.

3.14 Financial & Resource Implications

The cost associated with existing and future business start activity will be delivered within existing Economic Development unit activity and the transferring budget of £411,984.

The proposed social entrepreneurship programme is expected to incur an annual cost of £50,000 per annum or £150,000 over a three year delivery period. Due to the timescales involved in procuring a delivery agent for this initiative it is intended this programme will not be operational until the 2016/17 financial year. The budget for this programme will be met through the transferring budget.

3.15 Equality and Good Relations Implications

Each of the programmes referred above will be equality screened. The initiatives will be designed and delivered to remove barriers to participation, in particular by persons from under-represented groups or living in areas of deprivation.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

City Centre Regeneration and Infrastructure

Transfer of DSD Regeneration Powers

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is provide Members with an update on the status of the proposed transfer of Urban Regeneration and Community Development powers, and associated budgets, from the Department for Social Development (DSD) to Council in April 2016.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report including:

- (i) the decision taken by Full Council on 1 December 2015, to call for the NI Assembly to undertake an early review of the decision taken by DSD not to transfer regeneration powers in April 2016;

- (ii) the urgent meeting requested between a all-party deputation from the Council and the Social Development Minister, Mervyn Storey MLA, to examine all what alternative arrangements could be put in place to enable the Council to utilise key regeneration functions on behalf of DSD in the event of the non-transfer of these powers;
- (iii) correspondence to be issued to DSD seeking agreement permitting the use of/transfer of assets at nil cost to the Council to enable physical regeneration projects to happen at both a city and neighbourhood level; and
- (iv) the work underway by the Council to support and stimulate the further development and regeneration of the city including the lobby for greater devolution to city-regions.

3.0 Main Report

- 3.1 As Members will be aware in April 2016, the Council was due to become the regeneration authority for the city and to inherit additional powers and budgets from the Department for Social Development (DSD). This would have included an enhanced responsibility for, among other things, leading both citywide strategic urban regeneration and smaller scale area-focused neighbourhood regeneration activity through the utilisation of comprehensive development powers. The Council would have also been given responsibility for developing and delivering the successor programme to Neighbourhood Renewal and the allocation of a substantial revenue grant funding package.

4.0 Key Issues

- 4.1 On the 26 November 2015, the Social Development Minister, Mervyn Storey MLA confirmed that the transfer of regeneration powers to councils as planned in April 2016 would now not happen. This is the second time the planned transfer has been postponed with the original transfer scheduled for April 2015 as part of the wider Local Government Reform process. This time round, however, there is no future date set out as to when (or even if) these important functions would transfer back to local councils.
- 4.2 The non-transfer of key regeneration functions, particularly Comprehensive Development Powers and the ability to acquire land for regeneration purposes, will seriously hamper the ability of the Council to take forward major investment, development and regeneration plans; unlocking

and realising the potential of flagship schemes (e.g. North East Quarter, Northside) and reinvigorating key areas in the city (e.g. Linen Quarter, Cathedral Quarter, Western Quarter). It will constrain the ability of the Council to fully deliver Members' ambitions and priorities emerging from the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, support investment in the city centre which will grow the economy, create jobs and prosperity and improve quality of life for our citizens. It will also impact upon the ability of the council to:

- Create the conditions and opportunities to invest in Belfast, supporting economic growth & prosperity
- Provide the required level of confidence to investors considering developments in Belfast – investors want a one stop shop approach
- Ensure a targeted and holistic approach is taken to addressing blighted areas and development sites across the city including the city centre which is the regional gateway
- Ensure public spaces are managed and improved in a coherent way
- Ensure greater alignment of physical regeneration with the emerging local development plan

4.3 It makes no sense that Councils are now charged with bringing forward local development plans and community plans, setting out a vision for their areas in terms of commerce, town and city centres, housing, accessibility, economic development and improvements in local neighbourhoods only to have a separate government department hold the powers for comprehensive development schemes as well as drawing up masterplans & delivering local projects driven by different priorities.

4.4 Members will be aware that Full Council, at its meeting on the 1 December 2015, agreed that a call be submitted to the NI Assembly (and Executive Ministers) to undertake an early review of the decision taken by DSD not to transfer regeneration powers in April 2016. It was also agreed that Council officers do their utmost to work around such a decision to the city's benefit.

4.5 As instructed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee a formal request has been submitted for a cross-party delegation to urgently meet with the Social Development Minister, Mervyn Storey, MLA. The purpose of this meeting is to explore what alternative arrangements could be possibly put in place to enable the Council to utilise regeneration powers on behalf of DSD (and

incoming new Department for Communities) to ensure the continued development of the city over the coming months. The Council has been exploring a range of options including:-

- (i) **Agency Agreement - Enter into an 'Agency Agreement' under section 104 of the Local Government Act 1972 which enables the Council to undertake regeneration powers on behalf of the department and access associated funding. This would require the consent of the Minister.**
- (ii) **Alternative partnership arrangements – entering into a partnership agreement with DSD utilising legislative vehicles such as e.g. a Memorandum of Understanding which could underpin a shared agreement and responsibility to deliver key development schemes based on the exercise of the statutory powers of each organisation.**

4.6 Each option would require the agreement of the Social Development Minister and it is important that the Council proactively seeks to secure such agreement as it is of mutual benefit to both organisations. It is also important that the Council has an opportunity to work alongside DSD (and incoming new Department for Communities) and input into any processes put in place to determine the future allocation of both capital and revenue funding within Belfast. The Council would also seek to work with DSD and central government to ensure that major development schemes within the city come to fruition.

Asset Transfer

4.7 In anticipation of transfer, the Council has already entered into various agreements and are currently in discussion with DSD in respect of certain DSD assets which are required to facilitate the delivery of a number of key regeneration projects contained within the Council's Investment Programme and/or City Centre Investment Plan.

4.8 To date the DSD has worked with the Council to facilitate projects involving land assets owned by the Department and have not sought market value for sites due to their pending transfer to Council under local government reform. The pragmatic approach taken by DSD has been to assist Council in bringing forward key projects and have permitted work to be undertaken on their land, by way of licence or similar legal agreement, in advance and in anticipation of transfer in April 2016.

- 4.9 It is important to note that investment decisions have already been made and projects are being delivered in respect of some assets which DSD own or have legal interest in, such as Girdwood and the Waterfront Hall. In other cases there are emerging council projects that affect DSD owned assets such as proposed playground and leisure schemes across the city.
- 4.10 Again, as the transfer is no longer happening in April 2016, the Council is seeking to secure agreement with DSD which permits the use of/transfer of assets owned by the Department at nil cost to the Council to enable physical regeneration projects to happen at both a city and neighbourhood level. It is important to recognise that the lands held by DSD are for regeneration purposes.

Continuing to Invest in the Regeneration and Development of the City

- 4.11 The new larger Belfast City Council remains committed to using its new powers to drive economic growth attract investment, create jobs and improve the quality of life across the city. Our plans include a physical investment programme valued in excess of £400million over the next number of years, with £185million of investment already completed or underway across Belfast. This includes key economic infrastructure projects such as, for example, £29.5m extension to the Waterfront Hall creating a world class conference centre, £18m investment in Girdwood Community Hub opening in January 2016, and a £9.1m Innovation Centre opening in summer 2016.
- 4.12 There is a momentum gathering pace across Belfast particularly in the property, hotel, office and student housing sectors, but we've got to harness it now. To ensure Belfast punches above its weight, we have to make it easy to do business in the city, develop key city infrastructure, maximise investment opportunities and connect local people to jobs and opportunity. It is important to recognise that delivering the outcomes set out within the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy can only be achieved in partnership and working jointly on key projects.
- 4.13 To this end strategic partnerships are being formed including a City Centre Development Board which is seeking to develop implementation and resource plans to deliver Members' ambitions for the city centre. Furthermore, a 'Belfast Strategic Issues Group' has recently been established, comprising of senior representation from

Executive departments (i.e. Permanent Secretaries) and chaired by the Chief Executive of Belfast City Council. The core focus of this group is to encourage greater alignment and integration between policies, plans, programme and initiatives and where possible to support the delivery, in a holistic way, of key development schemes including critical city infrastructure projects.

- 4.14 A key lever for the Council is the recent creation of the £18.7m City Centre Investment Fund which will help incentivise private sector investment in the city address potential areas of market failure and enable key regeneration projects to happen through the potential targeted acquisition of strategic development sites. Work is also underway to develop a 'Place Positioning' Strategy which will promote Belfast as a major tourism and investment location and seek to secure further foreign direct investment into the city.

City-Region Devolution

- 4.15 In February 2015, the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee considered a Notice of Motion entitled 'City Growth'. The motion stated:

'Belfast City Council: notes that the RSA City Growth Commission recognises that major city regions, including Belfast, are the main drivers of economic growth; and that the British Government has undertaken 'City Deals' with 28 cities outside London, including Glasgow, to boost infrastructure investment, promote economic growth and create jobs.

Accordingly, the Council will consider how the recommendations by RSA City Growth could be promoted to enhance Belfast's position as a city region. The Council agrees to develop an action plan to seek to secure a 'City Deal' for Belfast which will support our ambitious plans, enhance the rate base, boost investment, promote economic growth, create jobs and ensure that the benefits of economic growth reach disadvantaged communities'....

- 4.16 The Council now intends to pursue an agenda for greater devolution to the city-region. This will seek to promote the role of Belfast (and cities) as economic drivers and major contributors to regional growth and prosperity. It will also seek to establish a differential relationship between Belfast, the NI Executive and central government.

- 4.17 There is a growing trend towards greater localism and place-based packages which involve the devolution of powers and budgets alongside new innovative policy, legislative and fiscal regimes which are empowering cities and local authorities to develop their area, improve public services, and boost the local economy. The associated introduction of new funding models such as City Deals is enabling cities such as Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, and Glasgow to unlock the development potential of their locality. It is also providing such cities with access to specified funding to invest in key growth areas, provide critical city infrastructure, deliver key regeneration and development schemes, and support specific programmes such as e.g. skills, employability and business start-up.

Financial & Resource Implications

- 4.18 There will be financial/resource implications attached to the non-transfer of regeneration powers and budgets to the Council given the fact that these were being considered as part of the Council's overall approach & funding towards the delivery of regeneration activity within the city.
- 4.19 Further detailed reports on the financial and budget implications will be brought back to Committee in-line with the budget estimates process and timetable.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

- 4.20 Development of new policies and/or service delivery models will be subject to equality screening and, where required, EQIA process."

After discussion, during which a number of Members expressed their disappointment that the regeneration powers would not be transferring to the Council in April 2016, the Committee agreed to the recommendations set out within paragraph 2 of the report and agreed also that the issues within the report should be raised with the NI Select Committee.

Tourism, Events and International Relations

**Cultural Framework –
Draft Action Plan 2016-2020**

(Ms. E. Henry, Assistant Tourism, Culture and Arts Manager, attended in connection with this item)

The Head of Economic Initiatives and International Development reminded the Committee that, at its meeting in August 2015, it had given approval to commence the process of developing a new action plan for the period 2016-2020 to support the

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Cultural Framework for Belfast. The Cultural Framework had been developed in 2012 and was based around 4 key themes, namely, Distinctly Belfast, Inspiring Communities, Attracting Audiences and Strengthening the Sector.

She advised the Members that, following a significant programme of sector engagement, a new draft Action Plan for 2016-2020 had now been developed and that, since August 2015, the following work had been undertaken:

- A series of sector workshops focused on Heritage, Inspiring Communities, Attracting Audiences, Developing People and International Connections;
- A “State of the sector” survey carried out to establish the current position of the cultural sector in Belfast; and
- Meetings with a number of key stakeholders, including the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Tourism NI and Visit Belfast.

She reminded the Committee that a significant issue for the cultural sector had been the level of public funding compared to other parts of the UK and Ireland and in recent years that had continued to decline. She highlighted, therefore, that this was likely to increase the requests submitted to the Council for support but that there was no additional budget available for grant funding. In response to this situation, she advised the Committee that the Council would continue to provide support and deliver development programmes to help organisations diversify their income streams and secure funding from other sources. This was outlined in the Strengthening the Sector theme of the Action Plan.

After the Assistant Tourism, Culture and Arts Manager had addressed a number of the Members’ questions, the Committee:

1. noted and agreed the contents of the Cultural Framework for Belfast – Draft Action Plan 2016-2020 (available on modern.gov) as a basis for public consultation; and
2. agreed to consider the revised version of the Action Plan after the conclusion of the consultation exercise in April 2016.

**Bid for 24 Hour World Endurance
Championship 2017 (Athletics)**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 **Over the last year Council Officers have been working with the local organising committee, who operate under the auspice of Athletics Northern Ireland, in their bid to secure the 2017 Twenty-Four Hour World Endurance Championship. This paper contains a request for approval of an underwriting letter of support in order that the organisers’**

bid can be endorsed by United Kingdom Athletics (UKA), which in turn will allow the submission to be presented to the International Association of Ultrarunners (IUA) in order to secure the event for Belfast

1.2 For Councillors' information, the IUA operates under the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF).

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Committee is asked to consider whether

- a letter of support, underwriting up to a value of £50,000, the bid for the World 24 Hour World Championship in 2017, should be issued by Council to United Kingdom Athletics. This will enable the bid to go in-front of the International Association of Ultrarunners in order to secure the event for Belfast.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

This event would be staged from the 30 June to the 2 July 2017, and would attract approximately four hundred participants, accompanied by four hundred coaches and support staff. It is also estimated that the event would attract around 1,000 spectators and create approximately 5,000 bed-spaces, which in turn would generate £364,000 additional economic activity for Belfast.

3.2 The main race elements of the event would take place in the Council owned Victoria Park, with the opening and medal ceremonies being staged at Belfast City Hall. Both these elements are subject to Council approval. Three hundred of the proposed competitors would come from out-of-state and the event would be in keeping with the Belfast Agenda, in that the Championship would not only help the local economy through tourism bed-nights, but would portray the city as an active and vibrant place to visit.

3.3 To date Council Officers have issued general letters of support to assist the local organisers, who operate under the auspice of Athletics Northern Ireland. However, United Kingdom Athletics have now indicated that they will not support the bid unless an underwriting commitment is made by a commercial sponsor or public body. The total cost of staging the event is £78,761 and the organisers have secured £28,761 from commercial sponsors and other

sources, including personal loans. However, the local bid group has been unable to gain an underwriting commitment for the outstanding £50,000, thus Belfast City Council is being to act as guarantor for the bid up to the amount stated £50,000.

3.4 Financial & Resource Implications

The organisers have given assurances that they will address the cash shortfall prior to the event. Any underwriting arrangement agreed by the Council would be subject to a final business case and legal contract. They have also stressed that the likelihood of Belfast City Council being asked to pay the full £50,000 is low, with the Council's commitment likely to be £10,000, which would be sought via Belfast City Council's annual Support for Sport Events grants scheme.

3.5 To date Belfast city Council has made no resource commitment to this event or its bid. However, if Council agrees to underwrite the proposal, and the bid is successful, it would mean that BCC would be exposed to a possible £50,000 shortfall in 2017. Therefore, Members are asked to note that Officers would attempt to address the financial implications as part of the Development Department's budgets for the 2017/18 period.

3.6 Equality & Good Relations Implications

Belfast City Council Officers will work with the local organisers to ensure that all sections of society in Belfast can become involved in the event."

After discussion, during which a number of Members sought clarification regarding the issue of underwriting, it was

Moved by Councillor Dudgeon,
Seconded by Alderman McGimpsey,

That the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the report for a period of one month to allow more information to be submitted to the Committee.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor McDonough-Brown,
Seconded by Councillor Attwood,

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- (i) That the Committee agrees that a letter of support be issued by the Council to United Kingdom Athletics, underwriting up to a value of £10,000 towards the bid for the 24 Hour World Championship in 2017 to enable the bid to be considered by the International Association of Ultrarunners in order to secure the event for Belfast;
- (ii) that additional financial support of £40,000 would be subject to a staged assessment to ensure compliance;
- (iii) that officers, in conjunction with the Legal Services section, draw up a contract to ensure that the organisers have made genuine attempts to attain funding from other sources and to demonstrate delivery ability at key milestones; and
- (iv) if the conditions are not met that the Council can end the contract and withdraw, or limit, its support.

On a vote by show of hands, thirteen Members voted for the amendment and three against and it was declared carried.

The amendment was thereupon put to the meeting as the substantive motion and agreed.

Request for Council Support – Chinese New Year 2016

The Interim Director of Development reminded the Members that the Council's International Relations Framework promoted civic and business linkages in key global markets, including China. He explained that one of the main partners was the Confucius Institute at the Ulster University. The Committee was advised that, on 18th February 2016, the Confucius Institute, in partnership with the Culture Office of the Chinese Embassy in London, planned to hold a celebration to mark the Chinese New Year. The Institute was inviting the famous Chongqing Sichuan Opera House to perform the Sichuan opera for a Belfast audience. The Members were advised that this event would bring senior officials from the Chinese Embassy in London to officially recognise Chinese New Year and, in particular, the opening of the Chinese Consulate General in Belfast. The Director advised that an audience of 3,000 people was expected to attend the event.

The Committee was advised that the overall budget for hosting the event was an estimated at £24,000 and that the Institute had requested a sum of £4,000 from the Council.

The Committee agreed that Council support be provided, up to a value of £4,000, towards the Chinese New Year 2016 celebrations and noted that this was available from within the council's International Relations budget.

Nashville Visit and Action Plan

(Ms. L. Leonard, European and International Relations Manager, attended in connection with this item)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval for an outward Nashville visit in March 2016 (11-16 March 2015).

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- **agrees to the Nashville visit, with participation of the Lord Mayor and Chair of the Nashville Steering Group or their nominees, and the development of a 2015/16 action plan through the Nashville Steering Group and noted that a budget of £5,000 from the International Relations budget has been set aside for work on Nashville, including this visit.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Members may be aware that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by the Mayor of Nashville and the Lord Mayor of Belfast in 1994 to promote cultural, tourism and business development opportunities between the two cities.

3.2 There was limited activity in the early days due to limited resources locally and changes in the political environment in Nashville, but around 2010 there was renewed interest in expanding the link from local partners who had made some progress in developing their own bilateral links with partners in Nashville. These include:

- **Staff exchanges, joint research and host visits between Queen’s University and Vanderbilt University**
- **Establishing and building on the Belfast – Nashville Songwriters Festival**
- **Participation in the annual Music Cities Irish Festival**
- **Development of links between Ulster University and Google Fibre to facilitate exchange programmes**
- **Development of links with Ulster and Belmond Universities**

- Exploration of healthcare links and conventions between the NI based EU Connected Health Alliance and the US Commercial Service
 - Exploration of partnerships between Visit Belfast and the Nashville Visitor and Convention Bureau.

- 3.3** The council convened a steering group of interested stakeholders including Ulster and Queen’s Universities, Invest NI, Visit Belfast, Tourism Ireland, Tourism NI, Generator NI, BBC and Belfast Nashville Songwriters. They agreed to a collective programme of activities covering a wide range of issues including education, economic development, genealogy and cultural tourism.

- 3.4** Individual partners have been working on their respective areas of collaboration such as QUB’s links with Vanderbilt University and the successful Belfast-Nashville Festival. The challenge has been to consider whether and how the Council can add value to those links and, as such, whether there needs to be a focus on exploring opportunities for additional links with Nashville and what the Council’s role should be in that regard.

- 3.6** In September 2015, Nashville elected a new Mayor – Megan Barry. The Mayor’s Office has indicated an interest in exploring opportunities for further mutual linkages between Nashville and its partners, including Belfast. The Sister Cities lead in Nashville has been in regular contact and has confirmed that a delegation from Nashville will travel to Belfast before the Sister Cities Summit in Dublin (April 2016).

- 3.7** In order to establish relationships with the new Mayor and to help test out the new city positioning narrative to international markets, it is proposed that the Lord Mayor (or nominee) visits Nashville in early March 2016. Invitations may also be issued to partners (subject to them covering their own costs) to visit the city at the same time and maximise the impact of the Belfast presence in Nashville. The objectives of the Belfast City Council visit would be to:
 - Ascertain the political support for additional links between the cities – including exploring the potential resource commitment on the Nashville side to undertake trade missions and develop joint projects around tourism, healthcare and music
 - On the basis of this engagement, explore potential areas for collaboration for the coming year and beyond

- Explore opportunities to profile Belfast as a cultural tourism destination in the Southern States and increase tourism revenue from this market
- Promote Belfast's investment message, as articulated through the place positioning work
- Profile Belfast as a creative business location by engaging with the Belfast- Nashville Songwriters' Showcase which will be broadcast to over 60 million homes in USA
- Plan ahead for the visit to Belfast by Nashville partners in April 2016, as part of the Sister Cities network conference in Dublin.

3.8 There are opportunities for engagement in and profiling at a number of significant events including:

- The Music City's Irish Festival on 12 March hosted with the Sister Cities and Mayor's Office, profiling the creativity and vibrancy of Belfast. The Lord Mayor has been invited to attend a reception of delegates and music businesses and to work on incorporating a Belfast branded stage with Belfast musicians in future years. A Queen's and Vanderbilt float for the festival is also being developed
- Tourism Ireland's tourism showcase event on the same day, profiling Belfast as a business and leisure tourism destination
- Activities as part of the Belfast-Nashville Songwriters' Showcase, including events to be broadcast across USA. The Lord Mayor has been invited to be filmed at this with the Mayor of Nashville to introduce Belfast artists at the event. This programme will be broadcast to over 60million homes in the USA.

3.9 Financial & Resource Implications

A budget of £5,000 from the International Relations budget has been set aside for the work on Nashville, including this visit. This will cover travel and accommodation costs for the Lord Mayor, Chair of the Nashville Steering Group, (or nominees) and one officer.

Equality or Good Relations Implications

No specific equality or good relations implications."

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After discussion, during which the Chairperson of the Nashville Steering Group provided the Members with detailed information on the work of the Group, the Committee:

1. agreed to the Nashville visit, with participation of the Lord Mayor and Chair of the Nashville Steering Group, or their nominees, plus one officer, and the development of a 2015/16 action plan through the Nashville Steering Group and noted that a budget of £5,000 from the International Relations budget had been set aside for work on Nashville, including this visit;
2. noted the proposal to review the International Relations framework and agreed to consider the revised framework at a future meeting of the Committee; and
3. agreed that officers should present additional updates on international activity on an ongoing basis.

Operational Issues

Go Ultra Low City Scheme - ecarni Bid

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

To update Members on the £10 million submission to the Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) competition for NI to become a regional exemplar for the uptake of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs). The bid, which is 100% funded, is led by the Department of Regional Development Ecarni team, and Department of Environment in conjunction with local Councils. Belfast City Council is the lead Council.

2.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the measures outlined in the NI ecarni bid
- Agree that Council will sign the NI Ultra Low Emission ‘charter’ as part of the bid process

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 The UK Climate Change Act introduced in 2008 sets a target of 80% reduction in green house gas emissions by 2050. As the transport sector is responsible for around 20% of the UK’s emissions particular focus is being placed on the transition to alternatively fuelled vehicles in order to meet this target.

In early 2015 £35 million was allocated to a 'Go Ultra Low City Scheme' to encourage city regions to take a lead role in the transition to electric and other ultra low emission vehicles. This is an opportunity for a city/region to build an international reputation for the uptake of ultra low emission vehicles – a major growth market and technology over the next fifteen years.

In April 2015 the DoE/DRD E-car team proposed leading a regional bid to the scheme in partnership with Belfast City Council. Following an initial application the Northern Ireland bid (ecarni) was shortlisted with ten other UK cities; four of which will be allocated up to £10 million.

The NI bid is designed to contribute to the wider sustainable transport vision for the region. It will use targeted policy and financial incentives, alongside strong marketing and innovative ICT to inform and monitor measures, to promote and build momentum for a major change in the uptake of ULEVs across the region. Since April the DRD e-car team have been working with the public and private sector to draft the bid, which includes the following measures:

1. Put in place a Diesel to Electric vehicle scrappage scheme to encourage the switch to EV's to owners of pre-2006 diesel vehicles which emit very high levels of pollution.
2. Provide incentives for an EV motability scheme to encourage greater uptake of EV as the car of choice for eligible customers.
3. Create an EV salary sacrifice scheme for NICS with further implementation to the wider public and private sector
4. Create a strong marketing and communications campaign which will increase the awareness of ULEVs , promote the individual measures and develop an online digital platform which will act as a 'one stop shop' for EV drivers.
5. Develop a Northern Ireland Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Strategy and international policy guidance which focuses on the development of short , medium and long term polices and measures to encourage the uptake of ULEVs including where appropriate amendments to local legislation and policy in the transport , planning and environmental sectors.
6. Advance the legislative process to permit all approved electric vehicles in motorway bus lanes for a dedicated period of time.

- 7. Work with local Councils, private sector and procurement partners to establish a series of highly visible dedicated rapid charging areas and parking zones in strategic locations throughout Northern Ireland.**
- 8. Create a highly branded EV car pool with associated infrastructure for staff use across all government departments, public and private sectors. Advance the legislative process to ensure that only these highly branded EVs can access city centre bus lanes on arterial routes.**
- 9. Through the use of data analytics and behavioural monitoring mechanisms, work with Invest NI, Queen's University, Ulster University and University of Hertfordshire to identify and monitor the outcome of measures to be implemented by the bid.**

One of the key criteria of the bid is evidence of support from key regional organisations. The bid team has asked all partners involved in the bid to demonstrate their support for the bid in principle by signing up to an Ultra Low Emission 'charter'. All partners are asked to sign up to general promotion and marketing activities as outlined (some of which the Council is already involved with) and some more specific activities:

- 1. Introduce a ULEV policy throughout the Council by June 2016, which will demonstrate our commitment towards sustainable development and corporate social responsibility.**
- 2. Investigate the establishment of an EV Car Pool for Council staff by September 2016, in conjunction with the overall 'highly branded' and visible EV Car Pool being implemented by the ecarNI team.**
- 3. Assist in the identification of land within Belfast City Council area which could be utilised for 'EV Rapid Charging and Parking Zones' in the Council area, in particular, land in or adjacent to Air Quality Management Areas.**
- 4. Encourage the formation of an ecarNI members club in the Council area for existing and future EV drivers, who will meet frequently to exchange new information and share EV driving experiences.**
- 5. Deliver a programme of marketing activities in partnership with the ecarNI team, to help promote ULEVs in the council area.**
- 6. Engage with the local business and wider community to promote and develop the ecar brand to facilitate a change the region's travelling practices**

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It is acknowledged that some of the specific measures will require more investigation and, if the bid is successful, further agreement with DRD on the appropriate level of funding required.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Chairperson

Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 16th December, 2015

MEETING OF LICENSING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hussey (Chairperson);
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Spence);
Alderman L. Patterson; and
Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Bell, Brown,
Bunting, Campbell, Carroll, Clark, Craig,
Dudgeon, Groves, Magennis, McConville,
Mullan and Sandford.

In attendance: Mr. T. Martin, Head of Building Control;
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apology

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Hutchinson.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 12th November were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st December, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Non-Delegated Matters

Schedule of Meetings for 2016

The Committee approved the following schedule of meetings for the Licensing Committee during 2016, commencing at 5.00 p.m:

Wednesday, 20th January;
Wednesday, 17th February;
Wednesday, 16th March;
Wednesday, 20th April;
Wednesday, 18th May;
Wednesday, 15th June;
No meeting in July (Council in recess)
Wednesday, 17th August;

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Wednesday, 21st September;
Wednesday, 19th October;
Wednesday, 16th November; and
Wednesday, 14th December.

**THE COMMITTEE DEALT WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN PURSUANCE OF THE
POWERS DELEGATED TO IT UNDER STANDING ORDER 37(d)**

Licences issued under Delegated Authority

The Committee noted a list of licensing applications which had been granted under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

**Application for the Grant of a Seven-day Annual Entertainments Licence –
Hole in the Wall, 1-3 Baltic Avenue**

The Committee was advised that an application had been received for the grant of a Seven-day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence in respect of the above-mentioned premises, based upon the Council's standard conditions to provide music, singing, dancing or any other entertainment of a like kind. The Head of Building Control reported that a petition, consisting of thirteen signatures, had been submitted within the twenty-eight statutory period, which related primarily to noise nuisance and anti-social behaviour. He pointed out that, under the terms of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985, the Committee, when considering an application, must have regard to any representation which had been received within that period.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to consider the application at its next monthly meeting, to which the objector and the applicant would be invited to attend.

**Applications for the Renewal, Transfer and Variation of a Seven-day Annual
Entertainments Licence - Hatfield House, 128-130 Ormeau Road**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To consider applications for the renewal and transfer of a Seven-day Annual Entertainments Licence for the Hatfield House, based upon the Council's standard conditions to provide music, singing, dancing or any other entertainment of a like kind. The transfer is from Kevin Cassidy as an individual to Cavanreagh Ltd. of which Kevin Cassidy and his son Kieran are the sole directors.**
- 1.2 The applicant initially applied to vary the Entertainments Licence to increase the numbers on the first floor of the premises and to extend the hours of the Entertainments Licence to 3.00 a.m., on seven nights per week. However, after objections were received regarding the applications and**

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in particular against the extension of hours, that particular part of the variation application has now been withdrawn and the applicant only wishes to increase the numbers on the first floor under their existing hours.

Premises and Location	Ref. No.	Applicant
Hatfield House 128-130 Ormeau Road, Belfast BT7 2EB	WK/2015/00696	Cavanreagh Limited 53bMaryville Park Belfast BT9 6LP

- 1.3 Letters of objection were received in October 2015 from local residents and representative community groups regarding the applications. All objections were received considerably outside the 28 day statutory period as the applications were lodged with Building Control on 26th June 2015. Copies of the objection letters and the application forms have been forwarded to Members.
- 1.4 The reason that the application has not been brought before you for consideration until now is that Officers of the Service have, by mutual agreement, engaged extensively with all parties affected by the application and have convened a series of meetings and negotiations on the matters. Details of these meetings including the attendees have been circulated to the Committee.
- 1.5 All of the objectors, except two, have agreed to the terms and conditions as agreed at the Liaison Meetings and have withdrawn their objections. An agreement has been drawn up reflecting those terms and conditions and has been signed by the applicant and those who have withdrawn their objections.
- 1.6 The remaining two objectors are i) the mother of a resident of Lavinia Square, which is in close proximity to the Hatfield Bar, and ii) a resident of Hatfield Street, which runs alongside the premises and is the closest property on that street to it. Both objectors have confirmed that they are not withdrawing their objection and have requested to make representations at the meeting on 16th December. The mother of the resident of Lavinia Square has informed us within the appropriate timeframe of her request to maintain her objection under the operating protocol and we have thus been able to share the documentation with the relevant parties. The resident of Hatfield Street has only just confirmed their request to maintain their objection at the time of writing this report and,

therefore, due to the limited timeframe available, we are unable to share any documentation between the relevant parties, as required under the protocol. However, we have informed them that they can, subject to the Committee exercising its discretion to consider objections received outside the 28-day timeframe, make representation with the other objector as their concerns are related. The applicant has been made aware of, and has consented to this.

- 1.7 A location map has been forwarded to Members.
- 1.8 Copies of agreements from relevant parties to withdraw their objections and allow the Entertainments Licence to be granted have been circulated to the Committee.
- 2.0 **Recommendations**
 - 2.1 As there remains two objections against the applications received outside the 28-day statutory period, you are required to determine if you wish to exercise your discretion to consider them and, if so, give the objectors an opportunity of appearing before and being heard by the Committee.
 - 2.2 If you decide not to take the objections into account then the application will be dealt with under the Scheme of Delegation.
 - 2.3 If Members wish to exercise your discretion and consider the objections you are required to also receive the applicant and/or their representatives and, after having received their submissions, make a decision regarding the application.
- 3.0 **Main report**
 - Key Issues**
 - 3.1 As a result of the public notice of application lodged on 26th June 2015, no written representation objecting to the application was received until October 2015. All these objectors, apart from two, have now withdrawn their objections.
 - 3.2 Under the terms of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1985, the Committee, when considering an application, must have regard to any representation which is received inside the 28 day statutory period. Where objections have been received outside the 28 day period you have discretion, but not a duty, to hear those objections. Members should note that the Council is not

prohibited from taking all relevant representations into account, whether they have been communicated by objectors or others, early or late, or in any other way. When deciding if you wish to consider the objections received outside the 28 day period, facts that you may wish to take into account could include the relevance of the objections and how far outside the 28 day period the objections were received, or any other matters that appear important in the circumstances at hand.

Outstanding Objections to the Application

- 3.3** A letter from the objector, on behalf of a resident of Lavinia Square, was received within the appropriate timeframe and they have submitted a Representation Form which also includes a statement summarising their objection and providing specific examples of the problems that have been encountered. Copies of those documents have been forwarded to the Committee.
- 3.4** The general nature of the objections submitted on behalf of the resident of Lavinia Square received relate to:
- the smoking area will diminish the quality of life in her home as they will be unable to sleep in their bedroom;
 - her children will also be unable to use their back garden for fear of overhearing adult conversation from the area;
 - when patrons leave the premises at 1.00 am, this will create further disruption to the children, her and their home routine;
 - she feels that the building is an impingement on her human rights and will be detrimental to her children's education and well being;
 - this will be further compromised should the numbers be allowed to increase from what they have now to 375 patrons. She also cites that it will increase over time to the 700 that it was reportedly built for;
 - she took a home behind a local bar, which had occasional entertainment upstairs and not a venue that is used twice a week for young students; and
 - the development of Lavinia Square was to house young families and as the houses are great family

homes, she feels that, should the increase in numbers to the premises go ahead, it will undermine a great public development of family homes.

- 3.5 She has confirmed that not all of their concerns have been dealt with through the Liaison Meetings and that she has grave concerns about noise and her daughter's ability to live in her home. She feels that no account has been taken of the assurances the applicant and his architect gave two years ago that there would never be a door onto the roof of Hatfield House, which she indicates is the reason for her concern and distrust. She is also concerned that the applicant wants to protect his own interests by turning his Bar into a Limited company (as per the transfer application), citing that the Limited company will make it more difficult for anyone to hold any one person to account.
- 3.6 A copy of the applicant's Representation Form has been provided to the objector and a copy of her response has been forwarded to the Committee.
- 3.7 The objector and/or their representative will be available to discuss any matters relating to their objection should they arise during your meeting.

Details of the Premises

- 3.8 The premises have held an Entertainments Licence since 1990 and were originally licensed on the first floor for 150 persons.
- 3.9 The areas currently licensed to provide entertainment are the:
- Ground floor bar with a maximum capacity of 100 persons,
 - Graduate Bar Ground Floor with a maximum capacity of 120 persons
- 3.10 The areas to be included in the variation are the:
- First Floor with a maximum capacity of 375 persons (increase of 225 persons)
- 3.11 The Second Floor area will only be used as a smoking area limited to maximum 50 persons and Members are advised that the number of persons to be accommodated in the new area is included in the new overall maximum occupancy of the indoor area of 595 persons; they are not in addition to

this occupancy. No entertainments are permitted at this location.

- 3.12 Members are advised that with the increase in number of persons to be accommodated in the new areas, measures will be implemented by the applicant to ensure that occupancies are controlled on all floors such that overcrowding does not take place.
- 3.13 The days and hours during which the premises are currently licensed to provide entertainment are:
- Monday to Saturday: 11.30 am to 1.00 am the following morning, and
 - Sunday: 12.30 pm to midnight
- 3.14 These hours are unaffected by these applications.
- 3.15 Entertainment is currently provided in the form of live band performances.
- 3.16 The special conditions attached to the current Entertainments Licence is as follows:
- security gates outside final emergency exit door to be locked open when premises are occupied;
 - the main front door to be hooked in the open position when entertainment is taking place; and
 - the front gates to be hooked open when entertainment is taking place.

Building Works

- 3.17 A Building Regulations application was also lodged with the Service on 30th June 2014 for the alterations to the building consisting of changes to the ground floor off-licence area, a fit out to the first floor area to extend the bar area and further amendments to the second floor to make provision for a new smoking area. Those works were satisfactorily completed on 8th October 2014.

Planning

- 3.18 A Planning Application for the works was lodged on 9th January 2014 for the 'demolition of existing central rear return, new 2 storey rear infill extension, with second floor smoking terrace bounded 2.5m high rendered walls, partial removal of rear roof to create new dormer, associated

internal and external alterations to facilitate amended layout at ground, first and second floor and extension of railing along Hatfield Street'. The project and the associated works received planning approval on the 23rd December 2014. As part of the approval a number of conditions were imposed. Some of these have been imposed in consultation with the Council's Environmental Protection Unit (EPU)

- 3.19 A series of informatives were also attached, which included a requirement that patron noise associated with the development should be suitably managed and controlled to ensure that nearby residential premises are not disturbed by noise. A copy of the Planning Approval Notice and conditions has been forwarded to the Committee.

Liaison Meetings

- 3.20 Two liaison meetings have taken place on 29th October and 25th November 2015. Whilst these have proven to be challenging, all parties have testified to them being necessary and constructive. Details have been circulated to Members.

- 3.21 In addition to the two liaison meetings, there have been several separate meetings with the applicant and objectors.

3.22 Applicants' Representations

The application has co-operated fully with the Council and appears keen to address residents' concerns. The measures taken by the owner, both actual and proposed have been made available to the Committee.

- 3.23 The applicant has also completed a Representation Form which includes details of the measures they have put in place to try and alleviate problems, such as door staff and patron dispersal. A full copy of the applicants Representation Form has been circulated to the Committee and has been provided to the objector. We have also provided the applicant with a copy of the objector's Representation Form, as required by the protocol, and a copy of their response to this information has also been forwarded to Members.

- 3.24 The applicant and/or their representatives will be available at your meeting to answer any queries you may have in relation to the applications.

PSNI

- 3.25** The PSNI has been consulted and been involved extensively with the liaison meetings. It previously also had concerns with the operation of the premises in addition to the increase in occupancy. However, it will also be involved in developing the roles of the new door staff going forward and, as a result of outcome of the liaison meetings and the continuing engagement going forward, it has agreed to sign the agreement referred to in paragraph 1.5 and, therefore, has no objection. A copy of its correspondence has been circulated to Members.

Health, Safety and Welfare Inspections

- 3.26** As noted above, officers of the Service have been working extensively with all parties, particularly the applicant in order to help resolve the concerns from residents.
- 3.27** Seven during performance inspections have been carried out on the premises by officers from the Service in the last 12 months. The inspections revealed that the conditions of the Entertainments Licence were being adhered to and the officers were satisfied that all operational and management procedures were being implemented effectively. Additionally, since the Service was made aware of the issues from residents at the liaison meetings, we have carried out 3 specific monitoring inspections to assess and observe the alleged issues and ensure that the actions and measures agreed at the liaison meetings was being implemented effectively. This has mainly involved monitoring of the premises externally and observing the conduct and control of door staff when dealing with patrons.
- 3.28** At the time of writing, we have found that the premises have been operating in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Entertainments Licence and the measures as agreed at the liaison meetings.

Noise Issues

- 3.29** EPU has confirmed that no complaints have been received over the last 12 months relating to noise break out from the premises or due to patron dispersal. The new second floor smoking area was subject to assessment by EPU and the current provisions and measures put in place, such as the high level screening were erected upon their liaison and advice with the applicants acoustic engineer.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.30 Officers carry out during performance inspections on premises providing entertainment but this is catered for within existing budgets.**

Equality and Good Relations Implications

- 3.31 There are no equality or good relations issues associated with this report.”**

The Head of Building Control provided an overview of the applications and pointed out that, in terms of the variation of the Entertainments Licence, the applicant had, following liaison meetings, withdrawn the request for additional hours and was now seeking only to increase the numbers permitted on the first floor of the venue. He confirmed that the alterations to the premises had been approved by both the Building Control Service and the Planning Service and that, as the smoking area on the second floor, which had been referred to by one of the objectors within her representation, did not form part of the licensing application, the conditions which had been placed upon it as part of the planning process would remain unchanged.

He drew the Committee's attention to the fact that the two remaining objections to the applications had been received outside the twenty-eight day statutory period and that, in such cases, it could exercise its discretion and hear from the objectors, both of which were in attendance, although it did not have a duty to do so.

The Committee agreed to exercise its discretion and, accordingly, Mr. D. McPhee and Mrs. L. Livingstone, representing local residents Mrs. A. McDonald and Ms. G. Livingstone, respectively, were invited to make representation on the applications.

Mr. McPhee informed the Members that Mrs. McDonald had lived in the area for approximately thirty-eight years and that she had not, until now, had any issues in relation to the operation of the Hatfield House. He explained that the area surrounding the premises was primarily residential in nature and highlighted a number of ongoing problems of anti-social behaviour which had been experienced by local people. He argued that the proposal to increase the capacity of what was now generally recognised as being a student bar by over two hundred patrons would be likely to lead to an influx of young people from outside the area and have a further detrimental impact upon local residents, particularly in terms of additional noise and anti-social behaviour. Whilst residents recognised and appreciated that the licensee had endeavoured to ease their concerns by implementing, for example, an alcohol policy and dispersal procedures, they were not convinced that patrons would be controlled effectively once they were outside the premises. Mr. McPhee added that properties within the nearby Holylands area had, in recent years, been devalued as a result of similar difficulties and indicated that, should the application to increase the capacity of the Hatfield House be approved by the Committee, it could have a comparable effect upon surrounding properties and the overall amenity of that neighbourhood.

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Mrs. Livingstone explained that her daughter's home was located approximately fifty feet from the premises and that it was one of a number which had been constructed by the Clanmil Housing Association specifically for young families. She pointed out that the clientele had changed considerably since the current licensee had assumed control of the premises and stressed that, should the application to increase the capacity of the premises be granted, it would diminish the quality of life for her daughter and her children due to noise, anti-social behaviour and the extended operation of the smoking area. That view had been reinforced as a result of incidents which had occurred as recently as October, during which patrons leaving the venue had, for example, blocked traffic and played football on the Ormeau Road and urinated in adjacent streets. She concluded by stating that the applicant had failed through the liaison meetings to address fully her daughter's concerns in relation to the future operation of the premises, which had led her to sustain her objection to the application for the variation of the Entertainments Licence.

Mrs. E. Cassidy, the wife of one of the director's of the applicant company, together with Ms. M. Fisher, her legal representative, were then invited to address the Committee.

Ms. Fisher reported that her client's family had operated the Hatfield House for the past forty years and that they were now seeking to expand the business by increasing the numbers permitted on the first floor. Importantly, however, it would not be operating as a nightclub, as had been demonstrated by their withdrawal of the request to provide entertainment till 3.00 a.m. She explained that the alterations to the premises had obtained both Building Control and Planning Service approval and highlighted the measures which had either been put in place or would be put in place to address the issues which had been raised during liaison meetings and, subsequently, by the objectors. Those included improved soundproofing on the first floor, the installation of silencers on extractor fans, the location of receptacles at exits for bottle collection, the provision of a dedicated telephone to contact taxi firms and their continued cleansing of the area outside the premises on a regular basis. Additional staff, including door supervisors, would be deployed on busy nights and at peak periods such as St. Patrick's Day.

She confirmed that the applicant was reviewing currently the type of entertainment to be offered within the venue, with a view to ensuring that it would cater for all age groups. Ms. Fisher concluded by stating that the applicant was committed fully to engaging on an ongoing basis with community groups, local residents, the Building Control Service and the Police Service of Northern Ireland to address issues of concern and that potential dates for the next meeting in January were in the process of being identified.

Mrs. Cassidy informed the Committee that liaison meetings had been held in October and November, once her husband had been made aware of the extent of the objections which had been lodged in relation to the application to provide entertainment till 3.00 a.m. and that he had almost immediately withdrawn that element of the variation. She explained that, prior to that, two awareness sessions had been held in the venue, at which her husband and the architect had outlined to local residents the details of the planning application relating to the proposed alterations. That had resulted in a

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number of changes being made to the application. She indicated that, should the Committee grant the applications, she would be agreeable to a condition being attached to the Entertainments Licence requiring the continuation of regular liaison meetings.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Campbell,
Seconded by Councillor Attwood,

That the Committee, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, agrees to grant an application for the renewal, transfer and variation of a Seven-day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence in respect of the Hatfield House, 128-130 Ormeau Road, with the capacity of the first floor of the premises being increased to 375 persons and the additional condition being imposed that officers of the Building Control Service facilitate regular liaison meetings.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Brown,
Seconded by Councillor Carroll,

That the Committee, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, agrees to grant for a period of six months an application for the renewal, transfer and variation of a Seven-day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence in respect of the Hatfield House, 128-130 Ormeau Road, with the capacity of the first floor of the premises being increased to 375 persons and the additional condition being imposed that officers of the Building Control Service facilitate regular liaison meetings.

On a vote by show of hand, two Members voted for the amendment and thirteen against and it was declared lost.

The original proposal standing in the name of Councillor Campbell and seconded by Councillor Attwood was thereupon put to the meeting when thirteen Members voted for and none against and it was accordingly declared carried.

**Application for the Grant of a Seven-day Annual Entertainments Licence –
Beckett's Bar, 241 Stewartstown Road**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 12th November, it had been advised that an application had been received for the grant of a Seven-day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence in relation to Beckett's Bar, based upon the Council's standard conditions to provide music, singing, or any other entertainment of a like kind. The Committee had agreed, in view of the concerns which had been raised by the Head of Building Control around public safety and by the Divisional Solicitor in terms of the management of other premises operated by the applicant's family, to consider the application at its next monthly meeting and that the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service and the applicant be invited to attend.

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Accordingly, the Head of Building Control submitted for the Committee's consideration a report which provided information in respect of the application. He reported that Beckett's Bar had been one of a number of licensed premises which had, under Local Government Reform, been transferred into the Belfast City Council area and that it had been brought to the attention of the Building Control Service that entertainment was being advertised there, despite there being no Entertainments Licence in place. As had been the case with all of those premises which had been transferred, officers had met with the management of Beckett's Bar to advise them of their requirements under the entertainments licensing legislation and had provided them with an information pack containing the necessary documentation for submission. As no application had been received, officers had visited the premises on several occasions in June and early July and had advised the applicant's representatives that, since no Licence had been granted, she should not be providing entertainment and, should she continue to do so, legal action could be initiated. However, the venue had continued to offer entertainment and an inspection which had been undertaken on 10th July had found that it was taking place both inside and outside the premises.

The Head of Building Control informed the Members that that visit had identified also a series of safety issues, such as fire doors being held open and escape and final exit doors being blocked. As a result, the Council's Legal Services Section was now reviewing a file, with a view to considering the potential for initiating legal proceedings against the applicant. However, he stressed there was not, at this point, any conviction against the applicant in terms of Beckett's Bar.

He explained that an application for the grant of an Entertainments Licence had since been submitted for Beckett's Bar and was now being presented to the Committee for its consideration. He confirmed that all of the information which had been requested previously by Members in relation to the Hughes family and the premises which they operated within the City had been included within the Committee report and that additional information, including a series of emails, had been circulated to the Members following the publication of that report. No written representation had been received in respect of the application and the Police Service of Northern Ireland had offered no objection. He added that, whilst the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service had, initially, objected to the grant of the Entertainments Licence, it had since withdrawn that objection. However, the Fire Service had accepted the Committee's invitation of 12th November to attend this meeting in order to provide clarification around the fire safety issues which had been identified during the inspection on 10th July and a representative was present.

In response to a question from a Member, the Divisional Solicitor explained that the Subject Access Requests, which had been referred to within the Committee report, had been submitted by Mrs. Carol Hughes, Mr. Eugene Hughes and Mr. John Hughes, following the meeting on 12th November, at which officers had suggested that it would be beneficial for Members, before determining the application, to obtain information on the various issues which had been identified previously in relation to bars owned by the Hughes family. Each person had requested details on all information being held by the Council in relation to them. The Head of Building reported that the Council was obliged to issue a response to such a request within forty working days and that it was

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envisaged that those for the three members of the Hughes family would be formulated within the next seven to ten days.

In response to a further question regarding other applications which had been approved by the Committee whilst a prosecution had been pending and the associated number of offences, the Divisional Solicitor indicated that she could not confirm if any application for the grant of any Entertainments Licence had been delayed, pending the outcome of legal proceedings. However, it was normal practice in presenting an application to bring to the Committee's attention instances where there had been either a previous conviction or where a prosecution was pending and it was a matter for the Committee to decide whether to take those issues into consideration. She stated that the applicant had highlighted within her submission a number of premises which had been granted an Entertainments Licence by the Committee, despite the fact that there had been either legal proceedings pending or a previous conviction. The Divisional Solicitor confirmed that, in those instances, there appeared to have been only one or two issues relating to the premises which had given rise to legal proceedings. In terms of Beckett's Bar, however, there had been a number of issues detected, as had been highlighted within the Committee report. She added that the important point was whether or not the outcome of any criminal proceedings would be material to the Committee's decision in relation to the grant of the Licence.

At this point in the meeting, it was

Moved by Councillor Armitage,
Seconded by Councillor Attwood,

That the Committee, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, agrees to defer consideration of the application for Beckett's Bar until such time as the outcome of any legal proceedings being undertaken by the Council had been determined and the applicant had had the opportunity to consider fully the Council's response to the Subject Access Requests.

The Chairperson pointed out that Mr. D. Rodgers, the applicant's legal representative, was in attendance and he suggested that the Committee might wish to offer him the opportunity to address it on the proposal to defer the application, particularly around the issue of potential legal proceedings.

The Committee agreed that it would be beneficial to hear from Mr. Rodgers and he was welcomed by the Chairperson.

Mr. Rodgers highlighted the fact that the Committee had already established a precedent by granting, in the past two years, an Entertainments Licence for Flame Restaurant, where there had been a prosecution pending for providing entertainment on more than one occasion without an Entertainments Licence and for fire safety issues. The Committee had, in that instance, been made aware that there was likely to be a prosecution and, in his view, had followed the correct process and had acted fairly in considering and granting that application. He made the point that all factors needed to be taken into consideration in assessing an application, such as the impact upon the livelihood of employees and, accordingly, he suggested that the Committee, in keeping with its approach for other applications where there had been

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potential legal proceedings, should again act fairly and consider the application for Beckett's Bar at this meeting.

In response to a point which had been raised by Mr. Rodgers, the Divisional Solicitor confirmed that the prosecution for Flame Restaurant had related solely to the provision of entertainment without an Entertainments Licence. She added that the time limit for issuing proceedings in the case of Beckett's Bar would expire on 20th January, after which time the Council would be unable to pursue a prosecution.

The Head of Building Control confirmed that the premises had never held an Entertainments Licence within Belfast and that its previous Licence, which had been issued by Lisburn City Council, had expired in 2010.

The Chairperson reminded the Committee that a proposal to defer consideration of the application had been made earlier in the meeting by Councillor Armitage, which had been seconded by Councillor Attwood.

Accordingly, the proposal was put to the Committee and resolved.

Chairperson

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Planning Committee

Tuesday, 15th December, 2015

MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Garrett (Chairperson);
Aldermen L. Patterson and Stalford;
Councillors Armitage, Bunting, Campbell,
Heading, Hutchinson, Johnston, Magee,
McAteer, McDonough-Brown and Mullan.
- In attendance: Mr. P. Williams, Director of Planning and Place;
Mr. J. Walsh, Town Solicitor;
Mr. C. McIlwaine, Area Planning Manager;
Miss N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

Apology

An apology was reported on behalf of Alderman McGimpsey.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 17th and 19th November were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st December, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declarations of Interest

The Chairperson (Councillor Garrett) declared an interest in application Z/2013/1434/F – former Visteon Site at Finaghy Road North/Blacks Road, in that he had been contacted by constituents regarding the proposal. However, he pointed out that he had clarified this matter with the Town Solicitor and pointed out that any interest was non-pecuniary and that he remained ‘without bias’ in respect of the application.

Councillor Heading declared interests in two applications, in that he had been contacted by constituents regarding the proposals. However, he pointed out that his interests were non-pecuniary and he remained ‘without bias’ in respect of the following:

- Z/2013/1434/F – former Visteon Site at Finaghy Road North/Blacks Road; and
- Z/2012/1417/F - Blackmountain Landfill at Upper Springfield Road.

Councillor McAteer declared an interest in application Z/2012/1417/F - Blackmountain Landfill at Upper Springfield Road, in that her employers, that is, the West Belfast Partnership Board, had made representations to the Department of the Environment in respect of the proposal. It was noted, however, that the views of her employers did not impinge upon Councillor McAteer’s ability to consider the proposal objectively in her capacity as a Member of the Committee.

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Councillor Mullan indicated that she had deferred item Z/2011/0726/0 – one to eight Springfield Heights and north of Moyard Crescent when it had been presented to the Council's former Town Planning Committee.

Noted.

Committee Meeting Dates - 2016

The Committee agreed to meet at 5:00 pm on the following dates during 2016:

- Tuesday, 19th and Thursday, 21st January (if required)
- Tuesday, 16th and Thursday 18th February (if required)
- Tuesday, 15th and Monday 21st March (if required)
- Tuesday, 19th and Thursday 21st April (if required)
- Tuesday, 17th and Thursday 19th May (if required)
- Tuesday, 14th and Thursday 16th June (if required)
- Council recess (if necessary, a meeting will be scheduled)
- Tuesday, 16th and Thursday 18th August (if required)
- Tuesday, 20th and Thursday 22nd September (if required)
- Tuesday, 18th and Thursday 20th October (if required)
- Tuesday, 15th and Thursday 17th November (if required)
- Tuesday, 13th and Thursday 15th December (if required)

Regionally Significant Application – Wastebeater, Kennedy Way

The Committee noted that correspondence had been received from the Department of the Environment indicating that an application which had been submitted by 'Wastebeater' for the demolition of an existing office block to enable the erection of a building for use as a waste treatment and transfer facility at Kennedy Way had been withdrawn by the applicant.

Routine Correspondence

The Committee noted the receipt of correspondence from the Housing Executive which related to the extinguishment of a Public Right of Way at Benmore Drive, Finaghy.

Appeal Decisions Notified

The Committee noted the outcomes of a three planning appeals, which related to applications at 44 Ulsterville Avenue, lands adjacent to 392 and 394 Belmont Avenue and at 11 William Street South.

Planning Decisions Issued Under Delegated Authority

The Committee noted a list of decisions which had been taken under delegated authority by the Director of Planning and Place and the Town Solicitor between 10th November and 7th December.

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Application Z/2010/0245/F – Apartments at 55-71 Ormeau Road

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 15th September, it had granted approval to an application for 83 apartments at 55 to 71 Ormeau Road. At that meeting, the Town Solicitor had pointed out that the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) had raised objections to the proposal and, should the Committee approve the application, it would be necessary, under the provisions of The Planning (Notification of Applications) Directions 2015, to advise the Department of the Environment [DoE] of that decision.

Accordingly, the DoE had been advised of the Committee's decision and, subsequently, correspondence had been received which had indicated that it had not deemed it necessary that the decision be referred to it.

Noted.

Committee Site Visits

Pursuant to its decisions at the meeting of 17th November, it was noted that the Committee had undertaken site visits on Saturday, 21st November in respect of the following applications:

- Z/2011/0726/O – 1-8 Springfield Heights and north of Moyard Crescent;
- Z/2012/1417/F – Blackmountain Landfill at Upper Springfield Road; and
- Z/2013/1434/F – the former Visteon Site at Finaghy Road North/Blacks Road.

Application Withdrawn

The Committee noted that item Z/2014/1223/F, which referred to application at the Macrory Memorial Presbyterian Church at Duncairn Gardens/Hillman Street had been withdrawn from the planning process.

THE COMMITTEE DEALT WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN PURSUANCE OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO IT BY THE COUNCIL UNDER STANDING ORDER 37(e)

Request for Pre-Determination Hearing – Visteon Application

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 17th November, it had deferred consideration of an application for a comprehensive mixed-use development, which would comprise 244 social and private/affordable residential units, with public open space/linear park at the site of the former Visteon factory off Black's Road. That decision had been taken to enable the Council to assess the implications of the Department of the Environment's Planning Advice Note 'Implementation of Planning Policy for the Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses', and to enable the Committee to undertake a site visit to acquaint itself with the location and the proposal at first hand.

The Committee was informed that, since its meeting on 17th November, a request had been submitted by the Campaign for the Economic Regeneration of the

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Former Visteon Site [the objector] to hold a pre-determination hearing in respect of the above-mentioned application.

The Town Solicitor indicated that the Committee could opt to hold a pre-determination hearing and, in that regard, he outlined the legislative context, which was set out within Section 30 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011. He added that the objector had requested also, should the Committee accede to the request, that a pre-notification period of 14 days be afforded to all participants to enable them to prepare adequately for the hearing.

The Town Solicitor advised the Committee that, should it agree to hold a pre-determination hearing, it was entitled to establish measures which it deemed appropriate to manage its proceedings. Those procedures could relate to the number of speakers and to the duration of representations.

Accordingly, he suggested that there were three options which the Committee might consider, viz.,

- to consider the planning application that evening without holding a pre-determination hearing;
- to hold a pre-determination hearing and to accede to the 14 day notification period; and
- to hold a pre-determination hearing that evening and to defer consideration of the application to Thursday, 17th December at 4:30 p.m.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to hold a pre-determination hearing that evening and to defer formal consideration of the application to Thursday, 17th December at 4:30 p.m. It agreed further that the pre-determination hearing would take place in the following order:

1. to receive an overview of the application from planning officials;
2. to receive representations from the objector and the applicant, limiting each to ten minutes speaking time; and
3. to receive representations from Elected Members limiting each to two minutes speaking time.

Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at 5.25 pm to host the pre-determination hearing and re-convened at 6:05 pm.

Z/2012/1417/F Blackmountain Landfill Site at 117 Upper Springfield Road

(Councillor Bunting, who had not been in attendance at the meeting on 17th November, when the item had been deferred, took no part in the discussion or decision-making process in respect of this application.)

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 17th November, it had deferred consideration of an application for the change of use of aggregate storage

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buildings to a waste transfer station, incorporating a facility for the importation, storage and treatment of hazardous waste, at Blackmountain Landfill site, 117 Upper Springfield Road, Hannahstown. That decision had been taken to enable the Committee to undertake a site visit in order to acquaint Members with the site and to assess the proximity of housing within the location.

The Committee received a deputation consisting of Mr. J. McClean and Mr. G. Daye, on behalf of the Mount Eagles Drive Action Group, who outlined a range of objections to the proposal. They referred particularly to the health implications which could arise as a result of asbestos being stored and treated at the site. They expressed concern also that the tourism potential of the Black and Divis Mountains could be impacted upon should the development be permitted.

Proposal

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Campbell,
Seconded by Councillor McAteer,

That the opinion to approve the application be rejected and, accordingly, the Committee refuses the application on the grounds that the proposal, if permitted, would contravene Planning Policy Statement 16, specifically TSM 8 (relating to tourism development), which states, amongst other things, that *'planning permission will not be granted to a development that would, in itself, or in combination with existing and approved development in the locality, have an adverse impact on a tourism asset'*, that being, the Black and Divis Mountains.

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

Z/2011/0726/0 – 1-8 Springfield Heights and north of Moyard Crescent

(Councillor Mullan left the Committee table at this point.)

The Committee re-considered an application, which included an addendum report, which sought outline permission for a residential development, which would include access and ancillary site works on lands northwest of one to eight Springfield Heights and north of Moyard Crescent. The Chairperson reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 17th November, it had deferred consideration of the matter to enable the Council to assess the implications of the Department of the Environment's Planning Advice Note 'Implementation of Planning Policy for the Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses', and to enable the Committee to undertake a site visit, which had taken place on 21st November.

The Planning Officer, in response to a Member's question, clarified that the application which was before the Committee was seeking outline permission only. He added that any future application received for the site would be assessed as a

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'reserved matter' and would be required to be in accordance with the outline approval, which would include any conditions attached.

The Committee granted approval, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

(Councillor Mullan returned to the Committee table at this point.)

Z/2013/0557/A – hoarding and shrouding on scaffolding at Carlton House, 1-6 Shaftesbury Square

The Committee considered an application which sought retrospective consent to display a hoarding and shrouding on scaffolding located at Carlton House, 1-6 Shaftesbury Square.

The Committee granted approval, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

Z/2014/1665/F – mixed-use development at Peter Pan Complex, 90-120 Springfield Road

The Planning Case Officer outlined the principal aspects of an application which sought permission for the demolition of existing buildings to enable the erection of two commercial units, which would include the re-instatement of an existing bookmakers and one retail unit, together with 90 affordable housing units, with associated parking, landscaping site and access works, at the Peter Pan Complex, 90-120 Springfield Road.

The Committee granted approval, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

LA04/2015/0675/F – change of use/extension at 75-81 Victoria Street

The Committee considered an application which sought permission for the change of use and extension to an existing office building to provide for hotel accommodation with associated bar and restaurant at 75 to 81 Victoria Street.

The Committee granted approval, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

Z/2015/00148/F – replacement stand and ancillary works at Crusaders FC, Shore Road (amended plans)

The Planning Case Officer outlined the principal aspects of an application which sought permission for the demolition of the existing stand at the St. Vincent's Street side of Seaview Football Stadium, the home of Crusaders FC. It was pointed out that the development would provide for a replacement stand (1246 seats), include parking provision, changing rooms and associated rooms and offices on the upper floors with a new vehicle entrance from the Shore Road.

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The Committee granted approval, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

Z/2014/0978/F – pitch and changing facilities/accommodation at St Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School

The Committee considered an application for a single-storey structure containing a synthetic surface sports training pitch with changing facilities and ancillary accommodation at St. Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School, located at 147a Glen Road.

The Committee granted approval, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

LA04/2015/0190/F – development adjacent to Commissioning Quay, Musgrave Channel, Harbour Estate

The Committee received an overview of an application which sought permission for the construction of a containment bund, using quarry rubble and rock armour, for the disposal and storage of marine contaminated silt which was deemed unsuitable for disposal at sea on a site located adjacent to the Commissioning Quay, Musgrave Channel, Belfast Harbour Estate.

The Committee granted approval, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

Z/2014/1536/F – two storey extension to the rear of St. Malachy's College, Antrim Road

The Committee was apprised of the principle aspects of an application which sought permission for a two-storey extension to an existing classroom block to the rear of St. Malachy's College, 36 Antrim Road.

The Committee granted approval subject, to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

Z/2013/0169/F – demolition/construction of bar, betting office, ATM and 16 apartments at 469-487 Crumlin Road

In considering the above-mentioned application, a number of Members suggested that it would be prudent to undertake a site visit to enable the Committee to assess the location of the proposed apartments in relation to an adjacent public house.

Moved by Councillor Hutchinson,
Seconded by Councillor Bunting and

Resolved – that the Committee agrees to defer consideration of the above-mentioned application to enable the Committee to undertake a site visit to acquaint itself with the location and the proposal at first hand.

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Z/2013/1402/F – demolition/construction of bar, betting office, ATM and 26 apartments at Antrim Road/Halliday's Road

The Planning Officer outlined the principal aspects of an application for the demolition of existing public house, betting office and snooker hall, to enable the construction of a new betting office, public house, installation of a bank machine and 26 apartments on land at 151-167 Antrim Road and at 12 Halliday's Road.

The Committee granted approval, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

LA04/2015/0222/F – Grove Playing Fields at Skegoneill Avenue

The Committee considered an application which sought permission to amalgamate a vacant site within the Grove Playing Fields, 195 Skegoneill Avenue, to create an extended park area at Grove Playing Fields Belfast

It was noted that the application, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, had been presented to the Committee since the Council was the applicant.

The Committee granted approval, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the report.

LA04/2015/0290/F – change of use re: off sales to takeaway/cafe at 26 Beechfield Street

The Committee was apprised of the principal aspects of an application for the change of use from a licensed off sales to a hot food take away and cafe at 26 Beechfield Street.

The Planning Officer indicated that the proposal would, if permitted, be contrary to the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) and Development Control Advice Note 4, in that it would cause demonstrable harm to the adjoining residential properties since it would affect the amenity of residents by reason of noise, vibrations, odours, litter and the potential for disturbance and antisocial behaviour. Accordingly, the Committee was recommended to refuse the application for the reasons outlined.

The Committee refused the application for the reasons outlined within the case officer's report.

LA04/2015/0185/F – new offices and accommodation for Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service at Boucher Crescent

The Committee considered an application for the development of new offices, workshop, stores and accommodation for the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service at its Training Centre, 79 Boucher Crescent.

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The Committee granted approval, subject to the imposing of the conditions as set out within the case officer's report.

LA04/2015/0780/F – two storey side and rear extension at 4 William Alexander Park

The Committee considered an application for a two-storey side and rear extension, which would include the demolition of an existing garage, to enable the erection of a single-storey side extension and the replacement of a single storey flat roof with a hip pitched roof at 4 William Alexander Park.

It was noted that the application, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, had been presented to the Committee since the applicant was a member of Council staff.

The Committee granted approval, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

Adjournment

The Committee adjourned at this point and agreed to re-convene at 4:30 pm on Thursday, 17th December to consider the following items:

1. Purpose-Built Managed Student Accommodation - Best Practice Guide; and
2. Z/2013/1434/F – the former Visteon Site at Finaghy Road Road/Blacks Road.

Chairperson

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Planning Committee

Thursday, 17th December, 2015

ADJOURNED MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Garrett (Chairperson);
Aldermen L. Patterson and Stalford;
Councillors Armitage, Campbell, Heading,
Hutchinson, Johnston, McAteer and Magee.

In attendance: Mr. P. Williams, Director of Planning and Place;
Mr. J. Walsh, Town Solicitor;
Mr. C. McIlwaine, Area Planning Manager;
Miss N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman McGimpsey and Councillors McDonough-Brown and Mullan.

Declarations of Interest

Z/2013/1434/F – former Visteon Site at Finaghy Road North/Blacks Road

The Chairperson (Councillor Garrett) declared an interest in the above-mentioned application, as per his previous declaration at the Committee's November meeting, namely that he had been contacted by constituents regarding the proposal. However, he pointed out that he had clarified this matter with the Town Solicitor and pointed out that any interest was non-pecuniary and that he remained 'without bias' in respect of the application.

Councillor Heading declared an interest also in the application, also as per his previous declaration at the Committee's November meeting, namely that he had been contacted by constituents regarding the proposals. However, he pointed out that his interests were non-pecuniary and he remained 'without bias'.

Noted.

Student Housing - Planning and Place Good Practice Guide

(Mr. D. O' Kane, Principal Professional and Technical Officer, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the following report, together with an associated Best Practice Guide for Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation, a copy of which was available on the Council's website:

"1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report seeks Committee endorsement of a new Best Practice Guide for Purpose Built Managed Student

Accommodation (PBMSA) in Belfast City Centre. It builds upon the Advice Note following Committee endorsement in October 2015 and helps articulate the Council's vision for PBMSA in the city to prospective developers.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Agree the adoption of the draft Planning and Place Best Practice Guide on Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation in Belfast.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 On 18 August 2015, this Committee agreed a series of steps to be undertaken to provide the Council with appropriate tools to deal with the recent influx of planning applications for Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation (PBMSA) in the City Centre. This included:

- **Long-term (3-5 years) – The inclusion of new policies to address any policy deficiencies within the New Local Development Plan;**
- **Medium-term (6-9months) – The preparation of Supplementary Planning Guidance to address gaps in the existing policy framework; and**
- **Short-term – the preparation of two guidance documents based on the existing policy framework as follows:**
 - **Technical, internal 'guidelines' to ensure a consistent approach when determining planning applications for PBMSA; and**
 - **A 'Best Practice Guide' to encourage the development of good quality PBMSA in the right locations.**

3.2 On 20 October 2015, the first of these short-term reports entitled 'Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation in Belfast – Planning and Place Advice Note' was approved for adoption and immediate use by this Committee. This report relates to the second of these short-term actions and the Committee is requested to approve the adoption and immediate use of the draft 'Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation in Belfast – Planning and Place Best Practice Guide'.

3.3 Whilst the Advice Note aims to consolidate the existing policy framework for use internally, the Best Practice Guide has been produced to assist applicants and agents in their understanding of the Council's aspirations concerning PBMSA in Belfast. It seeks to encourage the development of good quality PBMSA in the right locations by explaining how new developments can be best planned and designed prior to submitting planning applications. It is structured around the eight key areas containing best practice guidance in relation to:

- **Pre-application considerations – Encouraging early engagement with the Council and local communities;**
- **Locational considerations – Promoting suitable locations within the City Centre as preferred locations for PBMSA;**
- **Policy designations – Outlining relevant planning policy constraints;**
- **Design Considerations – Encouraging good quality, well-designed PBMSA in terms of layout, accommodation mix, open space, parking, facilities, waste and recycling, safety and crime prevention and energy reduction;**
- **Considering impact – Helping reduce negative effects whilst capturing any positive impacts of PBMSA development;**
- **Management considerations – Ensuring effective management arrangements to deliver a safe and positive environment for students, whilst reducing the risk of potential negative impacts on the local community;**
- **Considering need – Ensuring the right balance between meeting student housing needs and preventing an over-supply of PBMSA; and**
- **Planning Agreement and Developer Contributions – Summarising issues in relation to PBMSA where the Council may consider the use of planning agreements.**

3.4 The Guide is designed to be referenced by developers when first considering proposals for PBMSA developments and it is hoped that the correct application of the guidance will ensure an appropriate supply of good quality PBMSA in the right locations, helping the Council deliver an integrated approach to the management of student accommodation across the city.

3.5 It should be noted that the Guide is not a statement of policy as to where PBMSA can or cannot take place, but rather articulates the Council's view on student accommodation in

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the city to be referenced when considering proposals for PBMSA. It should therefore be read in conjunction with the wider planning policy framework, as well as the associated Planning and Place Advice Note.

3.6 Financial & Resource Implications

No additional resource implications arising from this report.

3.7 Equality or Good Relations Implications

None.”

After discussion, the Committee agreed to endorse the Best Practice Guide as set out.

THE COMMITTEE DEALT WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEM IN PURSUANCE OF THE POWERS DELEGATED TO IT IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 37(e)

Z/2013/1434/F – former Visteon Site at Finaghy Road North/Blacks Road

(Alderman Stalford joined the meeting whilst this application was under consideration and was therefore unable to vote or partake in the discussion.)

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 17th November, it had deferred consideration of the above-mentioned application to enable the Council to assess the implications of the Department of the Environment's Planning Advice Note, 'Implementation of Planning Policy for the Retention of Zoned Land and Economic Development Uses'. That decision had also been taken also to enable the Committee to undertake a site visit to acquaint itself with the location and the proposal, which had taken place on 21st November. At its meeting on 15th December, the Committee, in response to a request which had been submitted by the objectors to the proposal, agreed to hold a pre-determination hearing that evening, and to defer formal consideration of the application to 17th December.

Accordingly, the Committee considered the application, which sought permission for a comprehensive mixed-use development, which would comprise 244 social and private/affordable residential units, with public open space/linear park. The non-residential element of the application would include a community centre and business units, with associated parking.

The Planning Officer outlined the principal aspects of the proposal. He referred to an addendum report which had been submitted for consideration, which had clarified a range of matters that had been raised previously, specifically those relating to the DoE's Advice Note which had been issued on 16th November.

The Committee received Mr. P. Crossan, representing the Campaign for the Economic Regeneration of the Former Visteon Site, who outlined objections to the proposal. In addition, Councillor Attwood outlined his concerns in relation to the

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proposal, which related principally to the percentage of land which would be retained for economic purposes as part of the development.

The Committee received Ms. A. Conway, representing the applicant, Fold Housing Association, together with their agent, Mr. D. Broderick. In addition, Councillor Walsh spoke in favour of the proposal.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor McAteer,
Seconded by Councillor Magee,

That the Committee agrees to adopt the recommendation and approve the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions as set out within the case officer's report and as outlined at the meeting.

At this point, Councillor Heading addressed the Committee and indicated that he had been made aware that a letter relating to the application, which had been circulated in October 2014 by the local branch of his political party, might be interpreted as having compromised his objectivity in respect of the proposal. He referred to the fact that the letter had been issued prior to the former DoE Planning Service contacting the applicant to request that they submit an amended scheme. He indicated that, after discussing the matter with his legal representative, he felt it appropriate to declare an interest in the matter and, therefore, he would not be partaking in any vote on the application.

The proposal was thereupon put to the Committee when, on a vote by show of hands, eight Members voted for the proposal and none against and it was declared carried.

Chairperson

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