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BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

SUMMONS TO ATTEND THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

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

Notice is hereby given that the monthly meeting of the Council will be held in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Belfast on Wednesday, 1st February, 2017 at 6.00 pm., for the transaction of the following business:

1. Summons
2. Apologies
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Council of 3rd January, 2017 (Pages 1 - 10)
5. Request for a Deputation to Address the Council

A request has been received from Councillor McCusker to allow a number of young people to address the Council on the important role being played by youth services, in the context of the motion which he will be proposing later in the meeting.

As the Chief Executive has not received the required seven days written notice of the intended deputation, as required under Standing Order 8, the Council will be invited to consider the request.

6. Official Announcements
7. Minutes of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 6th, 20th and 26th January, 2017 (Pages 11 - 64)
8. Minutes of the People and Communities Committee of 4th, 10th and 24th January, 2017 (Pages 65 - 98)
9. Minutes of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 11th and 24th January, 2017 (Pages 99 - 118)
10. Minutes of the Licensing Committee of 18th January, 2017 (Pages 119 - 142)
11. Minutes of the Planning Committee of 17th and 24th January, 2017 (Pages 143 - 164)
12. Minutes of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders Committee of 12th January, 2017 (Pages 165 - 168)

13. Notices of Motion

a) Youth Services

Councillor McCusker to move:

"This Council notes with deep concern the proposed cuts in youth services in Belfast, which could see the loss of 131 posts in youth organisations.

The Council recognises the important and vital contribution of our youth services to Belfast and believes that these cuts will have a major negative impact on local communities.

The Council opposes these cuts in youth services and agrees to seek an urgent cross-party meeting with the Education Authority and the Minister of Education or senior Department of Education officials to raise our concerns and calls for the funding to be reinstated."

(To be discussed by the Council)

b) Car Parking Charges

Alderman Rodgers to move:

"This Council expresses its concern at the 16% increase in on-street car parking charges in Belfast, from £1.20 per hour to £1.40 per hour, announced by the Infrastructure Minister.

This decision will adversely affect City Centre retail trade and will advantage the out-of-town shopping centres which are able to offer free car parking.

This decision shows a complete lack of understanding by the Minister as to what local people and business have said about parking tariffs in Belfast.

The Council is strongly opposed to this decision and agrees to seek an urgent meeting with the Minister and/or his senior officials to try to persuade them to reverse this unnecessary move."

(To be discussed by the Council)

c) Irish Presidential Elections

Councillor O'Hara to move:

"Belfast is a rich and diverse city containing many different nationalities. Many consider themselves as British, others Irish and citizens of the Irish nation.

Recognising and respecting all traditions, this Council urges the Irish government to implement the recommendations of the constitutional convention and to allow the citizens of Belfast to participate in Irish Presidential elections.

Such a provision recognises the rights of Irish citizens in the North without threatening in any way others right to their British identity."

(To be discussed by the Council)

d) Review of Enforcement Services

Councillor Boyle to move:

"This Council recognises that it is responsible for a range of enforcement services such as on-street drinking, littering and night time noise. It is not clear that these services operate in all areas at all times of the year.

The Council, therefore, agrees that a comprehensive review is carried out by the relevant Council Departments into the delivery of enforcement services across the City, with the ultimate aim of ensuring that such services are delivered on all 365 days of the year."

**(To be referred without discussion to the
People and Communities Committee)**

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



Chief Executive

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Council

MONTHLY MEETING OF BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

Held in the City Hall on Tuesday, 3rd January, 2017
at 6.00 o'clock p.m., pursuant to notice.

Members present: The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor (Alderman Kingston) (Chairperson); the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Campbell); Aldermen Convery, Haire, McCoubrey, McKee, L. Patterson, R. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Boyle, Bunting, Clarke, Collins, Copeland, Corr, Corr Johnston, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Garrett, Graham, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Jones, Kyle, Long, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAllister, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, McVeigh, Milne, Mullan, Newton, Nicholl, O'Donnell, O'Hara, Reynolds and Walsh.

Reading of Scriptures

Prior to the meeting commencing, the Lord Mayor read a passage from the Scriptures.

Summons

The Chief Executive submitted the summons convening the meeting.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Aldermen Browne and McGimpsey and Councillors Carson, Craig and O'Neill.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Minutes of the Council

Moved by the Lord Mayor (Alderman Kingston),
Seconded by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Campbell) and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the monthly meeting of the Council of 1st December be taken as read and signed as correct.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 3rd January, 2017**

Request to Film Proceedings

The Chief Executive reported that a request had been received from the BBC seeking to film the meeting.

The Council agreed to accede to the request.

Official Announcements

Expression of Sympathy

The Lord Mayor referred to the recent death of the grandfather of Councillor Corr Johnston and of the father of Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive, and, on behalf of the Council, extended to them his condolences and deepest sympathy.

Congratulations

The Lord Mayor, on behalf of the Council, extended congratulations to Mr. D. Neill, the Council's Emergency Planning Co-ordinator, on having been appointed as a Member of the Order of the British Empire (M.B.E.) in the Queen's New Year's Honours List.

He congratulated also Councillor O'Neill and her partner, Kieran, on the recent birth of their son, Alfie.

High Sheriff of Belfast

Alderman Rodgers highlighted the fact that his term as the High Sheriff of Belfast had ended recently and expressed his appreciation for the support which he had received from the current Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor, the former Lord Mayor (Councillor Carson), the former Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Spence) and all Members of the Council. He thanked also those staff who had assisted him over the course of the year and wished his successor, Alderman Haire, well during his term as High Sheriff.

Change of Membership on Committees/Outside Bodies

The Chief Executive reported that notification had been received from the Sinn Fein Party indicating that it wished to replace Councillor McAteer with Councillor Corr on the Active Belfast Limited Board.

The Council approved the aforementioned change.

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Moved by Councillor Hussey,
Seconded by Councillor Hutchinson,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the Strategic and Policy and Resources Committee of 16th December be approved and adopted.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 3rd January, 2017**

**Request for Matter to be Taken Back
for Further Consideration**

Capital Programme Update

Councillor Kyle requested that the Chairman agree to the minute under the heading "Capital Programme Update", in so far as it related to the Clonduff Community Centre, being taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

The Chairman declined the request.

Amendment

Capital Programme Update

Moved by Councillor Kyle,
Seconded by Councillor Corr Johnston,

That the decision of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 16th December, under the heading "Capital Programme Update", in so far as it relates to the Clonduff Community Centre, be taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

On a vote by show of hands, five Members voted for the amendment and twenty-four against and it was declared lost.

Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee of 16th December were thereupon approved and adopted.

People and Communities Committee

Moved by Councillor Garrett,
Seconded by Alderman Rodgers,

That the minutes of the proceedings of the People and Communities Committee of 6th December be approved and adopted.

**Request for Matter to be Taken Back
for Further Consideration**

Analysis of Cost of Pitch Hire

Councillor Hutchinson requested that the Chairman agree to the minute under the heading "Analysis of Cost of Pitch Hire" being taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

The Chairman declined the request.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 3rd January, 2017**

Adoption of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Committee of 6th December were thereupon approved and adopted.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Moved by Councillor Graham,
Seconded by Alderman Haire and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the City Growth and Regeneration Committee of 7th December be approved and adopted.

Licensing Committee

Moved by Councillor Armitage,
Seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Licensing Committee of 14th December, omitting matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Planning Committee

Moved by Councillor Johnston,
Seconded by Councillor Armitage and

Resolved - That the minutes of the proceedings of the Planning Committee of 13th December, omitting matters in respect of which the Council has delegated its powers to the Committee, be approved and adopted.

Notices of Motion

Irish Presidential Elections

In the absence of Councillor Carson, in whose name the motion had been submitted, Councillor McVeigh, with the consent of the Council, proposed:

“This Council supports the call to implement the recommendation by the Constitutional Convention to extend the franchise to include all Irish citizens, regardless of their place of residency, to vote in the next and all future Presidential elections.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor O’Hara.

At the request of Councillor Lyons, the proposer agreed that the motion be amended to provide for the deletion of everything after the words “recommended by the” in the first line and the insertion of the following: “Joint Committee of the Oireachtas

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 3rd January, 2017**

on European Affairs, made in November, 2014, that voting rights in Oireachtas elections be expanded to all Irish citizens living outside the Republic's borders."

On a recorded vote, twenty-six Members voted for the motion, as amended, and twenty-nine against and it was declared lost.

<u>For (26)</u>	<u>Against (29)</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Campbell); Alderman Convery; and Councillors Attwood, Austin, Beattie, Bell, Boyle, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Lyons, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McCusker, McVeigh, Mullan, O'Donnell, O'Hara, and Walsh.	The Lord Mayor (Alderman Kingston); Aldermen Haire, McCoubrey, McKee, L. Patterson, R. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Bunting, Copeland, Corr Johnston, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Howard, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Jones, Kyle, Long, McAllister, McDonough-Brown, Milne, Newton, Nicholl and Reynolds.

Outcomes Based Accountability

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Alderman Convery proposed:

"This Council notes that the Programme for Government has been developed under the Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) principles.

The Council notes that two Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) pilots have been taken forward in Whiterock and Inner East, as part of the Belfast Agenda.

The Council agrees to embed the OBA principles in all Council decision making processes in the Council to make sure we achieve outcomes which show measurable improvements for people and communities in every part of the City."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Attwood.

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Donations to Political Parties

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Nicholl proposed:

"This Council notes a motion passed in March, 2016, regarding the transparency of donations made to political parties, recognises the importance which the citizens of Belfast place on being able to trust their Elected Representatives to work for the common good, further recognises the corrupting influence which money can have on the

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 3rd January, 2017**

political decision-making process and considers it unacceptable that donations to political parties continue to remain secret in Northern Ireland.

The Council notes correspondence which was received from the previous Secretary of State, dated 5th April, 2016, stating that the time was not appropriate to move to full transparency, however, given current low levels of public confidence in transparency of Government, it calls on the new Secretary of State to immediately lift the exemption to reveal all declared donations to political parties since January 2014 and calls also on all political parties to voluntarily publish donations from this time."

The motion was seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Councillor Hussey,

That the motion, as proposed by Councillor Nicholl, be amended to provide for the deletion of everything after the words "Secretary of State" in the second paragraph and the insertion of the following: "to introduce, at the earliest opportunity, legislation to implement the same donations regime in Northern Ireland as in the rest of the United Kingdom."

On a vote by show of hands, sixteen Members voted for the amendment and thirty-two against and it was declared lost.

The original motion, standing in the name of Councillor Nicholl and seconded by Councillor McDonough-Brown, was thereupon put to the meeting, when, by show of hands, thirty-eight Members voted for and thirteen against and it was declared carried.

Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Alderman R. Patterson proposed:

"This Council notes the serious public concern amongst our constituents in relation to financial squander around the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme.

The Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State, as public representatives, highlighting the huge public interest in relation to this matter and, accordingly, requests that he initiates a full public inquiry, pursuant to his discretion contained within Section 1 of the Inquiries Act 2005.

The Council agrees also to write to the Joint First Minister, Arlene Foster, expressing our belief, as a Council, that she should step aside pending a full public inquiry into this extraordinarily serious matter and

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 3rd January, 2017**

the allegations of corruption which have been made by a former Government Minister from her own Party.”

The motion was seconded by Councillor Heading.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor McVeigh,
Seconded by Councillor Hargey,

That the motion, as proposed by Alderman R. Patterson, be amended to provide for the deletion of everything after the words “This Council” and the insertion of the following: “recognises the mounting public concern relating to the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme and the serious allegations of incompetence, corruption and abuse.

The Council calls upon the First Minister to stand aside in order to facilitate an independent, time-framed, robust and transparent investigation and pending the findings and conclusions of the preliminary investigation.

This investigation should be chaired by an independent judicial figure (“The Chairperson”) from outside this jurisdiction appointed by the Attorney General. The Chairperson should appoint other independent expert panel members with the requisite skills to assist the investigation. The Panel of Investigation should have the power to subpoena documents, compel witnesses and any other powers deemed necessary by the Panel of Investigation.

On its completion, the report of the investigation should be made public and should not require the agreement of the First and Deputy First Ministers or the Attorney General. A preliminary report should be made public within four weeks of its establishment. The full report and its conclusions and findings should be made public within three months.”

On a recorded vote, eighteen Members voted for the amendment and thirty-six against and it was declared lost.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 3rd January, 2017**

<u>For (18)</u>	<u>Against (36)</u>
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Campbell); and Councillors Austin, Beattie, Bell, Clarke, Corr, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McVeigh, O'Donnell, O'Hara, and Walsh.	The Lord Mayor (Alderman Kingston); Aldermen Convery, Haire, McCoubrey, McKee, L. Patterson, R. Patterson, Rodgers, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Boyle, Bunting, Collins, Copeland, Corr Johnston, Dorrian, Dudgeon, Graham, Heading, Hussey, Hutchinson, Johnston, Jones, Kyle, Long, Lyons, McAllister, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, Milne, Mullan Newton, Nicholl and Reynolds.

Further Amendment

Moved by Councillor Dudgeon,
Seconded by Councillor Johnston,

That the motion, as proposed by Alderman R. Patterson, be amended to provide for the deletion of everything after the words "This Council" and the insertion of the following: "deplores the financial squander around the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme.

The Council agrees to write to the Secretary of State, as public representatives, highlighting the huge public interest in relation to this matter and, accordingly, requests that he pursues a time-bound public inquiry under the 2005 Inquiries Act.

The Council agrees also to write to the Joint First Minister, Arlene Foster, expressing its belief, as a Council, that she should resign in order to begin the process of restoring public confidence in the integrity of the devolved institutions."

On a recorded vote, four Members voted for the amendment and twenty-nine against, with nineteen 'no votes', and it was declared lost.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 3rd January, 2017**

For (4)	Against (29)	No Vote (19)
Alderman Rodgers; and Councillors Copeland, Dudgeon and Johnston.	The Lord Mayor (Alderman Kingston); Aldermen Convery, Haire, McCoubrey, McKee, L. Patterson, R. Patterson, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Boyle, Bunting, Corr Johnston, Graham, Hussey, Hutchinson, Jones, Kyle, Long, Lyons, McAllister, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, Milne, Mullan, Newton, Nicholl and Reynolds.	Councillors Austin, Beattie, Bell, Clarke, Collins, Corr, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Heading, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McVeigh, O'Donnell, O'Hara, and Walsh.

Further Amendment

Moved by Councillor Collins,

That the motion, as proposed by Alderman R. Patterson, be amended to include the following wording at the end of the motion: "The Council believes that the Stormont Executive has lost the confidence of the people of this City and calls for an immediate General Election, in light of the RHI scandal."

As there was no seconder for the amendment, it was not put to the meeting.

The original motion, standing in the name of Alderman R. Patterson and seconded by Councillor Heading, was thereupon put to the meeting.

On a recorded vote, twenty-three Members voted for the amendment and twelve against, with eighteen 'no votes', and it was declared carried.

For (23)	Against (12)	No Vote (18)
Aldermen Convery and R. Patterson; and Councillors Armitage, Attwood, Boyle, Bunting, Collins, Copeland, Corr Johnston, Dudgeon, Heading, Hutchinson, Johnston, Jones, Kyle, Long, Lyons, McAllister, McCusker, McDonough-Brown, Milne, Mullan and Nicholl.	The Lord Mayor (Alderman Kingston); Aldermen Haire, McCoubrey, McKee, L. Patterson, Sandford and Spence; and Councillors Dorrian, Graham, Hussey, Newton and Reynolds.	The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Campbell); Alderman Rodgers; and Councillors Austin, Beattie, Bell, Clarke, Corr, Garrett, Groves, Hargey, Magee, Magennis, McAteer, McCabe, McConville, McVeigh, O'Hara, and Walsh.

**Meeting of Council,
Tuesday, 3rd January, 2017**

Concessionary Travel Pass

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Heading proposed:

"This Council notes the recent establishment of the Smart Pass Equality Campaign, endorses its call for the full fare concessionary travel pass to be issued to all people who are unable to drive for medical reasons and agrees to write to the Minister for Infrastructure and the Minister for Finance urging them to implement this extension as soon as possible."

The motion was seconded by Councillor McCusker.

After discussion, the motion was put to the meeting and passed unanimously.

World Cup Boycott

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Boyle proposed:

"This Council notes the slaughter of innocent men, women and children in Syria (Aleppo) and the displacement of millions of people.

The Council calls for Northern Ireland and the other teams playing in the World Cup from these Islands to boycott the World Cup which is to be played in Russia."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Mullan.

On a vote by show of hands five Members voted for the amendment and forty against and it was declared lost.

Citywide Tribunal Services

In accordance with notice on the agenda, Councillor Collins proposed:

"This Council notes that funding of the Citywide Tribunal Service ends as of December 2016. It recognises the important role which this service has played in helping people across this City and understands that, faced with the coming changes surrounding Welfare Reform, this service is needed now more than ever. The Council recognises also the ongoing efforts to secure alternative sources of funding but also stresses the absolute necessity to continue this service and, therefore, pledges to retain Belfast City Council funding for this project until other sources of funding are secured."

The motion was seconded by Councillor Milne.

In accordance with Standing Order 13(f), the motion was referred, without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Lord Mayor
Chairperson

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 6th January, 2017

SPECIAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hussey (Chairperson);
Aldermen Convery and Rodgers; and
Councillors Attwood, Corr, Craig, Graham, Haire,
Hargey, Hutchinson, Jones, Long, McAllister, McCabe,
O'Donnell, Reynolds and Walsh.

Also Attended: Councillors Collins, Heading and Milne.

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

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor Clarke.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

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 2017/18

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the development of the revenue estimates for 2017/18 and the key issues which Members needed to consider as part of the rates settlement process. The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 16th December, it had agreed, amongst other things, that those areas for potential savings which had been identified by the Political Parties be considered in the first instance by the Budget and Transformation Panel.

The report outlined a number of further efficiency savings which the Panel, at its meeting on 20th December, had agreed should be presented to the Committee for consideration, together with a number of outstanding issues, namely, the Belfast Agenda, Community Grants and the future Efficiency Programme and targets.

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 6th January, 2017**

After a lengthy discussion, the Committee made the following decisions:

**Membership of the Northern Ireland
Local Government Association (NILGA)**

The Committee agreed to consider further the Council's membership of NILGA and the associated subscription at its meeting on 20th January.

Elected Members' Personal Development Plans (PDPs)

The Committee agreed to consider further the budget for the Elected Members' PDPs at its meeting on 20th January.

Rate Impact of Change to 3G Pitch Charges

The Committee agreed to consider, at its meeting on 20th January, the rating implication of the decision of the People and Communities Committee to reduce the price of 3G pitch hire by 25%.

**Revision to the Management of the City Hall
Function Booking Processes**

The Committee:

- a) Approved the revised criteria for the booking of rooms in the City Hall as set out below;
- b) Approved the Protocol for the use of the Conor and Lavery Rooms as set out below;
- c) Approved the room hire charges for the use of the City Hall as follows:

- £825 for a full evening function in the Great Hall
- £300 for an evening function in the various function rooms
- £115 for a daytime function in the various function rooms
- agreed that Community and Voluntary Groups be excluded from the hire charge rate

(with £13,850 of additional income to be included in the revenue estimates)

- d) agreed to cease the provision of hospitality for City Hall events, with the exception of Civic Events;

(with £28,800 of additional income to be included in the revenue estimates)

- e) agreed to impose a "one-in-three-year" rule in respect of commercial events, which are defined as *'for profit' and those events which, if not accommodated in the City Hall, would need to avail of private sector facilities and pay a full commercial rate;* and

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 6th January, 2017**

- f) delegated authority to the Director of Property and Projects to approve or reject requests for the use of a function room in the City Hall in circumstances where there was insufficient time to present the matter to the Committee or where the request was of a minor nature and was non-contentious, on the basis that any authority exercised be reported back to the Committee.

**Proposed revised criteria for booking the
function rooms in the City Hall**

Functions which WILL normally be permitted:

- a) *functions which are ancillary to other events being held in the city and which are of demonstrable economic benefit to Belfast whether organised by the council or not (e.g. conferences attracting large numbers of delegates requiring overnight accommodation, transport, food and beverages etc);*
- b) *Events which demonstrably enhance the city's image nationally or internationally as a desirable commercial, business or tourist destination;*
- c) *Events designed to celebrate or commemorate a notable achievement or significant anniversary (e.g. 25, 50, 100 years etc) by an organization or body with close links to the city or province;*
- d) *Events organised by recognised local community or voluntary sector groups for non-profit and non-political purposes;*
- e) *Events organized through any of the civic dignitaries during their period of office (administered by Lord Mayor's office) – where these involve charities fund-raising will be permitted;*

Functions which will NOT normally be permitted

- a) *Conferences, meetings, wedding receptions, private parties or receptions and similar booking requests in the prestige function rooms;*
- b) *Functions which have as their principal purpose the generation of commercial gain for the organizers (although charity fund-raising would be permitted for [f] above);*
- c) *Functions which have no compelling links to the council or the city specifically and which could instead avail of local private-sector facilities;*
- d) *Functions which have as their primary purpose the advancement of any political or religious cause or campaign or are otherwise potentially contentious and/or involve significant reputational risks for the council;*
- e) *Events which involve exceptionally large and/or disruptive set-ups or which pose a real and tangible risk to the fabric of the building and/or its grounds*

Use of the Conor and Lavery Committee Rooms

Primary Use

The main purpose of these rooms is to accommodate meetings of the Council's Standing Committees and All-Party Working Groups and to act as a venue for individual Members, in carrying out their representative roles as Councillors, to meet with constituents or groups of constituents.

Guiding Principals for Other Use

- 1. The rooms may be booked for meetings of bodies which involve a number of our Members directly and which are administered by the Council, such as the Policing and Community Safety Partnership.*
- 2. The rooms may be booked for meetings which involve the Chief Officers and/or Elected Members, such as CMT and the Budget and Transformation Panel.*
- 3. The rooms may be booked for meetings involving Chief Officers and/or Elected Members and/or Statutory Partner Agencies.*
- 4. It is accepted that there may be a lack of meeting space for those Council Services which have relocated to the City Hall. Therefore, the rooms may be booked for internal meetings by those Services based **wholly** in the City Hall where there is no other meeting room available.*

In any of the above circumstances, Services making bookings which meet the criteria need to understand that Democratic Services may at any time cancel the booking if a special meeting of one of the Standing Committees is called which requires the use of the room. Although we will do our best to prevent this happening, no guarantee can be given that a booking will be able to be honoured.

Coca-Cola Belfast Bike Scheme

The Committee approved the following revised Pricing Policy:

- The annual subscription fee to remain at £20 per annum
- To replace the current £5 Casual Three Day Pass with a £5 Casual One Day Pass and a £10 Casual Three Day Pass
- To restrict subscriber access to one bike
- The current first half hour free usage being reduced to 15 minutes (with £15,000 of additional income to be included in the revenue estimates)

The decision on the Bike Scheme free usage reduction was agreed following a vote by show hands, with fourteen Members voting for and three against.

Community Grants

The Committee agreed that the additional funding required for the Community Development Grant Programme for the current financial year and the community grant budget for future years be considered again at the meeting to be held on 20th January.

Belfast Agenda

The Committee agreed that the proposed funding for the delivery of the Belfast Agenda outcomes in the three priority areas, that is, Belfast Works; Smart City and the Small Business Service; and Wider Skills Development Programme be considered further at its meeting on 20th January.

Efficiency Programme

The Committee adopted the recommendation of the Budget and Transformation Panel that "Council's Markets" should be added to the "Commercialisation/Income Maximisation" Work Stream and that the efficiency target for 2018/19 and 2019/20 should be increased from the current £2m to £2.5m in each of these years and that, in addition, a new target of increasing Council income by £500k be set for both financial years. The Committee noted that a more detailed report on the future of the efficiency programme would be brought to the Committee in February 2017.

Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 3rd January, had, in accordance with standing orders, referred the following notice of motion, which had been moved by Councillor Collins and seconded by Councillor Milne, to the Committee for consideration:

"The Council notes that funding of the Citywide Tribunal Service ends as of December 2016. It recognises the important role this service has played in helping people across this city and understands that faced with the coming changes surrounding Welfare Reform, this service is needed now more than ever. The Council recognises also the ongoing efforts to secure alternative sources of funding, but also stresses the absolute necessity to continue this service and, therefore, pledges to retain Belfast City Council funding for this project until other sources of funding are secured."

The Committee was advised that correspondence had been received from the Chairperson of the Belfast Advice Group, on behalf of the Service, formally requesting the Council to extend its funding for the Tribunal Service. This would require funding in the sum of £54,000 in the current financial year and £100,000 for 2017/18, during which time the Service would seek match funding from the Department of Communities and other sources.

During discussion, the Members expressed their support for the Citywide Tribunal Service and, in response to a question, the Director of Finance and Resources explained, if the Committee was so minded, how budgets could be reallocated to fund the £54,000 in

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 6th January, 2017**

the current year and how the Committee might wish to consider the request for funding for 2017/18 at a future meeting through a non-recurrent allocation and in the context of the Quarter 3 finance report. He explained also that Part 2.3.1 of the Council's Scheme of Delegation provided him with authority, under certain conditions, to approve the payment as a matter of urgency without the need for Council ratification.

The Committee agreed:

- To provide funding of £54,000 for the Belfast Citywide Tribunal Service for the current financial year ending on 31st March, 2017;
- Noted that the Director of Finance and Resources was empowered to proceed with the payment pursuant to 2.3.1 of the Scheme of Delegation which permitted expenditure to be incurred in cases of urgency in so far as the requirement to advise the Chair was satisfied as he had obtained the consent of the Committee, with the Chair concurring in that decision;
- To indicate that it was minded to support funding of up to £100,000 to the Service for the financial year 2017/18 on the basis of a non-recurrent reallocation, subject to:
 - Affordability, which would be considered as part of the Quarter 3 finance report to be presented to the Committee in February; and
 - Council officers working with the Service to identify what the Service would achieve with that funding and what other sources of funding were being sought.

It was agreed also to write again to the Minister for Communities seeking a meeting with an all-party deputation from the Council to discuss funding for the Service.

Operational Issues

City Hall Passenger Lift

The Committee noted that work was due to commence on the City hall passenger lift and Members would be advised, in writing, in due course on the time schedule for the works.

Chairperson

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 20th January, 2017

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hussey (Chairperson);
The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire);
Aldermen Browne, Convery and Rodgers;
Councillors Attwood, Clarke, Corr, Craig, Graham,
Hargey, Hutchinson, Jones, Long, McCabe,
McVeigh, O'Donnell, Reynolds and Walsh

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

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor McAllister

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 16th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd January.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Restricted Items

The Information contained in the following three reports is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Acts (Northern Ireland) 2014

Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2017/18

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the development of the revenue estimates for 2017/18 and the key issues which Members needed to consider as part of the rates setting process. The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 6th January, it had deferred a number of issues but would now be required to make a decision on those in order to set the cash limits for the other Committees of the Council.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

After discussion, the Committee made the following decisions:

Call-in

The Committee agreed that the report in relation to the Revenues Estimates and District Rate and associated decisions would not be subject to call-in as it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2017.

3G Pitch Hire

The Committee agreed not to include in the district rate the loss of income of £17,500 as a result of the decision of the People and Communities Committee to reduce the price of 3G pitch hire by 25% for community and voluntary sector use and that the matter be referred back to that Committee to be considered within its cash limits for 2017/18.

Belfast Bike Scheme

Moved by Councillor Long,
Seconded by Councillor Jones,

That the Committee agrees to rescind its decision of 6th January to approve a revised pricing policy for the Belfast Bike Scheme and that the current policy as set out below remains in place until a review of the scheme is undertaken.

"The current pricing policy has two subscription options:

- *Annual membership at £20 per annum.*
- *Casual 3 day subscription at £5 per annum.*

On both options the first half hour of usage is free. Charges apply after this period at 50p for the next half hour of use and then £1 per hour thereafter.

Both subscriptions also allow for rental of up to four bikes which are charged at the standard usage rate."

On a vote by show of hands thirteen Members voted for a proposal and five against and it was declared carried

Membership of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA)

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Councillor Craig,

That the Committee agrees that the Council ceases to be a Member of the Northern Ireland Local Government Association.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

On a vote by show of hands five Members voted for the proposal and fourteen against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Committee agreed to remain as a Member of the NILGA and to pay the annual subscription of £70,759.

Elected Members Personal Development Plan (PDP)

The Committee agreed that the Elected Members PDP budget be reduced by £22,000, with a limit of £730 per Member.

Belfast Agenda

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Councillor Craig,

That the Committee agrees to include in the district rate a budget of £575,000 to support the delivery of the Belfast Agenda priorities, that is, Belfast Works £250,000; Smart City £250,000; and Small Business £75,000.

On a vote by show of hands five Members voted for the proposal and thirteen against and it was declared lost.

According, the Committee agreed to include in the district rate a budget of £750,000 to support the delivery of the Belfast Agenda priorities, that is, Belfast Works, Smart City and Small Business.

The Committee agreed also that monitoring reports on the Belfast Agenda be incorporated into the Committee's Quarterly Finance and Performance Reports.

Community Grants

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Councillor Craig,

That the Committee agrees to provide 25% of the £588,000 funding required for the Community Support Programme, that is, £147,000 through the district rate and to consider funding the remaining balance as part of the Quarter 3 forecast and Quarter 4 outturn which would be considered by the Committee in February and June 2017.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Long,
Seconded by Councillor McVeigh,

That the Committee agrees to provide 50% of the £588,000 funding required for the Community Support Programme, that is, £294,000 through the district rate and to consider funding for the remaining balance as part of the Quarter 3 forecast and Quarter 4 outturn which would be considered by the Committee in February and June 2017.

On a vote by show of hands, seven Members voted to provide 25% of the funding through the district rate, with twelve Members voting against and it was declared lost.

On a vote by show of hands, twelve members voted to provide 50% of the funding through the district rate, with seven members voting against and it was accordingly declared carried.

Cash Limits

The Committee agreed that, taking into account the impact of the above decisions, the Cash Limits for each of the Committees for 2017/18 be set as follows:

a) Strategic Policy and Resources	£42,443,408
b) Capital Financing Budget	£18,751,901
c) People and Communities	£76,242,845
d) City Growth and Regeneration	£15,841,354
e) Planning	£1,520,440

District Rate

The Committee noted that the aforementioned decisions would result in an increase in the district rate of 1.89% and noted also the next steps in the setting of the district rate.

Leisure Transformation Programme – Assets Update

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update on the development and implementation of the £105m leisure assets capital programme and agreed that consideration be given to the possibility of providing a temporary building in the locality following the demolition of the Clonduff Community Centre.

Asset Management

Lock Keepers Cottage Visitors Centre – Lagan Valley Regional Park Lease Renewal

The Committee granted approval to the terms of the lease renewal in respect of the offices occupied by Lagan Valley Regional Park at the Lock Keepers Cottage Visitors Centre.

Hanwood Centre – Proposed Licence Surrender and Grant of New Lease to the Hanwood Trust Company Limited

The Committee granted approval to the surrender of the existing 21 year lease agreement and to the granting of a new 25 year lease in respect of premises occupied by The Hanwood Trust Company Limited at the Hanwood Centre in Dundonald (Phase1), subject to terms to be agreed by the Estates Manager and Legal Services.

Lanyon Tunnels

The Committee:

- Approved Belfast City Council entering into a 25 year Lease with the Department for Infrastructure for the regeneration of the Lanyon tunnels; and
- Agreed to the sub-letting of the Lanyon Tunnels Lease to the Markets Development Association on completion of the refurbishment of the tunnels, subject to the terms to be agreed by the Estates Manager and Town Solicitor.

Commission House, Gordon Street – Potential Acquisition

The Committee agreed to the Council acquiring Commission House, at the Land and Properties Services (LPS) valuation, as a strategic acquisition in line with the Belfast City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy, with the acquisition costs being provided from the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Fund and other sources such as Capital Receipts.

Maysfield – Grant of Easements/Wayleaves to Facilitate Developments

The Committee granted approval to the Director of Property and Projects to enter into such legal agreements with various service and utility providers, subject to detailed terms to be agreed by the Estates Manager and the Town Solicitor, that would facilitate use and occupation of the Concentrix and Allstate developments currently progressing at the Council's former Maysfield Leisure Centre site.

Matters Referred Back from Council/Notices of Motion

**Notice of Motion - Outcomes Based Accountability
and Update the Area Events**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1** Following the Notice of Motion moved by Alderman Convery at the council meeting on 3 January, this report provides Members with an update on how use of the Outcomes Based Accountability methodology has developed within the council to date and plans for its on-going use.
- 1.2** The report also provides Members with a brief update on proposed area engagement events taking place over the coming weeks to support consultations on the Belfast Agenda and Local Development Plan (Preferred Options Paper).

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- a) note the OBA methodology developments being explored within the council as part of the emerging Belfast Agenda, Corporate Planning and partnership development processes; and
- b) note the proposed area engagement events

3.0 Main report

Background

3.1 Notice of motion

As Members are aware the undernoted motion, which was moved by Alderman Convery (& seconded by Cllr Attwood) at council on Tuesday 03 January has been referred to the Committee for consideration:

- 3.2** ‘Belfast City Council notes that the Programme for Government has been developed under the Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) principles.

Belfast City Council notes that two Outcome Based Accountability (OBA) pilots have been taken forward in Whiterock and Inner East, as part of the Belfast Agenda.

Belfast City Council agrees to embed the OBA principles in all Council decision making processes in the Council to make sure we achieve outcomes which show measurable improvements for people and communities in every part of the city.'

3.3 Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) in the Programme for Government

As the motion above notes the new Programme for Government has been developed using the Outcomes Based Accountability methodology. This has resulted in:

- A set of outcomes identifying the quality of wellbeing conditions the Northern Ireland Executive would like to see improved across the region. Alongside this, a set of population indicators is being proposed to enable the measurement of the achievement of the outcomes.**
- Emerging programmes of work being designed cross-departmentally and with partners that will result in improving these measures and improve the quality of life of residents.**

3.4 Work to date on OBA in the Council

Members will also recall that the Council has been exploring the use of the Outcomes Based Accountability methodology in a variety of ways over the past two years. Activities have included:

- Workshop Mark Friedman (developer of the OBA methodology) with Members and partners (Sept 2014)**
- OBA Capacity building programme with officers and partners (Spring 2015)**
- Briefings for Area Working Groups on the OBA approach and discussion of outcomes for local areas as part of AWG workshops;**
- Locality planning: testing the use of OBA across the city in locality settings with communities and partners to help local people shape targeted interventions and test the process with a view to further roll-out.**
- Belfast Agenda: as the lead partner for community planning in Belfast the council has supported the drafting of the Belfast Agenda for consultation to include:**
 - development of a long-term citywide outcomes framework seeking to improve the quality of life**

- over the next 20 years and align with Programme for Government population outcomes and indicators;
- development of a citywide performance framework in line with the principles of OBA (a City Dashboard);
- working with partners to develop the proposed broad work-streams in the Belfast Agenda into specific programmes which will include performance frameworks in line with OBA methodology.

Next steps

- 3.5 Since it is intended that the Belfast Agenda will form the framework for the council's future plans and key strategies, including the corporate plan it is inevitable that these will have a focus on delivering the long-term outcomes that have been set for the city as well as the targets that have been set for the next four years.
- 3.6 As Members are aware the council's new Corporate Plan is under development, following a workshop with the SP&R Committee on 28 October to which all Members were invited. The corporate plan will reflect and evidence the council's contribution to the Belfast Agenda programmes of work and population outcomes as well the specific programmes of work that the council will be delivering.
- 3.7 In the months ahead, the outcomes in the Belfast Agenda will continue to shape the councils emerging plans and strategies at both a city and local level. As ever, Members will lead and shape this process through a series of workshops, including the Committee workshops planned for February, through discussion at Area Working Groups and through the committee decision making processes themselves. The partnership work that Members play a leading role in will also help ensure alignment to our long-term goals with partnerships such as the Belfast Strategic Partnership on life inequalities, the Shared City

Partnership, the PCSP and others playing a key role in the ongoing development and roll-out of implementation plans. Regular reports on the work of these partnerships and the process of alignment will be brought to Members.

Area engagement events

- 3.8 To support the ongoing public consultation on the draft Belfast Agenda, and the upcoming consultation Local Development Plan

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

(Preferred Options Paper), a series of area based engagement events are planned to take place in late January/early February 2017. These events are as follows:

North: Girdwood Community Hub	South: Olympia Leisure Centre	East: Skainos Centre	West: Innovation Factory
Monday 30 January 2017, 2.00-4.00pm	Thursday 2 February 2017, 6.30-8.30pm	Thursday 9 February 2017, 6.30-8.30pm	Monday 13 February 2017, 2.00-4.00pm

These events will provide an opportunity for members of the public to hear about the key plans affecting the future of Belfast and how to give their views, together with opportunities to provide some initial feedback.

3.9 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no additional resource implications as a result of this report. Alignment of resources to the delivery of the Belfast Agenda will be part of the on-going organisational and financial planning processes

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications

The Belfast Agenda includes outcomes related to improving equality and good relations in the city.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

Notice of Motion – Transfer of Regeneration of Powers

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting on 1st December, Councillor McDonough-Brown had proposed the following motion:

“This Council expresses its profound disappointment in the decision of the Minister for Communities not to proceed with the Regeneration Bill and devolution of regeneration powers to local government.

The Council:

recognises that these powers would strengthen and enhance our ability to drive strategic regeneration activity, when used alongside community and land use planning;

believes this decision to be in conflict with the entire direction and ethos of local government reform and to be a significant missed opportunity; and

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

reiterates our support for the devolution of regeneration powers to local government; and calls for the Minister for Communities to meet with the Council with a view to reversing his decision and proceeding with the Bill.”

The Motion had been seconded by Councillor Howard.

The Committee was reminded further that, at the request of Councillor McDonough-Brown, the Council had agreed, with all forty-eight Members present voting in support of the proposal, to suspend Standing Order 13(f) to enable the Council to debate point(iii)of the Motion. Subsequently the Council had agreed to adopt point(iii) and, in accordance with Standing Order 13(f) had referred points (i) and (ii), without discussion, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. Those points were noted by the Committee at its meeting on 16th December.

It was reported that a response to point(iii) of the Motion had now been received on behalf of Minister Given. The response confirmed that the Minister would not be reconsidering his position not to proceed with the Regeneration Bill and devolve regeneration powers to local government. The response did, however, stress that, irrespective of where the legislative responsibility lay, local government played and would continue to play a significant role in insuring the successful implementation of the regeneration programmes. The response concluded by highlighting the importance of the Partnership Panel as a means of engagement between the Northern Ireland Executive and councils.

It was reported further that Council officers would continue to work alongside senior officials within the Department for Communities and the Belfast Regeneration Directorate with the view to unlocking prioritised regeneration and development schemes and to supporting that delivery. That relationship was underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding which had been established between the Council and the Department for Communities which supported a joined up approach to be taken to progressing key schemes. That was currently being revised and a list of jointly agreed priority projects was being developed.

The Committee noted the response from the Minister for Communities and the information which had been provided.

Belfast Agenda

NI Executive and Ministerial Engagement

The Committee noted the contents of a report on the continued engagement with the NI Assembly and Executive Ministers and that engagement would continue with the NI Executive, Ministers and Senior Departmental officials over the coming weeks and months

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Area Working Update

Minutes of the Meetings of the Area Working Groups

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meetings of the South Area Working Group of 19th December and the East Area Working Group of 5th January.

Local Investment Fund

The Committee noted that the East Area Working Group, at its meeting on 5th January, had requested officers to follow up with a number of Groups in relation to emerging proposals for its unallocated LIF, with details to be submitted to a future meeting of that group.

The Committee noted the two projects (WLIF2 – 08 – Berlin Swifts Football Club and SKLIF -07 – Holylands Area Improvement) which had previously been approved in principle had been scored and had met the minimum threshold and agreed that those be progressed to due-diligence.

Belfast Investment Fund

The Committee noted that the East Area Working Group, at its meeting on 5th January, had agreed that the Lagan Valley Youth and Community Group BIF project, which was currently at Stage 2 – uncommitted project, should be considered first if any funding became available under BIF.

The South and East Area Working Groups had also requested officers to follow up with a number of Groups in relation to emerging proposals for the Outer South and Outer East, with details to be submitted to the next meetings of those Area Working Groups.

Noted.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Corporate Risk Management Update

The Committee considered the undernote 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 progress being made to manage the corporate risks that are of direct relevance to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.**

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- **Note the progress being made to manage the corporate risks and the proposed six monthly process for reporting. These are summarised at section 3.3 below and appended.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 The new corporate risk management process

Members will recall that the corporate risk register and related processes were subject to a fundamental review in 2015-16. This included a review and re-score of all the corporate risks, including target risk scores. For each corporate risk a 'Risk information form' was produced, detailing relevant controls, proposed actions (including timescales) and responsible officers. It was also agreed that management would begin to report to the relevant committees on the progress being made to manage these key risks.

3.2 Managing Corporate Risks to an Acceptable Level

CMT have reviewed and, where appropriate, have updated the assessment of the corporate risks, the results of which are plotted on to the corporate risk map (see Appendix 1). The corporate risk map shows the progress that is being made to manage the corporate risks.

The risks of particular relevance to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee are as follows:

Ref.	Risks
1	ERDF projects - ERDF claw backs and financial penalties lead to BCC cost increases. In addition, failure to deliver project outcomes also presents a financial risk in addition to the reputational damage to the Council.
2	Information governance - Poor information governance results in non-compliance with legislation and best practice standards.
6	H&S - Failure to protect the Health and Safety of employees and

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

	others and ensure compliance with Health and Safety legislation.
7	Physical Investment Programme - Failure to deliver the Physical Investment Programme within the affordability limits of the Council
8	Asset maintenance - Fail to resource, plan for and undertake appropriate maintenance of current and new assets (vehicles and buildings) that delivers value for money.
9	Agreement / delivery of Community Plan - 1. Fail to secure agreement and buy in from key partners for the Community Plan / Belfast Agenda 2. Failure to implement and deliver targets for the Community Plan / Belfast Agenda
10	Change management - If we do not manage change effectively then we will not deliver the Belfast Agenda / Community Plan.
11	Strategic Planning / Corporate Frameworks - We don't have corporate frameworks in place to deliver the Belfast Agenda and Corporate Plan.
14	Leisure estates programme - Fail to deliver the Leisure Estates Programme
15	Financial position of the Council - Failure to secure the financial position of the council in a sustainable way

Management have now prepared progress update reports on the above corporate risks and these are attached in appendices 2 to 9 of this report.

3.3 Issues emerging from the progress update reports

Some of the key issues arising from the progress updates are drawn out below.

- a) Of the sixteen corporate risks, reports have been produced for fifteen risks. The 1 exception relates to the Strategic Planning and Corporate Frameworks risk. With regard to this risk, the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources has indicated that this involves an extensive piece of work. It therefore needs to be properly scoped and planned before the actions can be put in place to manage the risk.
- b) Management has indicated that the Leisure Estates Programme risk has reduced and moved closer to its target risk rating. The risk reduction has been attributed to ongoing controls which are in place to manage this risk, including the establishment of a Programme Office and the assignment of dedicated internal resources to the Leisure Programme and also the progress made to date. Through the ongoing improvement programme, management are working towards achieving the target risk rating.
- c) Management have indicated that the Community Planning risk has also reduced and moved closer towards its target risk rating. The reduced risk rating takes account of the recent agreement and launch of the draft Belfast Agenda, with focus now turning to establishing systems and processes to ensure that the targets are delivered.
- d) Members will be aware that the ERDF project risk was related to four key projects – Girdwood Community Hub, the Innovation Factory, the Waterfront Exhibition and Conference Centre and the infrastructure at the North Foreshore. All delivery on all of these projects has now completed and the assets have been handed over to the relevant departments/Standing committees and are all now operational. The risk level in relation to the ERDF Projects has not reduced yet, which recognises that the focus until recently has been on delivery of the physical buildings, and that further work is required to shift the focus to monitoring the delivery of the agreed outcomes. However this risk should reduce, once these new arrangements are fully implemented.
- e) Management have amended the risk description in relation to Asset Maintenance from ‘Failure to plan for and undertake appropriate maintenance of current and new assets (vehicles and buildings) that delivers compliant assets fit for purpose while offering value for

money' to 'A failure to resource, plan for and undertake appropriate maintenance of current and new assets (vehicles and buildings) that delivers compliant assets fit for purpose while offering value for money' recognising that the additional assets that have been taken on will require additional resources, both financial and resources. Reflecting this, the risk assessment remains the same

- f) Members will be aware that the Council continues to deliver a substantial Physical Investment Programme and the risk assessment level for this risk has therefore not been reduced. However Members will be aware that over £100m of projects have been completed within the past year and it is key that the outcomes from this investment are delivered. Management are therefore looking at how ensuring that the benefits from the Council's overall physical programme are maximised and how this is encapsulated within the risk framework
- g) The risks relating to Strategic Planning and Corporate Frameworks and Change Management either relate to new areas of work for the Council that are at quite an early stage or relate to existing areas that require major programmes of work.
- h) The risks relating to Information Governance and the Financial Position of the Council relate to established areas of work for the Council but further work is required before the risk assessment can be reduced.
- i) The Health & Safety risk, at the request of members, was reported to SP&R Committee in September 2016 and is not included here.

Progress Updates to Committee

- 3.4 In order to ensure that members have an understanding of the corporate risks and have clear information on how they are being managed, we propose that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is provided with progress update reports on a six monthly basis, unless of course reports are required more urgently.

3.5 Financial & Resource Implications

None.

3.6 Equality or Good Relations Implications

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Contracts for Award

The Committee:

- (1) Approved the public advertisement and acceptance of tenders as listed in Appendix 1, table 1 below, through the Council’s electronic procurement system;
- (2) Granted delegated authority to the appropriate Director, using pre-agreed criteria, to accept the most economically advantageous tender, and allow extensions where contracts were under review as per table 2:

Appendix 1 - Schedule of tenders for consideration

Table 1 – New tenders

Title of tender	Senior Responsible Officer	Proposed contract duration
Employee counselling services	Jill Minne	1 year plus 1
Occupational health physician services	Jill Minne	1 year plus 1
Cleaning service at St George’s Market	Donal Durkan	1 year plus one plus one
Specialist heavy goods vehicle hire	Gerry Millar	2 years plus one*
Standard light goods vehicle hire	Gerry Millar	2 years plus one*
Vehicle breakdown recovery services	Gerry Millar	2 years plus one

* To be completed as two lots on one tender exercise

Scheme of Allowances

The Committee was advised that the Department for Communities had published consolidated guidance on Councillors’ Allowances, however, the Council was required to agree and publish its own Scheme of Allowances.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that the amendments to the existing guidance on Councillors’ allowances focused on the issue of Dependant Carers’ Allowances. In the new guidance, the rules on that allowance had been revised to make it more easily accessible to councillors who required to use the facility in order to attend

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

Committee meetings or other approved duties. The Council's Scheme of Allowances had been amended to reflect that change, and a copy was available on the Council's website.

The Committee approved the amended Scheme of Allowances for Councillors.

Equality and Good Relations

Shared City Partnership Meeting

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Shared City Partnership of 9th January.

Operational Issues

Rates Consultation Response

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 This report provides a draft Council response to the Department of Finance consultation paper on 'Reforming the Rating System, Rates: Rethink, Spurring Economic Growth'**

The consultation paper was issued on the 16 December 2016 and the consultation period ends on the 16 February 2017.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to;**

- Agree the draft Council response included as Appendix 2.**

3.0 Main report

Review of the Business Rates System

- 3.1 In November 2015 the (then) Department of Finance and personnel launched a public consultation seeking responses to a review of the non-domestic rating system. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed a response to this major consultation, together with a further consultation in March 2016 on the Review of rate liability in the Domestic Rental Sector.**

- 3.2 The current consultation document 'Rates: Rethink' further develops and broadens the issues previously considered and makes policy proposals which aim to deliver a fitter and more**

acceptable rating system for citizens and businesses and which spur economic growth.

Overview of the Consultation Paper

3.3 The consultation paper includes the following proposed measures:

- A new £22m a year Rates Investment Scheme for smaller retail and hospitality business.
- Piloting Business Empowerment Zones in two areas (Lower Newtownards Road and Lower Falls Road).
- Increasing rates on empty commercial premises.
- Charity shops to make a contribution.
- Charging the highest value homes more.
- Removing the early payment discount.
- Reducing landlord allowances.
- Student halls of residence to start paying rates.
- A 3 year rates holiday for first residents of new energy efficient homes.

3.4 The following paragraphs provide a brief summary of the policy proposals in each area and the proposed Council response as detailed in Appendix 2.

Investment in Small Business

3.5 Proposal to replace the existing Small Business Rates Relief Scheme (SBRR) with a new scheme targeting retail and hospitality. A commitment to provide £22m to fund the scheme which should double average awards. The proposals include two options for allocating relief, one of which favours lower Net Annual Values (NAV's)

3.6 The Council has previously responded supporting the replacement of the SBRR Scheme with a scheme which would include a focus on new start-ups and expanding SME's.

Small Business Empowerment Zones

3.7 Proposal for two pilot Zones (Lower Falls and Lower Newtownards Road). Zone reliefs to be in place for 3 years, with automatic 50% relief within zone regardless of NAV (unless already receiving higher) and Back in Business Scheme (occupation of vacant properties) to be enhanced (75% Yr1 Relief and 50% years 2 and 3)

3.8 The Council is not in a position to comment on the specific proposals as the financial implications in relation to the

potential rates income losses and whether local government will be reimbursed for additional reliefs is unknown.

Revitalising our High Streets

- 3.9 Proposal based on Living over the Shops (LOTS) and Town Centre Living initiatives. Proposed 100% rates exemption for converted property, with exemption not transferrable.
- 3.10 The Council has previously responded in support of revitalising High Streets, but emphasised that interventions to encourage city centre living should include the wider private rented sector and not just for converted properties. City Centre Regeneration also requires the flexibility for temporary targeted business case relief for developments such as Grade A office accommodation and hotels.

Charity Shops

- 3.11 Proposals that charity shops should pay 20% rates (currently exempt) and that an upper threshold for relief of NAV £25k (same as SBRR Replacement Proposals) should be applied to discourage charities occupying prime retail sites and to reduce relief on planned new charity superstores.
- 3.12 The Council has responded previously with the view that charity shops should pay some rates.

Non-Domestic Empty Property Relief

- 3.13 Proposals to end the current 3 month 100% vacancy exemption and to reduce the current relief from 50% to 25%.
- 3.14 The Council would strongly object to the removal of the 3 month 100% exemption as this could have a negative impact on city centre development projects. The council would support the reduction in relief after the 3 month period from 50% to 25% to more align with Britain. N.B. Relief would still be more favourable than in England Nil after 3 months, Scotland 10% after 3 months.

Halls of Residence

- 3.15 Proposal to remove existing 100% exemption for University Halls of Residence.
- 3.16 The Council has already argued for this exemption to be removed as it is unfair to those students in private accommodation who pay rates and citizens who pay for

services which will be required for new accommodation. New student accommodation in Belfast is an important outcome of the City Centre Regeneration Strategy and Growing the Rate Base.

Hardship Relief

- 3.17 Proposal to review the definition of the scheme and widen the decision making beyond LPS.
- 3.18 The Council would support a review of the definition and the input of local government.

Sports & Recreation Relief

- 3.19 Proposal to include spectator stands that do not generate income in sports and recreation assessment. Also proposal to review the non sporting area 20% disregard 'de minimus' anomaly.
- 3.20 On a principle of fairness the Council would support the spectator stands and de minimus proposals.

Domestic Rates Cap

- 3.21 Proposal to remove the existing Domestic Capital Value Rates Cap of £400,000 for the regional rate element of the rates bill.
- 3.22 Responses to be considered by individual political parties, however if any change is made it should benefit local government and not just central government.

Early Payment Discount

- 3.23 Proposal to remove existing 4% domestic rates discount for up-front payment.
- 3.24 The Council currently incur a loss of 45% (district rate element) of the 4% discount, with no benefit, as rates payments are made to the Council based on 1/12th of estimated income.

Landlord Allowance

- 3.25 Proposal to reduce the current allowance from 10% to 5%. This applies to Landlords who are responsible for paying rates (rather than tenant) i.e. Mandatory if Capital value under £150,000 or Voluntary option by the Landlord. This includes Social Landlords e.g. NIHE.

Reduce current 10% allowance to 5%.

- 3.26 Council position is that allowance should remain. The Council would support a reduction in the allowance, although there is no information available on the likely impact of voluntary registrations of allowance being reduced.

Energy Efficient New Homes

- 3.27 Proposal for a 3 year domestic rates holiday for first occupants of newly constructed energy efficient homes.

- 3.28 The proposal is supported.

3.29 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no finance implications at this point.

3.30 Equality or Good Relations Implications

There are no Equality or Good Relations Implications at this point.”

Appendix 2

RATES RETHINK CONSULTATION – BELFAST CITY COUNCIL DRAFT RESPONSE

Belfast City Council welcomes the consultation document “Reforming the Rating System #Rates – Rethink Spurring Economic Growth”. It considers many of the issues that have interested the Council in the delivery of its services. Each individual question is answered as the consultation request however the following general comments on rate reform we believe are worthy of attention as you take the process forward.

Belfast City Council supports the majority of the proposed reforms and believes they will help the regeneration and revitalisation of Belfast. There are some aspects of the proposals which will inhibit this process and they are highlighted in the following paragraphs. However these negatives are vastly outweighed by the positives.

Commercial Rates Reform - Reform of the Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR)

In general Belfast City Council supports the replacement of SBRR to support the strategic development of businesses but would prefer if this was targeted to new start-ups and expanding SME’s. However the Council recognises the importance of the retail and hospitality sectors to the economy and the range of small businesses which it is proposed will be classified as retail or hospitality. In addition potential exists to consider how the scheme should be targeted towards those sectors expected to deliver higher economic growth and productivity returns, as a means of maximising the economic benefit of the SBRR scheme.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

Investment in Small Business

Question	BCC Response
Do you agree that retail should be the subject of any SBBR Replacement scheme?	<p>Yes, any scheme should be available to all who satisfy the criteria. Any scheme should emphasise the need to stimulate retail activity and there should be an incentive which is linked to other rating matters to encourage participation in a vibrant small business community. Additionally whilst retail is a key sector within the city consideration should be given as to how SBBR can be used as a tool to maximise economic growth.</p> <p>It is the Council's view that any replacement scheme should have a focus on new start-ups and expanding SME's providing relief for a defined period. Consideration should also be given to targeting key growth sectors expected to significantly contribute towards economic growth of the city such as knowledge economy, creative industries, business and financial services etc.</p>
Do you agree that hospitality should be the subject of any SBBR Replacement scheme?	<p>Yes, any scheme should be available to all who satisfy the criteria. The hospitality industry is an important element of small business activity and should be actively encouraged to participate in a retail community. It is particularly important that this sector is supported because it has a wider role in relation to the revitalisation of the high street. It is the Council's view that any replacement scheme should have a focus on new start-ups and expanding SME's providing relief for a defined period. As above whilst hospitality is a key sector within the city consideration should also be given to targeting key sectors expected to significantly contribute towards economic growth of the city such as knowledge economy, creative industries, business and financial services etc.</p>
Will the policy proposal address the issue of helping to regenerate our towns and cities?	<p>Yes, any measure that enables businesses to survive and prosper in the current period of uncertainty should be applauded. As stated above, small business rate relief scheme should be treated as an investment in the sector and should be looked at in conjunction with other incentives to maintain employment and stimulate business activity particularly in the high street. Small businesses also have a major role to play in maintaining a vibrant street scene. However as stated previously whilst the retail and hospitality sectors are key sectors consideration should be given to supporting sectoral growth for those industries expected to contribute most significantly to economic growth and productivity improvements. While small businesses play a vital role in our towns and cities, City Centre Regeneration requires major developments which would fall outside the scope of this relief. This requires a combined central and local government package of measure to support regeneration. This type of relief should be subject to proven business cases, which prohibits relief where displacement of existing ratepayers occurs. Sectors to target could include</p>

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

	hotel developments, Grade A office space development and the redevelopment of vacant properties or derelict land.
What uses should be considered retail and hospitality (and what should be excluded)?	All uses should benefit from the scheme and we agree with the listings in Annex A. We believe they are comprehensive and with the proper application of the power should play a major role in encouraging small business activity.
Do you agree with the proposed conditions for entitlement	Yes if these are the sole range of criteria rules available. As a living wage employer the Council would particularly support the reference to accreditation with the Living Wage Foundation. There is also an opportunity to expand the parameters of the scheme and base it on ability to pay and thus helping those businesses which do not have any easy path to success.
Should the balance of available relief be targeted at lower value or higher value properties?	It is difficult for the Council to respond to this question without analysis of the impact of relief proposals on the small business community in the City.

Small Business Empowerment Zones

The Council support the targeting of specific zones and the focusing of regeneration activity to support the economy, stimulate job creation and boost growth in the rate base. The innovative idea of small business empowerment zones would therefore be supported in principle by the Council as would the use of pilot areas to test the business case for such zones. The Council is not however in a position to comment on the specific proposals in the consultation as the financial implications in relation to the potential level of losses of rates income and whether local government will be reimbursed for additional reliefs provided though the scheme is unknown.

Question	BCC Response
Do you agree with piloting empowerment zones in these two areas?	See above
Do you agree with the special measures proposed for the zones?	See above
Are there other ways in which the rating system should be used to help business in these areas?	Yes, other features of the rating system; such as hardship relief and empty rate exclusions should be available to assist in the development of the empowerment zones.
What partnership arrangements should be out in place in order to maximise the potential benefits of this proposal?	It is important that business organisations are in partnership with local authority in which the empowerment zone is located. These schemes should be part of the normal consultation process which encourages regeneration of any particular area.
What criteria should be used to judge the success of this proposal?	It should be judged by the number of created and sustainable businesses within the empowerment zone.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

Revitalising our High Streets

Question	BCC Response
Do you agree that the rating system should be used to incentivise behaviour?	<p>Belfast City Council views the rating system as part of the tools which can help incentivise city centre development. As stated previously the rating system could be utilised to foster entrepreneurship and accelerate the growth of key sectors. While we would support the proposal for converted properties, we also believe that revitalising our high streets requires the targeting of key developments such as hotels and Grade A office space as aligned to local needs and the development of the private rented sector in the City Centre.</p> <p>Additionally to support economic growth potential exists to utilise the rates system to incentivise investment including FDI activity. We would view the 100% exemption for three years as being excessive and that partial relief should apply. As in the issue with Empowerment Zones clarity needs to be given as to how this relief will be financed i.e. will this be a loss of income to local government? The economic impact of the proposed Empowerment Zones should be analysed on completion of the pilots to determine the impact of such an approach at a citywide level.</p>
Do you agree that this proposal will help demand for these properties?	<p>We have no evidence to comment on this proposal either way; however we are certain that investment in the street scene is an essential element of revitalising the high street. We believe that any scheme that encourages the use of vacant property should be supported. We recognise that the high street is changing and that it is reverting back to a mixed approach of retail, other business sector uses and residential needs to be recognised. However it is important that any conversions to residential use blend into the street scene and do not create a pattern of occupation that appears to be disjointed.</p>
Do you agree with limiting the incentive to the first occupier?	<p>No. We believe that relief should be transferrable within the three year period in order to create stability and maintain a viable street scene.</p>
What criteria should be used to judge the success of this proposal?	<p>The criteria should be vacancy rates and sustainability and economic growth.</p>

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

Charity Shops

Question	BCC Response
Should charity shops be asked to pay a relatively small contribution to rates revenue?	BCC believes that charity shops should make a small contribution to rates revenue. An amount of 20% as in Britain would be reasonable.
Should exemption be capped at £25,000 NAV? Do you agree with the proposal to make commercial landlords liable for rates on short term Do you agree that this proposal will help demand for these properties?	Yes.

Empty Property Rates

Question	BCC Response
Are there reasons as to why vacant property locally should be treated differently to other regions?	Yes, the Belfast is going through a significant period of change that is likely to last several years. During this period of change there will be new and altered buildings which will be available on the market. During the marketing period landlords should still be able to benefit from the 100% relief for the initial period of vacancy in order to support any efforts to find tenants. Removal of this relief is not supported by the Council and would damage efforts to achieve timely lettings.
Should a 75% charge apply here?	BCC would support a 75% charge as outlined, provided this was applied after the first 3 months of 100% relief. This 25% relief level would reflect local market conditions by providing a more favourable level of relief than Britain e.g. England Nil, Scotland 10%.
Are there other reasons why empty factories should not incur a vacant rating charge?	A full review of all excluded properties should take place. The Council believe that all properties, including empty factories, should pay a charge after the initial three month 100% vacancy relief period.

Mines

Question	BCC Response
What are the implications for the mining sector of removing this relief?	No comment.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

Halls of Residence

Question	BCC Response
Do you agree that the current Halls of Residence exemption currently treats some students more favourably than others?	Yes. The Council's response to the earlier consultation on this issue highlighted the Council's belief that the current exemption is unfair to the students who reside in the general private sector in Belfast because those students are charged rates in with their rent and the large majority of them do not have access to rate rebate. It is therefore reasonable to put forward the equitable argument for removing the exemption from rating for premises used as student accommodation which is provided by certain educational establishments.
Do you agree with the Department's assessment of this issue, following the earlier consultation this year?	Yes the Council supports removal of the exemption. As stated in the Council's previous response, the Council believes that the current exemption is also unfair to all residents in Belfast that a proportion of occupiers make no contribution to local services irrespective of their personal financial circumstances. The removal of the exemption would also increase the overall tax base for the Council to help offset the additional costs incurred by the Council in providing services to new student accommodation developments in the City.

Hardship Relief

Question	BCC Response
Do you consider that hardship relief is necessary?	Yes we do consider that hardship relief is necessary.
If so, what changes are needed?	There needs to be increased signposting of the scheme to increase its awareness.
What criteria should be used?	There needs to be a reconsideration of the definition of exceptional circumstances to take account of local impact.
Please provide views on how this can be done without duplicating the coverage provided by insurance?	Insurance is event driven, hardship has a much wider criteria. Any hardship scheme should always have regard to any likely income from alternative sources, these will include; insurance awards, damages awarded by any court, and any other source of "one off" revenue. Any hardship decision should be built around a clear data and circumstance evidence.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

Do you think hardship support should be administered differently?	Must have local authority input into the decision making.
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Sports and Recreation Relief

Question	BCC Response
Do you agree that spectator stands that do not generate income should be treated as part of the sport and recreation assessment?	Yes, and therefore entitled to relief.
Do you think that the present “de minimis” criteria creates an unfair advantage to some clubs?	Yes and we think that these anomalies should be removed

Domestic Rates Reform: The Rates Cap - Political Response

Question	BCC Response
Do you agree that the capped system of domestic rates is unfair to the vast majority of ratepayers?	
Do respondents consider that sufficient mitigations are in place to assist low income households (particularly asset rich income poor pensioners) that will be affected by this policy?	
Do you think that additional safeguards need to be implemented in order to mitigate hardship caused by the proposal to lift the cap in respect of the regional rate element of the bill?	<p>There are other issues that require consideration in relation to the rates cap:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why is the proposal to lift the cap in respect of the regional rate element only, and 2. Why does the current proposal allocate all additional income raised through this levy to central government rather than apportion on a pro rate basis to central and local government in keeping with other income raised through the rating process?

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

Early Payment Discount

Question	BCC Response
Do you agree with the Department's assessment that the Early Payment Discount is unnecessary and unaffordable?	Yes.
Do you agree that the policy should be phased out, before its removal?	No, the policy should be abolished with immediate effect.

Landlord Allowance

Question	BCC Response
Do you agree with the proposal to reduce landlord allowances to 5%?	The Council would not favour removing the allowance but would support a reduction to 5%.
What impact do you think this will have?	There is no information available as whether a reduced allowance figure would be adequate to compensate landlords. Some landlords will make tenants liable and collection will be more difficult.
Do you agree that the cut in allowance should be applied universally across all sectors?	The information available is inadequate for the Council to come to a view on this.

Energy Efficient New Homes

Question	BCC Response
Do you agree with the proposal to provide a rates incentive for newly built energy efficient homes?	Yes.
What are your views on an appropriate standard, reliable assessment and safeguards?	There are now statutory measurement of the energy efficiency in dwellings. These rules should be sufficient to make any scheme viable.
Do you agree with limiting the incentive to the first occupier?	Yes.
What criteria should be used to judge the success of such a measure?	The criteria should be the number of new low carbon and zero carbon homes developed.

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

The Committee approved the draft Council response to the Department of Finance consultation paper on “Reforming the Rating System, Rates: Rethink, Spurring Economic Growth”.

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

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Budget and Transformation Panel of 12th January.

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

The Committee considered the undernoted requests for the use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality:

Appendix

Organisation/ Body	Event/Date - Number of Delegates/Guests	Request	Comments	Recommendation
IEEE MEMS 2018 Conference	IEEE MEMS 2018 Conference Reception 21st January, 2018 Approximately 400 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 Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together'.	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception Approximate cost £500
Ulster University	2018 British Human Computer Interaction Conference Dinner 4th July, 2018 Approximately 200 attending	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a drinks reception	Delegates will be staying in accommodation in Belfast and the Conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Opportunities for Success Across the City'	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception Approximate cost £500

**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Friday, 20th January, 2017**

European Federation for the Science and Technology of Lipids	Congress Dinner for the European Federation Lipid Congress 18th September, 2018 Approximately 250 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 Conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Opportunities for Success Across the City'	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception Approximate cost £500
Queen's University Belfast	European Symposium on Clinical Pharmacy 2018 Welcome Reception 23rd October, 2018 Approximately 500 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 Conference will take place within the city. This event would contribute to the Council's Key Themes of 'City Leadership – Strong, Fair, Together' and 'Better Opportunities for Success Across the City'	The use of the City Hall and the provision of hospitality in the form of a pre-dinner drinks reception Approximate cost £500

The Committee approved the requests for the use of the City Hall but agreed, in line with its decision of 6th January to amend its policy and cease the provision of hospitality for City Hall events, not to provide hospitality for any of the events listed in the Schedule of Applications.

Director of Organisational Development

The Chief Executive advised the Members that Mrs Jill Minne, Director of Organisational Development, had been appointed to a post within the Civil Service and would be leaving the Council in due course. She advised the Members that she would be submitting reports to future meetings of the Committee on how the functions undertaken by the Director would be dealt with in the short and longer terms.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and several Members paid tribute to the work undertaken by the Director.

Chairperson

B1146

Page 46

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Thursday, 26th January, 2017

SPECIAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hussey (Chairperson);
The High Sheriff (Alderman Haire);
Aldermen Convery and Rodgers;
Councillors Attwood, Corr, Craig, Graham,
Hargey, Hutchinson, Jones, Long, McCabe,
McVeigh, O'Donnell, Reynolds and Walsh

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

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor McAllister.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Revenue Estimates and District Rate 2017/18

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on the 20 January 2017, considered the proposed 2017/18 revenue budgets and cash limits for the Strategic Policy and Resources, People and Communities, City Growth and Regeneration and Planning Committees.**
- 1.2 The Committee agreed that the revenue budgets and cash limits for the People and Communities Committee, City Growth and Regeneration Committee and the Planning Committee should be referred to special meetings of each Committee on 24 January 2017.**
- 1.3 This report provides recommendations for the Committee Cash Limits and District Rate for 2017/18.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to agree:

- That this paper should not be subject to call-in (as indicated above) because it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February 2017.
- A cash limit of £42,443,408 for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for 2017/18, including £3,270,000 relating to the Belfast Investment Fund.
- A cash limit of £76,242,845 for the People and Communities Committee for 2017/18.
- A cash limit of £15,841,354 for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for 2017/18.
- A cash limit of £1,520,440 for the Planning Committee for 2017/18.
- The capital financing budget of £18,751,901 for 2017/18.
- That the increase in the district rate for 2017/18 should be 1.89%, based on an estimated penny product of 5,875,174 meaning a non-domestic rate of 26.3481 and a domestic rate of 0.3199 and that the amount to be raised through the district rate in 2017/18 will be £149,511,770.
- Note the Director of Finance and Resources statement on the adequacy of the Council's reserves position and the robustness of the revenue estimates as required by the Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011.
- Note the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement (Appendix 5) as required by the Local Government (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations (NI) 2011.

3.0 Main report

- 3.1 Table 1 below summarises the net cost of the Council for 2017/18 and shows that the amount to be raised through the district rate in 2017/18 is £149,511,770. This represents a 1.89% increase in the district rate.**

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Thursday, 26th January, 2017**

Table 1 Cost of Running the Council in 2017/18

	Cost (£)
Strategic Policy and Resources Committee	39,173,408
People and Communities Committee	76,242,845
City Growth and Regeneration Committee	15,841,354
Planning Committee	1,520,440
Net Departmental Expenditure	132,778,048
Belfast Investment Fund	3,270,000
Capital Financing	18,751,901
Total Net Council Expenditure	154,799,949
Less Derating Grant	-5,288,179
Amount to be Raised from the District Rate	149,511,770

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee Cash Limit

- 3.2 The recommended cash limit for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed by the Committee at its meeting on the 20 January 2017 is £42,443,408, which includes £3,270,000 relating to the Belfast Investment Fund and the additional £750,000 of funding for the Belfast Agenda Priorities.
- 3.3 The revenue estimates for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee comprise the revenue budgets for the Chief Executive's Department including City Centre Regeneration, Property and Projects Department and the Finance and Resources Department.
- 3.4 The budget for each main service area and corporate finance budgets are summarised in Appendix 1.

People and Communities Committee Cash Limit

- 3.5 The People and Communities Committee, at its meeting on the 24 January 2017, noted the revenue budget and cash limit of £76,242,845 as recommended by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. Each main service area is summarised in Appendix 2.

City Growth and Regeneration Committee Cash Limit

- 3.6 The City Growth and Regeneration Committee, at its meeting on the 24 January 2017, agreed the revenue budget and cash limit of £15,841,354 as recommended by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. Each main service area is summarised in Appendix 3.

Planning Committee Cash Limit

- 3.7 The Planning Committee at its meeting on the 24 January 2017, agreed the revenue budget and cash limit of £1,520,440 as recommended by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. Each main service area is summarised in Appendix 4.

Belfast Investment Fund

- 3.8 The annual contribution to the Belfast Investment Fund is £3,270,000 and this is included in the Strategic Policy and Resources Cash Limit above.

Capital Financing Budget

- 3.9 The Council will have secured a capital financing budget of £18,751,901 in 2017/18 to support its capital investment programme. The only change from 2017/18 is the inclusion of £661,000 financing for the new office accommodation. This money has been financed through efficiency savings and not through an increase in the district rate. The savings come from the rationalisation of the accommodation estate with the opening of the new office block in Adelaide Street.

The 2017/18 capital financing budget is summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2 – Capital Financing Budget 2017/18

Capital Financing	(£)
Capital Programme	10,312,676
Transferred LGR Loans	677,319
Leisure Investment Programme	7,100,906
Accommodation Efficiencies	661,000
Total	18,751,901

Derating Grant

- 3.10** The grant received from central government (Derating Grant) which compensates the Council for de-rated properties will increase by £59,052 to £5,288,179 in 2017/18.

Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011

- 3.11** The Local Government Finance Act (NI) 2011 requires the Director of Finance and Resources, in his role as designated chief financial officer, to provide assurance to Members on the robustness of the revenue estimates. The Finance Act requires the Council to have regard to this statement when considering the estimates and the amount estimated to be required to be raised by means of rates. He is also required to report on the adequacy of the Council's reserves position as part of the rate setting process.

The development of the revenue estimates for 2017/18 commenced in June 2016 with the identification of uncontrollable costs arising from external influences, the development of the detailed budgets at cost centre and account code level across the organisation and the consideration and challenge of base budgets and growth proposals.

Reports were presented to the Strategic Policy Resources Committee from November 2016 to January 2017 which detailed the additional financing requirement for the Council, based on uncontrollable costs (e.g. salary costs, apprentice levy, waste disposal) and additional investment to support the Belfast Agenda. These reports also provided updates to Committee on the efficiency programme which resulted in £2,876,970 of efficiencies being removed from based budgets as compared to the targeted savings of £2,000,000.

As the result of this process the Director of Finance and Resources is satisfied that the estimates presented should provide adequate financial resources to support the running costs of the Council for 2017/18 and that reasonable consideration of the financial risks to the Council have been made in the preparation of the estimates.

Alongside the development of the revenue estimates, work was undertaken with Land and Property Services (LPS), supported by the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation (IRRV) to validate the Estimated Penny Product for 2017/18 including losses on collection.

The decline in the rate base, mainly due to successful rating appeals and the removal of non-domestic properties from the valuation list resulted in the Estimated Penny Product (EPP) being reduced by £61,114 (1.03%) a loss of £1,511,561 annual rates income. This revised EPP has been included in the district rate calculations.

The Council's general reserves position is forecast to be £12.8m by the end of 2017/18. The Director of Finance and Resources believes that the level of reserves should be maintained at this level to safeguard the Council's exposure to financial risk including any backdated element of non-domestic revaluation appeals.

The Director of Finance and Resources is therefore satisfied with the robustness of the revenue estimates and that the reserves position is adequate for the Council and does not require enhancement though the district rate in 2017/18.

Regional Rate

- 3.12 The Regional Rate has not been set at this stage.

Impact on Ratepayer

- 3.13 Table 3 below illustrates the impact of a 1.89% increase in the district rate on ratepayers by average property type.

Table 3: Impact on Ratepayer by Property Type

Property Type	Annual Increase	Monthly Increase
Terraced House	£5.12	£0.43
3 Bed Semi-Detached	£7.83	£0.65
4 Bed Detached	£17.41	£1.45
Apartment	£4.94	£0.41
Average Office	£134.61	£11.22
Average Retail	£131.34	£10.95

Communication

- 3.14 It is proposed to use the following key messages for the announcement of the agreed rate:
- Belfast City Council has agreed a district rate increase of 1.89%.
 - To set this level of district rate, the Council has delivered £2.9m of cash savings without impacting on frontline service delivery.

- The average impact on domestic ratepayers is less than £1 per month or less than £10 per year. Business and offices will pay on average an extra £11 per month or £130 per year.
- The Council has shown responsible leadership by achieving the balance between investing in the city to secure jobs and grow the economy during these difficult times while also providing value for money services.
- The Council's long term strategy is to improve the retail and hotel offering and office and business infrastructure to attract major investors and businesses to the city in order to increase its rate income, with the effect of further investment and keeping rates as low as possible.
- The Council will continue to maintain and improve its services, to invest in local communities while at the same time delivering a further £6 million of efficiencies in the next two years.
- The Council will invest:
 - £22.77m in city centre regeneration projects
 - £36m in local regeneration projects
 - £150m in providing new facilities and refurbishing existing ones
 - £105m in new leisure facilities.

3.15 In addition Corporate Communications will produce a press release for Members. A pull out section on the district rate, services and capital investment will be provided in the next addition of City Matters. The My Rates Page on the website will be updated.

3.16 Financial & Resource Implications

The report details the cash limits and level of district rate required to meet the additional financing requirement of the Council for 2017/18.

3.17 Equality or Good Relations Implications

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

APPENDIX 1

STRATEGIC POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
ESTIMATE ANALYSIS 2017-18

SERVICE	BUDGET 2017-18
Corporate Priorities.	2,423,750
City Centre Regeneration	1,035,662
Human Resources	3,009,237
Democratic Services	2,290,596
Corporate Communications	1,217,137
Central Support Unit	1,734,818
Legal Services	1,499,736
Strategic Policy	719,435
Corporate Management	1,663,474
Finance & Performance	2,532,874
Digital Services	5,188,661
Audit	1,018,576
Corporate Directorate	1,106,787
Property Mgmt.	1,775,426
Estates	-4,459,575
Facilities	15,241,136
Contracts	820,895
Good Relations	354,783
COMMITTEE TOTAL	39,173,408
Belfast Investment Fund	3,270,000
Capital Financing	18,751,901

APPENDIX 2

**PEOPLE & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
ESTIMATE ANALYSIS 2017-18**

SERVICE	BUDGET 2017-18
Cleansing	18,063,073
Community Services	6,557,491
Directorate Support	2,701,136
Environmental Health	7,115,033
Leisure - GLL	7,247,371
Leisure - BCC	374,635
Neighbourhood & Development	4,248,166
Parks & Cemetery Services	9,485,141
Waste Management	20,450,799
COMMITTEE TOTAL	76,242,845

APPENDIX 3

**CITY GROWTH & REGENERATION COMMITTEE
ESTIMATE ANALYSIS 2017-18**

SERVICE	BUDGET 2017-18
Economic Initiatives & ID	7,956,603
Development Directorate	3,221,847
City Events & Venues	4,260,059
Carparking	-919,247
Estates	376,718
Zoo	930,374
North Foreshore	15,000
COMMITTEE TOTAL	15,841,354

APPENDIX 4

PLANNING & LICENCING COMMITTEE
ESTIMATE ANALYSIS 2017-18

SERVICE	BUDGET 2017-18
Planning	1,145,983
Building Control	374,457
COMMITTEE TOTAL	1,520,440

Appendix 5

Belfast City Council
Minimum Revenue Provision Annual Statement
January 2017

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Government (Capital Financing and Accounting) Regulations (NI) 2011 requires Councils to determine an amount of minimum revenue provision (MRP) which it considers to be prudent. This provision will be charged to the general fund each year and will be in respect of the financing of capital expenditure incurred in current or prior years.

2. Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

- 2.1 The general MRP provision for capital expenditure financed by loan sanctions issued by the Department of the Environment up to and including 2011/12 and for borrowing incurred in 2012/13 and later years, will be charged to the general fund on a straight line basis in-line with the asset life determined for depreciation purposes either:-

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Thursday, 26th January, 2017**

- In the financial year in which the expenditure was incurred, if the expenditure was incurred during the first six months of the financial year.

or

- In the financial year following the one in which the expenditure was incurred, if the expenditure was incurred during the last six months of the financial year.

- 2.2 The MRP will not be made on the value of Long term Debtors outstanding, as these will be repaid by third parties and it is not therefore deemed necessary to make an additional revenue charge in relation to these amounts. However, if a third party is not making annual repayments of principal, the MRP payments will be made over the asset life.
- 2.3 If the Council enters into finance leases, the MRP will be calculated in accordance with the requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and be equal to the principal elements of the lease payments.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Councillor Craig,

That the increase in the District Rate for 2017/18 be set at a maximum of 1.61%.

On a vote by show of hands five Members voted for the proposal and ten against and it was declared lost.

The Committee adopted the recommendations as set out in paragraph 2.1 of the report.

PEACE IV – Local Action Plan Shared Space Proposal

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

- 1.1 **The purpose of this report is seek to approval on the Shared Space element of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.**

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- Approve the redrafting of the Shared Space element of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan as outlined below.

3.0 Main report

Background

3.1 The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) invited Local Authorities to prepare Local Action Plans under the themes of Children & Young People, Shared Spaces & Services and Building Positive Relations as part of Objective 3 of the European Union's PEACE IV Programme. The bid is for approximately €17 million to be delivered from 2017 to 2021. Council's initial bid was approved by the PEACE IV Steering Committee (with an initial score of 72%) and Council submitted a more detailed Stage 2 application on 2nd September. The indicative financial allocation for the Shared Space theme is a maximum of €5.3 million which can comprise of a mix of capital and revenue funding. Members are advised that in addition to the development of Local Action Plans there is a separate funding call for large scale capital projects administered by SEUPB on a regional basis.

3.2 The criteria for the Shared Space theme allows for the following indicative activities

- Activities that contribute to an enhancement of the environment in local communities e.g. the enhancement of existing urban infrastructure or natural spaces.
- Dialogue, reconciliation and capacity building between interface communities, leading to the creation of shared vision and conditions where communities feel it is safe and appropriate to proceed with the removal of interface barriers;
- Developing the shared aspects of existing neighbourhoods, public spaces and buildings;
- Support for local initiatives with the aim of making public space in cities, towns and villages more inclusive, this will often involve addressing sensitive topics around parades, flags, emblems, graffiti and other issues which serve to intimidate and make some members of society, whether based on religion, race or other factors feel unwelcome in some areas.

3.3 The Local Action Plan proposal was developed in line with these criteria. It aims to promote positive attitudes towards shared space, address post conflict issues, improve connectivity and build on the city's wider economic potential. Funded activities would focus on engagement with local communities on concepts of shared space and explore how this can be practically applied in terms of:

- Community relations
- Physical and social regeneration
- Ensuring a sustainable and liveable city.

3.4 The approach would seek to adopt an asset based community development model and support local communities in placemaking and in the development of a transferable approach to the identification, design, programming and management of shared space in the City, all within the context of improving community relations.

3.5 The proposal as submitted included scope for infrastructure/ capital works as well as programming costs. The exact locations for the proposed signature civic space and satellite environmental improvement schemes were to be identified in Phase 1 of the works which was planned to run until September 2018. Criteria for selection included as a minimum feasibility; deliverability; sustainability and affordability of proposals along with contribution to the specific PEACE IV Programme objectives and desired results; transformational potential, quality of design and value for money.

3.6 Completion of all activity under the theme was anticipated by December 2021.

3.7 Key Issues

SEUPB has now requested additional detail on the Shared Space element of the proposed Local Action Plan for Belfast including identification of target locations for the proposed capital element with a redrafted bid to be submitted to them by the end of January. SEUPB have indicated that they expect target locations to have a clear and demonstrable peace and reconciliation focus in line with the criteria detailed above and expect the Belfast Plan to target significant interface areas.

3.8 Senior Officers were briefed on feedback from SEUPB on the application on Monday 9th January and discussed options around further development of the Shared Space proposal. It was agreed that the methodology and approach as outlined

in the bid were still relevant and appropriate but that the identification of target locations for the proposed capital element would need to be accelerated to meet SEUPB's timetable and requirement for up front identification of specific locations.

3.9 In discussion of the options consideration was paid to a number of capital schemes at varying stages of development that are seeking funding. However given the call criteria as outlined above significant potential was identified for the focus of delivery to be put on the Springfield Road interface which remains the longest physical barrier in the city. The approach would involve developing a corridor of shared space via key locations at Springfield Dam, Paisley Park and the Invest NI land on the former Mackie's site. A map is attached for reference.

3.10 Activity under the Shared Space theme would focus on creating and improving linkages between, and increasing usage of, significant assets within the area, promoting shared space within the particular local context as well as complementing existing and proposed new developments in the area. This approach would be reflected in the allocation of programming and capital works undertaken under this theme.

3.11 Proposed Capital Allocations

Within the PEACE IV bid under the Shared Spaces theme approximately £2.6 million was allocated for infrastructure/capital works. If this proposal is approved for funding by SEUPB then PEACE IV funding would allow for further development of the Springfield Dam site following transfer from the Department for Communities (DfC) and completion of initial capital works to provide the basic framework to improve access and provide for recreational use of the site. PEACE IV funding would allow for enhancements to Springfield Park in line with development proposals which could include performance area, park furniture, art installation etc and enhancements to the Dam itself, including boardwalk, boathouse and jetty etc.

3.12 The remaining capital allocation would support and complement the planned DfC development for Paisley Park aimed at increasing access from Springfield Road and assist in the development of the Invest NI site aimed at improving access from Woodvale Park. There would also be scope for supporting other small scale Environmental Improvement

schemes which would arise through the Shared Space programming element.

3.13 Other Areas of the City

In addition to this signature proposal resources would also be deployed under this theme to explore developing similar approaches in other significant areas of the city, e.g. Girdwood, Cultural Corridor, City Centre Gateway sites etc to work with local communities on identifying and planning for other shared spaces and their long term management, programming and sustainability, building upon the existing assets and relationships in the area.

3.14 Areas to be prioritised for involvement would be those that are continuing to deal with legacy issues arising from the conflict and suffering from high levels of social deprivation including poverty, low educational attainment, barriers to improved employability and increased economic activity, mental health and wellbeing issues and disability.

3.15 Programming

Throughout the engagement and design stages and in the identification and agreement on principles of shared space specific consideration will be paid to the impact of parades; flags, emblems, graffiti and other related issues upon successful design and creation of shared spaces as well as the ongoing programming and management of shared spaces. This will be done through creative use of planning scenarios; visioning and other techniques to facilitate discussion. The same approach will apply to the linked satellite spaces developed under this theme.

3.16 Communities would be assisted to build local capacity in terms of action planning, animating and managing shared spaces and would provide an opportunity to link in with Council's approach to community asset transfer.

3.17 Activities would involve

- Support for technical assistance for visioning and planning purposes.
- Regular knowledge exchange and best practice events so that learning can be shared across the city and to identify potential for innovation and collaborative work.

- Agreement of Shared Space Principles and identification of Environmental Improvement locations and civic space site.
- Diversity Awareness/ Good Relations training/ events
- Animation/ Placemaking Events/ site tours
- Scenario Planning/ Visioning/ Discussion & Debate Support for technical assistance for Design/ Programming/ Management/ Sustainability.
- Initial Draft Designs/ Concept - EI Schemes
- Development of Good Relations Toolkit and Guide for shared spaces
- Ongoing Evaluation

3.18 Building on other investment

Significant potential was also identified to use the programme funding in terms of building the capacity and capabilities of relevant community and voluntary organisations in the area as well as contributing to key policy priorities for the city Integrated Cultural Strategy, Employability and Skills framework; City Centre Regeneration Framework etc.

3.19 The work would also seek to build upon the Shared Space policy and community engagement approach developed for the new Innovation factory located on the former Mackie's site on the Springfield Road as an example of how this concept of shared space can be put into practice with the support of the Programme.

3.20 Links/ Complementarity

Potential to bring in key partners in the area such as the Innovation factory; Belfast Metropolitan College; Department for Communities; NI Housing Executive and PSNI as well as sharing learning with other complementary initiatives in the city.

3.21 The proposal also offers scope to tap into the expertise and experience of other networks for example the Neighbourhood Project (supported through the Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities initiative) being piloted by local authorities in Australia to promote short term, low cost and scaleable interventions to catalyse long term sustainable change and the Young Foundation's approach to fostering social innovation.

3.22 Activity under this theme would also be complemented by programming under the Children & Young People and Positive

Relations themes of the PEACE IV Action Plan and work alongside key partners such as the NI Housing Executive and their approach to the engagement, empowerment and enabling of local communities to achieve positive outcomes.

3.33 Financial & Resource Implications

100% funding is available under the PEACE IV Action Plan for supported activities deemed eligible and compliant by the Managing Authority.

3.24 Equality or Good Relations Implications

The Plan's design and implementation is intended to help promote equality of opportunity and good relations within the city so the Plan has been screened out on the basis that the screening exercise identified major positive impacts across Section 75 grounds which are considered as impacts that would help to promote equality of opportunity and good relations."

The Committee approved the redrafting of the Shared Space element of the PEACE IV local action plan as outlined in the report.

Restricted Item

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.

Arrangements for Future Management of Human Resources

(With the exception of the Chief Executive and the Senior Democratic Services Officer, all Members of staff left the meeting whilst this item was under consideration)

The Chief Executive submitted for the Committee's consideration a report outlining the arrangements to cover the HR and organisation and development needs of the Council following the resignation of the Director of Organisational Development.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to

- Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to fill the established tier 3 Senior HR post to cover the key areas of HR Services;
- The Director of Development becoming the SRO for the development work for the Employability Project Belfast Works from the beginning of the next financial year;
- Delegate authority to the Chief Executive to implement interim arrangements for the other aspects of the Director of Organisational Development's role; and

**Special Strategic Policy and Resources Committee,
Thursday, 26th January, 2017**

- A report providing further options on the organisation design previously agreed by the Committee being submitted for its consideration at a future meeting.

Standing Order 14

In accordance with Standing Order 14, the Committee agreed as the meeting had been held later than seven clear days before the meeting of the Council, that the minutes of the meeting be submitted to the Council on 1st February for ratification.

Chairperson

People and Communities Committee

Wednesday, 4th January, 2017

SPECIAL MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Garrett (Chairperson);
the High Sheriff (Alderman Rodgers);
Alderman Sandford; and Councillors Austin, Heading,
Jones, Lyons, Magennis, McCusker and Nicholl.

Also attended: Councillor Magee.

In attendance: Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director;
Mr. S. Leonard, Environmental Health Manager; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman McCoubrey and McKee and Councillors Beattie, Copeland, Corr, McCabe, Newton and O'Neill.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Attendance at Special People and Communities Meetings Re Housing Issues

It was agreed, as with the previous Housing Forum Meetings, that all the Members of the Council would be invited to attend the future special meetings with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) regarding housing matters.

Presentation

Northern Ireland Housing Executive – Update Presentation

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Mr I. McCrickard (Belfast Regional Manager) and Mr. R. Hawe (North Region Place Shaper), representing the NIHE.

Mr. Hawe commenced by advising that the Housing Executive wished to update the Committee on its Social Housing Development Programme and Place Shaping Role. He emphasised the important role of the Council in both these areas and stressed that an opportunity for effective joined-up working existed, particularly in respect of the Place Shaping Powers.

**Special People and Communities Committee,
Wednesday, 4th January, 2017**

Mr. Howe provided the Members with a presentation on the Social Housing Development Programme (copies of this document were circulated at the meeting). He highlighted the following key points within the presentation:

- social housing completions (407 units);
- social housing units under construction (795 units);
- social housing starts in 2016/17 (79 units);
- programmed to start in 2016/17 (Gross Programme) (445 units); and
- programmed to start in 2017/18 (Gross Programme) (1,140 units – this included 'New Bids' that were highlighted within the document).

Mr. Howe outlined the current demographic trends and the resultant social waiting list needs and he apprised the Committee with regard to the performance by the Housing Executive in relation to new build start and completion and future delivery timescales. Mr. Howe explained that one of the priorities of the organisation was to identify new development sites for social housing and that work was ongoing with the various agencies, including the Council, regarding the zoning of appropriate land.

Mr. Howe provided clarification on the operation of the Social Development Programme. He advised that there existed a shortfall between the demand and supply for social development housing and therefore the overall aim of the Programme was to increase the stock of social housing.

Mr. Howe then provided the Committee with an update on the Place Shaping Role within the Housing Executive which included consideration of housing need, land availability and development/regeneration within the context of the Community Plan, the Development Plan and the Belfast Agenda. He reiterated that the Housing Executive would be liaising closely with the Council in progressing this area of work.

Following a query regarding the housing selection scheme and the process for the transfer of tenants, Mr. McCrickard advised that the Department for Communities was in the process of reviewing the points allocation system and that a Public Consultation Exercise would be held in the near future.

During Members' questions, the Committee was also apprised regarding homelessness in the city and the various options available to rehouse people which including a more joined up approach with the private rental sector. The Committee were also updated on the work of the new Housing Solutions and Support Team

A Member welcomed the new approach and the longer term/multi-agency approach being taken to this ongoing problem.

It was agreed that, at the next quarterly meeting, the NIHE would provide the Committee with an update presentation on the work of this team in Belfast. It was agreed further that an up-to-date contact list of Housing Executive Officers would be forwarded to the Committee.

**Special People and Communities Committee,
Wednesday, 4th January, 2017**

The Members also drew the attention of the officers from the NIHE to several further matters, a number of which are set out hereunder, and the officers undertook to update Members on individual queries which they had raised:

- intimidation cases and how those were being monitored;
- change of tenancy delays/transfers and the reallocation of houses;
- the number of applicants in urgent need of housing;
- the purchase and refurbishment of properties to increase the housing stock;
- fire escape windows in older properties; and
- city centre living and regeneration;

The Chairperson thanked the officials from NIHE for attending and they left the meeting.

Chairperson

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People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 10th January, 2017

MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Garrett (Chairperson);
Aldermen McCoubrey, Rodgers and Sandford; and
Councillors Austin, Beattie, Copeland, Corr, Corr Johnston,
Heading, Jones, Lyons, Magennis, McCusker, McCabe,
Milne, Newton and Nicholl.

In attendance: Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director;
Mrs. S. Toland, Assistant Director; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman McKee and Councillor O'Neill.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 6th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd January.

Declarations of Interest

- Councillor McCusker declared an interest in respect of item 3 (c) Request from Crumlin Star Re Strangford Avenue, in that he was a member of the Crumlin Star Social Club; and
- Councillor Austin declared an interest in respect of item 5 (b) Front Line Advice Service, in that she was associated with an organisation that that received funding support.

Committee/Strategic Issues

Dealing with banned breeds under the Dangerous Dogs (NI) Order 1991 as amended

(Mr. S. Skimin, Head of Cleansing Services, 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 this report is to further update the Committee on the Motion that was brought to Council on 1st September 2016 with regard to dangerous breeds of dogs and to provide an interim report on the work that is being undertaken to**

review how the Council handles any future cases involving dangerous breeds. The Motion called for a review of breed specific legislation to avoid the removal from their owners of prohibited dogs that have not posed a danger to the public, as follows:

'This Council calls upon the Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to conduct an urgent review of Breed Specific Legislation. Recent tragic events in England demonstrate the need for effective controls in respect of dangerous dogs. However, the removal from their owners of dogs that have not posed a danger to the public should be avoided. The Council supports and encourages responsible dog ownership and those who exercise appropriate care and control of their dogs.'

1.2 The Council wrote to the Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Minister McIlveen MLA, about the Motion on 5th October.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- Note the contents of the report.
- Agree to receive a presentation on the key issues from Mr Peter Tallack at the start of February's Committee meeting.

3.0 Key Issues

3.1 A reply from the Minister's office has been received. The Minister has stated in her response as follows;

'The Department understands that the Council is currently reviewing its handling of a high profile case involving the seizure, assessment and return of a pit bull. We would be interested in learning of the findings of that review, and will then consider whether the existing legislative provisions could be reviewed to allow the impact of seizure on dogs and their owners, to be more effectively managed, while ensuring appropriate protection for the public.'

3.2 An internal officer group has been reviewing the legal policy and processes involved in dealing with cases of suspected banned breeds. Members of the group sought and have received a report from an expert on identifying and dealing with banned breeds of dogs, Mr. Peter Tallack, regarding the risks to public safety and the welfare considerations about the Council seizing dogs, suspected to be a banned breed type,

under the Dangerous Dogs (Northern Ireland) Order 1991. Mr Tallack has extensive experience in investigating serious dog attacks. This report provides further background and information and best practice in advance of seeking the opinion of Legal Counsel in relation to the potential liability to the Council in allowing a dog from a banned breed to remain at home with its owner, pending legal proceedings for exemption.

3.3 Members are reminded that there is now a legal process which will allow the dog to be placed on the Council's exemption register subject to adherence with control conditions. In addition to the above Officers are also considering issues around visitation by an owner, should a dog have to be seized. We are also looking at dog and environmental assessment processes and risk assessments, as part of the overall decision making process.

3.4 Following receipt of all of the information, a full report will be presented to Committee detailing the findings of the review taking account of both the opinions of the Council Officers, an expert in the field and also legal opinion.

3.5 Prior to the presentation of the full report to Committee, the author of the expert's report, Mr. Peter Tallack, is available to give the Committee a presentation on the factors to consider when handling dangerous dogs and how the Council can manage these cases, taking into account the public safety risks and the welfare needs of the dog and its owner. This would provide Members with some background information into the practicalities and risks involved in dealing with banned breeds.

3.6 **Financial & Resource Implications**

There will be a cost of approximately £150 involved in bringing Mr. Tallack to Belfast to give his presentation to Committee. This can be met from within existing revenue estimates.

3.7 **Equality or Good Relations Implications**

There are no relevant equality considerations associated with the review."

A Member requested that the internal review group also consider the view of an Independent Animal Behavioural expert and suggested that the proposed presentation from Mr. P. Tallack was not required at this stage.

Several other Members concurred and also questioned the need, at this stage in the review, for the proposed presentation from Mr. P. Tallack given the projected cost.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

It was also suggested that Members of the Committee might benefit from a site visit to some of the Council's dog holding facilities.

Following consideration the Committee:

- noted the response from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs;
- agreed not to receive the proposed presentation from Mr. P. Tallack at this time;
- noted that an internal officer group was currently reviewing the legal policy and processes involved in dealing with cases of suspected banned breeds and agreed that a report would be presented to a future meeting of the Committee which would detail the findings of this review;
- agreed that as part of the review the view of an Independent Animal Behavioural expert would be sought; and
- agreed that as part of the review the Committee would give consideration, at a later stage, to the organisation of a site visit for the Members to the Council's dog holding facilities.

Minutes of the Meeting of the Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development Working Group

The Assistant Director advised that, at the meeting of the Strategic Cemetery and Crematorium Development Working Group held on 5th December, the following key issues had been considered:

- economic appraisal on the proposals regarding the future cremation options;
- review of the burial policy; and
- update on the Loughview Park Cemetery Planning Application.

Following a query from a Member, the Assistant Director confirmed that a permanent memorial to mark Plot Z1 at the City Cemetery was being progressed.

In response to a query, regarding the economic appraisal on the proposals in relation to the future cremation options, the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services confirmed that the draft document had been received by the Council on 28th November and was currently being assessed in line with the governance under the Council's agreed three stage approval process for all capital projects. He advised the Committee that consideration of the economic appraisal had been placed on the agenda for the Party Group Briefings scheduled to be held at the end of January.

Several Members advised that they had been contacted in relation to members of the public no longer being allowed to use the waiting area at Roselawn Crematorium without purchasing refreshments and asked officers to investigate this complaint further.

Following consideration the Committee:

- approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Strategic Cemeteries and Crematorium Working Group held on 5th December 2016;

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

- noted that Party Group Briefings would be taking place at the end of January on the proposals regarding the economic appraisal and future cremation options;
- noted that a permanent memorial to mark Plot Z1 at the City Cemetery was being progressed through the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and that engagement would take place in due course regarding the actual memorial; and
- agreed that officers would submit a report to a future meeting of the Strategic Cemeteries and Working Group on the new tender arrangements for the café at Roselawn Crematorium which would include details regarding the use of the waiting area and the current pricing structure.

Physical Programme and Asset Management

Partnership Agreements - Quarterly Update

The Assistant Director reminded the Committee that the Council had previously agreed to enter into Partner Agreements at seven sites. She explained that the information presented was on six of the seven sites, as details from Ulidia Playing Fields (Rosario Football Club) were still outstanding. She confirmed that the club had been formally written to requesting the outstanding information and they had confirmed that the information would be forwarded immediately. The Director then provided an update on the progress in relation to the Agreements for July – September 2016.

The officer reminded the Committee that funding of up to £20,000 per annum was available for each partner for the delivery of a programme (supporting the Sports Development Plan). She reported that successful applicants had submitted plans to improve sports development outcomes at each site and that financial support had been approved at all of these sites. Full Quarter one and Quarter two payments, plus initial payments of 80% from Quarter three budgets, had been made at six of the seven sites. She added that only Quarter one initial payments had been made to Rosario FC. The officer explained that changes to the club's personnel had resulted in the recently submitted mandatory information not having met the required standard, however, a Council Sports Development Officer was currently assisting the club to resolve these outstanding issues, and it was anticipated that the payments to Rosario would be approved during the current quarter.

The officer drew the Members' attention to a table which indicated the outputs at the sites as reported by the partners up to the end of September 2016 and highlighted that in the initial year of transition from the Facility Management Agreements there was evidence of growth in the level of diverse use and extensive partnership working.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Springfield Dam

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 update Committee on the transfer of the land from DfC following expenditure of c. £0.5m by DfC on capital work to upgrade the area.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- **Note that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee has granted approval to accept the transfer, on terms as outlined below, from DfC following completion of capital works to enhance the site.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

The DfC own the land at Springfield Dam. DfC commissioned AECOM to undertake a feasibility study in partnership with the Council to develop high level concept plans for the site. The Springfield Dam site shares a boundary with the Council’s Springfield Park and there is an opportunity to create a larger enhanced and integrated open space at this location. The feasibility study produced two options; the estimated construction cost for option 1 is £448,513.71 and for option 2 is £1,215,511.01. DfC have funding available in this financial year for option 1 and they are keen to start spending the estimated total construction costs for Option 1 before 31st March 2017; if expenditure is committed and commenced prior to 31st March 2017 the full cost can be accrued by DfC in Financial Year 16/17. There is no funding currently available for option 2.

3.2 Option 1 comprises the basic framework to improve access and provide for recreational use of the site. The proposed paths will provide for circulation between the Dam and Springfield Park and also link into proposed new entrances to the site. This will facilitate ‘loop’ walks in the locality. The proposed recreational facilities include a proposed building for classroom/training/recreational/storage use, fishing stands and an activity trail.

3.3 At its meeting on 21st Oct 2016 the Committee agreed in principle to the transfer of land and property assets from the DfC, or other central government bodies as appropriate, upon completion of identified capital projects, subject to the conditions of transfer as set out in the report and specifically on agreement on revenue budgets at the time of the transfer, with up to three years agreed maintenance costs being provided as a minimum, depending on the nature of the asset.

3.4 The following Heads of Terms have been agreed with DfC in respect to the transfer of Springfield Dam to the Council:

- DfC to provide BCC with copies of satisfactory title and confirmation that there are no restrictions, onerous conditions or charges in the title which would preclude the proposed works.
- BCC will appoint consultants to design Option 1 of the Springfield Dam project.
- BCC will secure planning approval and statutory approvals as required for the scheme.
- BCC will appoint the contractor to complete the works.
- DfC will fund all costs including design, statutory approvals and construction.
- BCC will agree to take ownership of the site at nil cost to the Council on completion of Option 1 of the works.
- BCC (Parks & Neighbourhoods Dept) will require to be represented on the design group for the project to ensure that the future maintenance and management of the Springfield Dam is properly reflected in the designs.
- DfC will fund the Council's maintenance costs for a period of three years following handover of the site to the Council.

3.6 Financial & Resource Implications

The transfer will be at nil cost to the Council and will only take place following completion of capital expenditure of c£0.5m. Maintenance costs for three years following completion of the capital works and hand over to the Council will be covered by DfC.

3.7 Staff from the Legal Services and Estates Management Unit will complete the transfer of the land and staff from the Project Management Unit will deliver the capital project on behalf of DfC.”

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

The Committee noted that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had granted approval to accept the transfer from the Department for Communities following completion of capital works to enhance the site.

Request from Crumlin Star Re Strangford Avenue

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 11th October 2016, it had agreed that an update report on Crumlin Star Football Club's request to upgrade facilities at the Strangford Avenue Playing Fields would be submitted to a future meeting.

The Assistant Director outlined that Crumlin Star had asked the Council if it would investigate the possibility of bringing pitch three and the associated pavilion up to Intermediate League Standard, which would enable the Club to play its home games at Strangford Avenue.

The Members were also advised that the Club had indicated that, if successful, it would explore other investment options to assist with the enhancement of the facility and proposed that the Council would remain responsible for the maintenance of the pitch but that the Club would pay for the use of the facility.

The Members were asked to note that, whilst it appeared that technically the facility could be brought up to an existing Intermediate Ground Standard, there remained a number of issues around funding, planning (including potential local opposition), and the displacement of existing users.

The Assistant Director advised that officers from the Council had recently met with a representative from the IFA who had responsibility for Ground Criteria for a preliminary assessment, and she highlighted that the following points had arisen at the meeting:

- in order to meet the standard the facility would require a perimeter high level fence around the pitch as well as the spectator rail, the league do not stipulate the height of the fence, a height of at least 1.8m is normal. The spectator rail is normally 1.2m high. The high fence would require planning approval. This would need to extend around the pitch, to enclose the playing surface, the run off area and the circulation spectator;
- the existing changing pavilion was currently fenced in with a 1m fence. The IFA appeared satisfied with this. The fence was camouflaged by hedging;
- the pavilion appeared to be compliant with current criteria in terms of size and the accommodation for match officials. However, as the pavilion had a separate changing area and shower facilities it would not meet the ground criteria. To make it Intermediate League compliant, it would be necessary to restrict the use of the pavilion to two teams, one team would use block 1-3 and the other block 4-6, during Intermediate League games;
- Strangford Avenue was currently booked on Saturdays by the South Belfast League and Belfast and District League. Both of those leagues would be displaced from this facility on those occasions when Crumlin Star would be playing. There had been no discussion with either of those Leagues to date;

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

- the Intermediate Ground Criteria required dug outs; and
- an estimated cost for the works would be in the region of £50,000;

The Assistant Director also asked the Members to note that officers had met with representatives from the IFA Intermediate Committee. She reported that the Chairman of the Committee had advised that there was an ongoing review of ground criteria at an intermediate level. The Committee noted that the final report on the review was not expected until the end of 2017 and it was anticipated that it would make changes to the existing grounds criteria. She continued that the Chairman had also advised that until the report was completed it would be unlikely that the Committee would approve works to bring a new pitch up to the existing standards.

A Member referred to the potential relocation of the fence at Olympia to the Strangford Avenue Playing Fields in order to reduce costs and requested that a breakdown of the estimated cost for the works be submitted to the next meeting. He reiterated that, owing to the lack of its own facilities and the lack of other suitable alternatives, the club was currently playing its home matches at Larne and he urged the officers to try and progress this request as soon as possible.

The Assistant Director confirmed that, as stated in the report, the salvage and relocation of the fence would be possible and she agreed to investigate further the costs for the next meeting. However, she highlighted that there was still many issues to be resolved, not least, the review being undertaken by the IFA Intermediate Committee and the Council's consideration of this in terms of its policy position.

Following discussion, the Committee stated that it felt it might be beneficial, at this stage, to invite a representative from the IFA Intermediate Committee to a future meeting, to enable the Members to discuss the review and the potential revised standards.

The Committee:

- noted that, whilst it appeared that technically the facility could be brought up to an existing intermediate ground standard, there remained a number of issues around funding, planning (including potential local opposition), and the displacement of existing users;
- agreed, given that the Irish Football Association (IFA) was currently undertaking a review of Intermediate League Ground Criteria, which would likely result in revised standards, that representatives from the IFA be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss the proposed changes; and
- agreed that a further report be submitted to the February meeting which would include more detail in respect of the estimated £50,000 cost of the required works to bring the facility up to intermediate standard, and also include specific detail in respect of the potential relocation of the fence at Olympia to the Strangford Avenue Playing Fields and the anticipated costs.

Community Leases

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services explained that in cases where the Council leased a land or property asset to a community/third sector organisation a

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

rent would be payable to the Council, in line with the provisions as set out in the various leases, and in accordance with the Council's statutory requirements in relation to disposal (including leasing) under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 96.

He continued that, at the Community and Recreation Sub Committee meeting of 7th March 2006, which had subsequently been ratified at the Council meeting of 12th May 2006, it had been agreed that the six independently managed community centres would be paid their allocated grant payment net of rent. In those instances a rental value would still be assessed, as provided for in accordance with the lease provisions, and added to the overall grant amount but the actual amount paid out would be net of rent. He reported that the independently managed community centres included:

- Shaftesbury Community Centre;
- Grosvenor Community Centre;
- Ballymacarrett Community Centre;
- Carrickhill Community Centre;
- Denmark Street Community Centre;
- Percy Street; and
- An Munia Tober in respect of a facility at Glen Road (this had been agreed at a later date).

The Director advised that, in order to try and simplify the current arrangements, it was proposed that, where appropriate, all community/third sector groups, both present and future, which were in receipt of Community Services Revenue or equivalent Grant Aid and had a lease agreement with the Council for either land or buildings, should be paid the grant net of rent in those instances where the grant aid was in excess of the rent. He also reminded the Committee that a Community Asset Transfer Policy was currently being progressed by the Council, therefore, the arrangements might be subject to change.

He reported that, in addition to the current independently managed centres, it was proposed that a similar arrangement would be put in place in respect of leases held by the following groups:

- Lower Old Park Community Association;
- Finvoy Street – Walkway Community Association; and
- Whitecity site – Whitecity Community Development Association.

The Committee agreed that, in order to simplify the different lease arrangements, all those groups which were in receipt of Community Buildings Revenue grant, as part of the Community Development Grant Programme, and which had a lease for Belfast City Council land or buildings, would be paid their revenue grant net of rent.

New Whiterock Play Park – proposed naming process of the new play park

The Assistant Director reminded the Committee that the Whiterock Community Corridor capital project had been agreed as a project on the Council's Capital Programme by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting held on 22nd November

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

2013. She advised that the aim of the project had been to redevelop the 0.7 acre vacant site at Whiterock Close for the provision of facilities for the local community.

She advised that, to date, a new play park, a multi-use games area (MUGA) and a newly landscaped open space with gardens, seating, footpaths and lighting had been completed. The project had been developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders, including local community representatives and residents.

The officer reminded the Committee that, at its meeting in August 2008, the former Parks and Leisure Committee had agreed to a policy framework for managing requests to (re) name parks and leisure facilities. She advised that the proposed consultative approach would be delivered in line with the policy, with the intention that the name proposed for the play park would be assessed against the agreed criteria set out within it.

The Assistant Director outlined the process to name the new play park. She explained that the suggested naming proposal recommended a four week consultation period, during which local schools would be asked to submit suitable name suggestions. The responses would then be assessed by a panel of judges who would shortlist the submissions down to three. The public would then be asked to vote for their favourite between 12th January and 1st February.

The Members noted that the name proposals for the play park would be determined by the majority votes for each, with an update report being submitted to the People and Communities Committee at a future meeting for its consideration within the context of the Belfast City Council Naming Policy.

The Committee agreed to the naming process for the new play Park at Whiterock Close.

Environment

Comber Greenway

The Committee was advised that officers wished to seek a Committee position in regard to the notice of motion which had been raised at the Council meeting on 1st November 2016. The Committee was reminded that it had been proposed that the Council would work collectively with the Department of Infrastructure (DoI) to develop a strategic political and costed plan for the Comber Greenway on part of the recently launched Strategic plan for Greenways within Northern Ireland.

The Assistant Director explained that the Comber Greenway covered three Council areas: Ards and North Down Borough Council; Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council; and Belfast City Council. She reported that, whilst the DoI was responsible for the Greenway, the three Councils' did provide assistance, which was essential in order to maximise the valuable benefits of the resource.

In order to progress the motion, the Committee:

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

- agreed that Belfast City Council officers would request to meet with the Department of Infrastructure (DoI) officials to try and establish the Department's commitment to the Comber Greenway within its strategy;
- agreed that, if the approach was positive, officers would aim to create a Steering Group with the DoI and the other relevant Councils. Should the other Councils not be interested then the Steering Group would focus on the Belfast section of the Greenway only;
- noted that the aim of the Steering Group would be to develop a costed plan for the Comber Greenway that would identify contributions and responsibilities; and
- noted that if the DoI did not engage positively then the motion would need to be reconsidered;
- agreed that the Committee would receive an update report on the progress in due course.

NIEA Municipal Waste Statistics Annual Report 2015/16

(Mr. T. Walker, Head of Waste Management, attended in connection with this item and also for the following item: Supplementary Waste Storage Guidelines for Houses and Apartments in Belfast.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report provides an overview of the NI Environment Agency (NIEA), Northern Ireland Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste Management Statistics, Annual Report 2015/16.

1.2 The report contains the validated data on Belfast's recycling rate and its performance in meeting the legislative obligations contained within the NI Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS), which measures the diversion of biodegradable (primarily food & garden waste) waste from landfill.

1.3 These figures are used to determine the progress of NI in relation to meeting the legal requirements outlined in the Waste Framework Directive (i.e. 50% household recycling rate by 2020) and also compliance with the Landfill Directive.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to;

- **Note the contents of the report.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 Key Issues

Recycling Rate – Members may recall that at the Committee meeting of 9 June 2015, during discussions on the Interim Waste Plan 15/16, it was noted that the recycling rate was projected to decrease from 44% (2014/15) to 40%. Over the 2015/16 financial year, the total amount of household waste collected was around 142,000 tonnes with 57,000 tonnes being recycled or composted. This resulted in a final validated recycling rate of 40%, in line with projections. The comparative performance of Belfast is displayed in Figure 1.

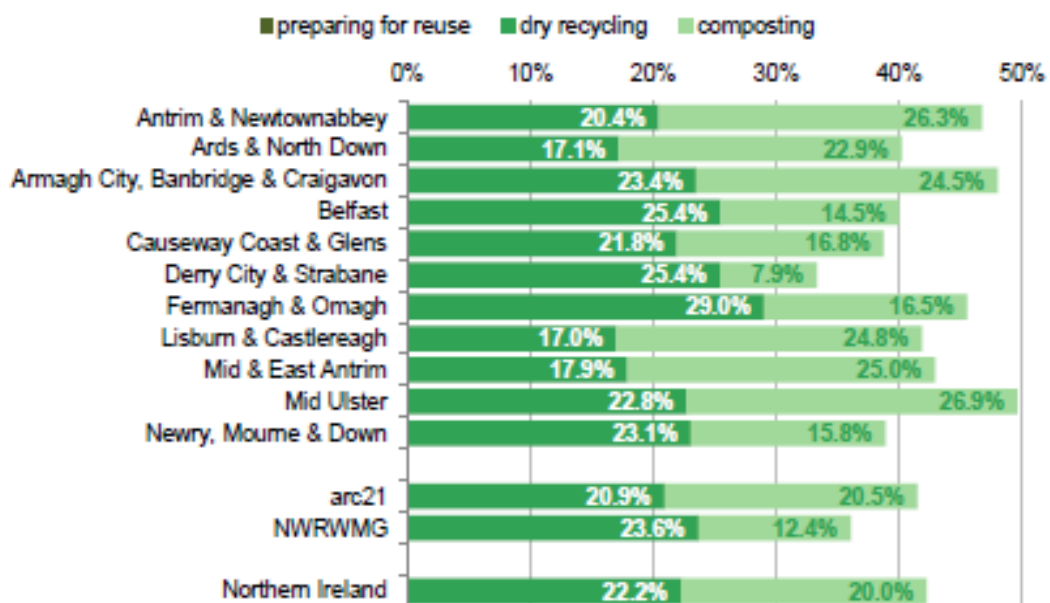


Fig 1: Comparative household waste recycling rate 2015/16

- 3.2 The decline in the Council’s recycling rate is primarily due to a number of factors, including continued growth in the amount of waste generated, the impact of additional waste tonnages from households which transferred under local government reform (LGR), and ongoing challenges within the local market place.
- 3.3 Post the Great Recession, the five years leading up to 2013/14, councils across NI witnessed a 15% reduction in the amount of waste collected. Since then, this trend has reversed with waste rebounding by 6% in three years. These increasing volumes of waste bring ongoing financial challenges and, in some instances, neighbouring councils have changed their operating practices to mitigate this impact. This has affected the volume and types of waste being deposited at Household Recycling Centres (HRCs) in particular, including Belfast’s, and has also increased waste tourism between councils.

- 3.4 As part of the LGR process around 21,000 households transferred to Belfast. In December 2016, the 2015/16 year's waste data was released which showed that, despite the positive work of the Waste Education team, several of these new neighbourhoods were not participating in the kerbside recycling schemes to their full potential.
- 3.5 This issue has also been affected by events in the local marketplace. It has been noted that this is of limited size and that it potentially lacks maturity, as well as having a patchy record with criminality. The absence of large, multi-national waste management companies such as Veolia, Biffa, Viridor, Suez/Sita, FCC &c. places a heavy reliance on relatively small companies, some with limited track records or expertise in meeting the growing regulatory requirements associated with the waste industry.
- 3.6 A further factor contributing to the Council's lower recycling rate is the level of contamination being recorded in the dry recycling bins. This has increased from around 10% in 2012/13 to current levels of 13%. This may have occurred due to better recording practices, higher quality standards being required by reprocessors and householders placing incorrect materials in their recycling bins. The contaminated material results in loads being rejected and has a negative impact on the quality of the final material, both of which negatively affect the revenue the Council receives for the sale of these materials. By way of example, based on current levels of contamination, the cost of processing the Council's dry recyclables waste is around £350,000 per annum. If the level of contamination across the arc21 group was reduced to below 5%, the Council would receive an income of approximately £800,000 – a spread of around £1.15 million. Within arc21, an internal Contamination Working Group has been formed to tackle this issue and a report will be presented to Committee in due course outlining methods to address this issue.
- 3.7 Members will be aware that the Council is presently developing its next strategic waste plan (the Waste Agenda) to improve management of the challenges outlined above while supporting a major shift in emphasis towards jobs and delivering a value for money service – a three pronged approach; environmental, financial and societal benefits which will deliver a Circular Economy for Belfast. This waste plan will be presented for Members' consideration shortly.
- 3.8 *NILAS* - The Landfill Allowance Scheme (NI) Regulations 2004 (as amended) place a statutory responsibility on councils, in

each scheme year, to landfill no more than the quantity of biodegradable municipal waste for which they have allowances. In order to ensure compliance with these targets, the amount of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill is monitored. This indicator is also used to monitor performance under the Local Government (Performance Indicators & Standards) Order (NI) 2015.

- 3.9 Under the NI Landfill Allowance Scheme (NILAS) regulations councils have been allocated a number of allowances (each allowance represents 1 tonne of BLACMW) for each year until 2019/20. In 2015/16, the Council sent 45,200 tonnes of biodegradable waste to landfill, using up around 91% of its annual allowance.

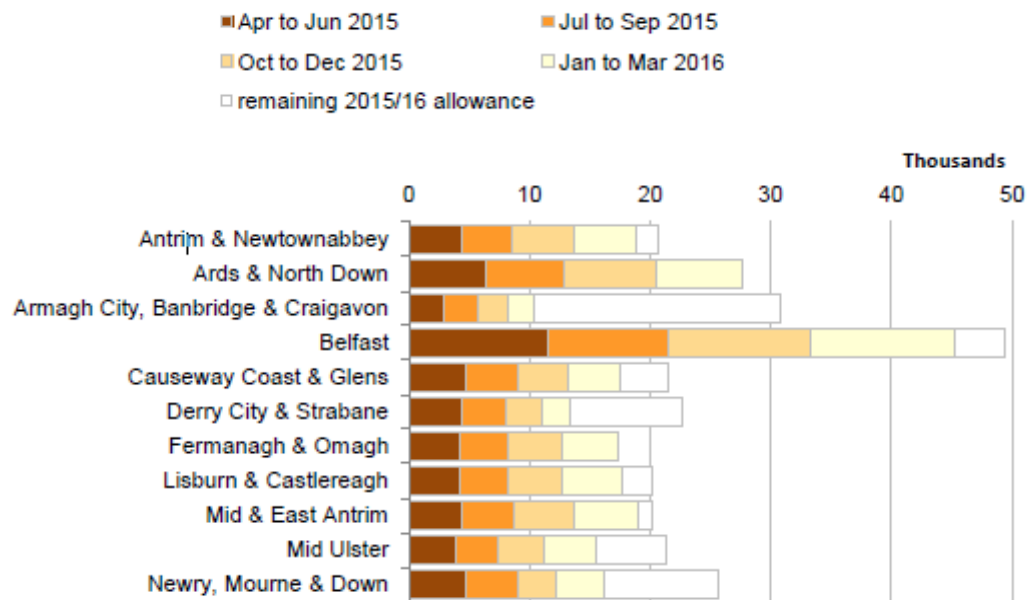


Fig 2 : NILAS Compliance

- 3.10 The Council met its NILAS obligations firstly by diverting waste to recycling or composting processors through its kerbside collection schemes and network of recycling centres and bring banks, and secondly by sending a proportion of the residual waste to a contractor for treatment which resulted in a relatively small element being recycled and a significantly greater proportion of this waste being made into a Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) for energy recovery in Europe. Following the EU referendum in June 2016, the future market for this is currently uncertain.
- 3.11 *Household Waste Generated* - There are two key performance indicators which look at household waste arisings (i) per capita and (ii) per household. It is noteworthy that the Council

generated the smallest amount of household waste per person at 418 kg and also generated the smallest quantity of household waste per household at 0.97 tonnes per household in 2015/16. This is compared with an NI average of 465 kg of household waste collected per capita and 1.18 tonnes per household.

3.12 Financial & Resource Implications

There are no finance or resource issues associated with this report.

3.13 Equality or Good Relations Implications

There are no relevant equality and good relations implications associated with this report.”

Following a query regarding the decrease in recycling figures, the Head of Waste Management confirmed that contamination of waste was increasing and he urged the Members to work with their constituents in order to widen their awareness of what materials could be recycled. He also reported that the NIEA was now applying stricter quality control checks and that re-processors were, likewise, increasingly particular regarding contamination levels for recycled waste which meant that Councils' recycling rates were being affected, which also impacted upon achievement of targets.

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services advised that officers were currently working on finalising the Council's Waste Agenda which would set out the Council's strategy for the next 10 years. He stated that this was an extremely important document which aimed to address the many current issues around waste disposal and he reported that a copy of this would be submitted to the Committee in the near future for its consideration.

Following discussion the Committee:

- noted that the Council's Waste Agenda (ten year plan) would be submitted to a future meeting and agreed that a biannual waste statistics report would now be submitted to the Committee; and
- agreed that a site visit would be arranged for the Members to visit some of the Council's waste and recycling facilities in April 2017.

Supplementary Waste Storage Guidelines for Houses and Apartments in Belfast

The Head of Waste Management reported that under the Belfast Agenda the City of Belfast was seeking to grow by 70,000 population by 2035. He reported that in order to facilitate such an increase the Council needed to give consideration to waste storage throughout the City.

The officer reported that, in February 2013, the Council's Health and Environmental Services Section had approved the publication of supplementary guidance to help architects and developers apply the Northern Ireland guidance in line with the

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

specific collection schemes operating in Belfast. He advised that this reference document had helped balance the workload of staff with Waste Management, Building Control and the Planning Service, while familiarising the construction industry with the Council's requirements and expectations. The officer continued that, with changing times, and in light of experiences using the earlier supplementary guidance, the above services had identified a number of potential amendments/improvements which had subsequently been incorporated into an updated version of the document and he drew the Members' attention to some of these as follows:

1. the content had been comprehensively revised and updated to reflect changes which had occurred (for example, the implementation of Local Government Reform and the adoption of 180-litre wheeled bins as standard for the collection of general waste) and learning which had been gained (for example, the advantages of individual recycling bins over communal recycling bins) since the original publication;
2. the requirements in terms of the proportions of general waste and recycling capacity were adjusted, in light of experience, to be more realistic while still firmly biased towards recycling; and
3. the format had been revised to be clearer and simpler.

The Committee approved:

- the revised methodology to be applied by the Council to calculate the proportions of residual, dry recyclable and food waste which would be incorporated into developments where communal waste containers would be used;
- the publication of the revised information, in the form of a comprehensively updated "*supplementary guidance*" document, which would be used in Belfast in conjunction with the NI guidance for builders, developers and architects; and
- agreed that a copy of this report be submitted to a future meeting of the Planning Committee for information purposes.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Risk Update

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services provided the Committee with an update on the progress being made to manage the corporate risks.

He reminded the Committee that a review of the corporate risk register and related processes had been undertaken during 2015-2016 and this had included a review and re-score of all the corporate risks, including target risk scores. For each corporate risk a 'risk information form' had been produced which had detailed relevant controls, proposed actions (including timescales) and responsible officers. He reported that it had also been agreed that management would update the relevant committee on the progress being made to manage the key risks.

He advised the Committee that the Corporate Management Team had reviewed and, where appropriate, had updated the assessment of the corporate risk and he drew

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

the Members' attention to the corporate risk map which identified the progress that had been made to manage the corporate risks down to an acceptable level.

The Committee was advised that the risks of particular relevance to the People and Communities Committee were as follows:

- GLL – inability to effectively manage the leisure contract and relationships between BCC, Active Belfast Limited and the Greenwich Leisure Limited - (GLL) to ensure that the key outcomes were achieved;
- Waste Management - failure to manage the City's waste against targets in an affordable manner; and
- Safeguard all ages – failure to safeguard children and adults from the risk of harm caused by abuse, exploitation and neglect when using Council facilities/attending Council events/or receiving Council services.

He outlined to the Members that management had prepared progress update reports on each of these corporate risks.

Following a query regarding the monitoring processes for GLL, the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services confirmed that GLL reported regularly to the Active Belfast Limited Board and that the minutes of those meetings were tabled at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for noting. He also advised that on the basis of the ongoing operation of controls and following implementation of the agreed actions, the rating for the GLL risk had reduced and it had now reached its target risk rating. The Director advised that the risk would continue to be monitored through the corporate risk management process and he agreed to update the Committee on matters regarding GLL which were of direct relevance to the People and Communities Committee.

The Committee:

- noted the progress that had been made to date to manage the corporate risks on GLL, Waste Management and Safeguarding and the proposed six monthly process for reporting; and
- agreed that the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services would update the Committee on matters regarding GLL which were of direct relevance to the People and Communities Committee.

Letter of Variance – Front Line Advice Services

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to invite members to note the correspondence received from The Department for Communities (DfC) on the 16th December with regard to

further additional funding for Frontline Advice Services and to ask members to agreed to accept the subsequent offer of additional funds.

1.2 Summary of main issues:

For members to agree to accept the offer of additional in-year funding of £54,320.00 from DfC. Officers recommend that the additional funding will be allocated to each of the 5 generalist advice consortia based on council's agreed existing allocation model. To support the allocation, each consortium will be required to submit programme proposals in line with the programme objectives for assessment and approval by officers.

1.3 In light of the request for continued financial support from the Belfast Advice Group, officers contacted DfC officials to determine if this additional in-year funding could be used to extend the Citywide Tribunal Service contract. Officials have responded noting this is not permissible, rather the additional offer is conditional on funds being spent on support functions and should be allocated across frontline advice providers in the Belfast area to allow them to purchase support type functions.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Committee is asked to:

- i. accept the offer of additional in-year funding under the Community Support Programme (CSP) from the DfC detailed the Letter of Variance.
- ii. consider and agree a mechanism to distribute this additional grant across the five advice consortia based on the agreed allocation model and in line with contract conditions.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Letter of Offer

Correspondence was received on 16 December from the Department for Communities offering further additional in-year funding under the Community Support Programme for Frontline Advice Services. The letter advises that the Voluntary & Community Unit has secured regional funding of £160k with Belfast's allocation being £54,320 which is conditional on spend in advance of 31 March 2017.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

3.2 The funding is ring-fenced for the delivery of any or all of the objectives as part of the LOO. This funding is to enable frontline advice organisations to secure support functions. The funding is in-year and does not require any match funding from BCC.

3.3 Proposed Model of Funding

Given the time-frame for spend, and the established precedent for front line generalist advice support, officers recommend that this funding is administered using the same model applied in relation to the additional funding received for the Welfare Reform Readiness Programme agreed by committee in October.

The table below details the current 2016/17 grant award for each consortium, the previous agreed uplift and this proposed additional grant uplift based on Council's existing allocation model. The marginal percentage anomaly has been equally spread across neighbourhood consortia to maximise the available budget.

3.4

Area	Area Alloc. %	2016/17 Generalist Advice grant award	Letter of Variance	
			Additional allocation: Welfare Reform Readiness & Training	Additional allocation: Frontline Advice Services
Central	10.00	£ 82,588.50	£26,983.07	£5,447.21
East	14.41	£134,593.53	£38,849.37	£7,842.72
North	24.71	£241,153.43	£66,564.33	£13,437.68.
South	15.37	£143,538.48	£41,432.51	£8,364.19
West	35.37	£329,891.59	£95,247.97	£19,228.19
Total	99.86	£931,765.53	£269,077.26	£54,320.00

3.5 If this approach is agreeable, each consortium will be required to submit proposals outlining how they intend to meet the programme objectives.

3.6 Following Committee decision, officers will initiate pre-contract discussions with organisations to discuss the

proposed 2016/17 grant revision and to outline any specific conditions attached to the funding offer. Officers will assess and approve individual submissions. Further conditions may be attached to letters of offer as deemed necessary.

Members should note that all funding agreements will continue to be subject to receipt of satisfactory monitoring reports.

4.0 Financial & Resource Implications

4.1 Financial:

Any additional funding contracts issued will be wholly dependent upon additional income from the Department for Community. There is no requirement for BCC match funds.

4.2 Human Resources

Officer assistance and support

4.3 Equality or Good Relations Implications

None.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Operational Issues

Live Here Love Here

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 inform Members on the progress of the Live Here Love Here Campaign (LHLH) to date and to propose further support for the campaign.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to

- (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 2017/18 at a maximum level of £41,000 following a review of the project at this year-end. This will

ensure that the campaign still meets with the aims of the Belfast Agenda. Funding will also be dependent on other contributors maintaining funding at levels which make the programme viable.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

3.1 At a meeting of the Health and Environmental Services Committee on 6th February 2013, a report was considered relating to the Council committing funding to the proposed Civic Pride Programme. Committee agreed to commit £41,000 of the Council's existing anti-litter campaign budget to the project for 3 years, subject to appropriate funding from other agencies. On 7th August 2013 the Committee was updated and advised that the commencement of the project was delayed. Committee agreed that the Council would continue support the campaign for 2014/15 and 2015/16. On 8th December 2015, the People and Communities Committee agreed that Council's funding for the project would continue for the further year 2016/2017.

3.2 The 'Civic Pride Programme' has subsequently been re-branded as 'Live Here Love Here' and has been developed by a partnership of organisations including Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful (formally Tidy Northern Ireland), the Department of Agriculture, Environment, and Rural Affairs Tourism Northern Ireland and local Councils. In the current third year of the project, additional supporters, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Choice Housing have come on board. In year 3 of the campaign (2016/17), 7 councils supported the programme:

- Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council
- Ards and North Down Borough Council
- Belfast City Council
- Derry and Strabane District Council
- Fermanagh and Omagh District Council
- Mid and East Antrim Borough Council
- Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

3.3 The programme is made up of three elements; a media campaign, a volunteering support programme and a small grants scheme. The aims of the LHLH programme are:

- To create a movement in the Northern Ireland community focused around the concept of Civic Pride;

- To effect behavioural change in the public and business community through the promotion of Civic Pride;
 - To improve the quality of the built and natural environments in Northern Ireland;
 - To continuously improve street and beach cleanliness in Northern Ireland;
 - To promote and support local volunteers and volunteer networks to lead Civic Pride initiatives in their local areas;
 - To increase opportunities for volunteering in Civic Pride Initiatives;
 - To encouraging a sense of 'active communities'/local activism in Northern Ireland;
 - To create a sense of ownership among local communities and individuals in waste reduction, waste management and recycling, use of green space;
 - To promote public health through increased community engagement and community involvement in local and regional communities; and
 - To encourage tourism through increasing the aesthetic appeal of the Northern Ireland landscape.
- 3.4 The LHLH Programme is managed by Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful. The small grants scheme was launched in September 2014 and the media campaign commenced in January 2015.
- 3.5 As well as an anti-littering message, the campaign also aims to improve the local environment by encouraging people to take action in their local communities through volunteering activities. The campaign consisted of local outdoor, bus and press advertising as well as Northern Ireland wide TV advertising and digital activity. within the participating Council areas
- 3.6 There are advantages to the Council in contributing to a collaborative approach to behaviour change campaigns. Previously the Council has developed and paid for its own TV Ad campaign but as the Ads were shown regionally all council areas received the benefit. In this collaborative approach, funding for the campaign is also being provided by other councils, DAERA and other agencies. In addition, through the small grants scheme, community and other groups within Belfast have benefited directly with £20,500 allocated to Belfast groups in 2015/16. This year, 2016/17, £10,500 has been allocated to Belfast groups to date with another £10,000 to be allocated in the second tranche in December. An

additional £4,900 has been allocated to Choice Housing projects in the Belfast area this year.

3.7 Millward Brown Ulster was commissioned in 2015 to undertake quantitative research into the effectiveness of the small grant scheme. There was unanimous agreement across all groups interviewed that the funded projects helped to instil a feeling of civic pride among local people. These projects helped to make positive changes in the areas and in turn encouraged people to be more aware of the environment around them and to take pride and responsibility in their local areas.

3.8 The Live Here Love Here Campaign has achieved good progress towards its targets

- Awareness - Community engagement and involvement – to have 40% brand awareness of the Live Here Love Here programme across Northern Ireland.

The most recent results of the market research being carried out by Millward Brown to measure key impacts of Live Here Love Here showed up to 19% brand awareness of the Live Here Love Here programme has been achieved in participating areas. On reflection this was an ambitious target given the level of funding for the campaign which was Northern Ireland wide, notwithstanding this, it is likely that the brand awareness will increase given that the campaign is still ongoing and is mid through the 2016/17 media plan.

- To have cleaner streets – achieve a reduction in the Litter Pollution Index of three % points by the end of year 3.

The annual Litter Pollution Index (LPI) measurements available since campaign media activity first commenced showed a reduction in the Litter Pollution Index of five points from 17 to 12, between 2014 and 2015.

- Number of volunteers – e.g. to engage 50,000 volunteers in the Live Here Love Here programme within 3 years.

The total number of volunteers engaged has increased to 107, 616 to date

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

Year 2 2015/16; the total funding was £238,000. With engaging new partners Year 3 2016/17; Total funding is £325,000

Local Councils' Support	£170,000
Tourism Northern Ireland	£20,000
DAERA - Grant Funding	£70,000 +
additional in year funding	£23,000
Choice Housing	£22,000
Northern Ireland Housing Executive	£20,000
Total	£325,000

3.9 Funding for 17/18 (c. £70,000) has been confirmed from DAERA. Continuation of funding for 17/18 has also been confirmed from Choice Housing (£22,000) and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (£20,000). In addition, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful have received positive indications from a number of partners that they intend to support Live Here Love Here next year.

3.10 It is recommended that the council supports funding for an additional year 2017/18 at £41,000 as the project continues to meet the priorities and aims of the Council as outlined in the Belfast Agenda. This will also be on the proviso that all other contributors continue to fund the project to a level which makes the project viable.

3.11 Financial & Resource Implications

The cost of the council's contribution of £41,000 would be met from within the existing Cleansing Services anti-litter campaign budget for 2017/18, revenue estimates permitting; there would be no additional resource implications to the council subject to the agreement of the revenue estimates.

3.12 Equality or Good Relations Implications

There are no equality or good relations implications in this report."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Request for Approval of the World Celtic Spey Casting event at the Waterworks Park

The Assistant Director advised that a request had been received from the Families at the Waterworks Fishing Club to support the second year of the Celtic World Spey Casting Invitational Challenge Event at the Waterworks Park. She advised that the committee members at the club had already applied for Belfast City Council Sports Event Grant Funding towards the event, therefore, the People and Communities Committee was being asked to consider costs which would not be eligible through the Sports Event Belfast City Council Grant.

Several Members welcomed the return of this successful event to the City and praised the work of the Families at the Waterworks Fishing Club. A Member highlighted that the event would bring world class fishermen from all over the globe to Belfast, with over fifty competitors and 250 spectators estimated daily.

The Committee noted that the event would greatly enhance cross community relations and promote the Waterworks Park as a shared space.

The Committee agreed:

1. to host the event on 19th - 21st May 2017 at the Waterworks Park, subject to completion of the appropriate Event Management Plans and on the condition that the Event Organisers meet all statutory requirements, including Public Liability Insurance and provide relevant Health and Safety documentation and Risk Assessments; and
2. to provide additional funding up to £7,500 to host the event, to assist with the following:
 - £2,000 towards medals, gifts and trophies;
 - £2,000 towards the cost of daily lunches and hosting a reception at the Belfast Castle;
 - £1,000 for the transport of International Competitors;
 - £1,000 for bouncy castles for family engagement;
 - £500 for toilet hire; and
 - £1,000 for a compere for both the event and the competition.

World Health Organisation – Conference

The Assistant Director informed the Committee that the World Health Organisation (WHO) would be holding its annual Conference and Exhibition in Pécs, Hungary from 1st until 3rd March 2017. She advised that the estimated rate for attending the conference was £600 and confirmed that the cost could be met from within the existing revenue estimates.

The Committee was advised that the conference would be strategic and visionary in nature, in preparation for the next phase of Healthy Cities and that it would include a strong political vision, which would be presented by the newly formed Political Vision Group with political participation from the participating cities and networks.

**People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 10th January, 2017**

The Committee granted authority for the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson (or their nominees), to attend the annual World Health Organisation Healthy Cities Conference, in Pécs, Hungary in March 2017.

Chairperson

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People and Communities Committee

Tuesday, 24th January, 2017

SPECIAL MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Garrett (Chairperson);
Alderman Rodgers; and
Councillors Austin, Beattie, Copeland, Heading,
Jones, Lyons, McCabe, Newton and O'Neill.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. R. Crozier, Assistant Director;
Mrs. S. Toland, Assistant Director; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Aldermen McCoubrey, McKee and Sandford and Councillor Milne.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Restricted Item

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.

Cash Limits 2017/18

The Director of Finance and Resources presented the Members with the proposed Cash Limit for the People and Communities Committee for the year 2017/18, as recommended by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 20th January, 2017.

He outlined to the Members the next steps in the rate setting process which would lead to the district rate being set by the Council at its meeting on 1st February.

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting held on 6th December, a proposal had been agreed to reduce the 3G pitch hourly rate hire charges by 25%. The Director of Finance informed the Committee that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 20th January, had agreed not to fund the loss of £17,500 income from the district rate and had also agreed that the matter would be referred back

**Special People and Communities Committee,
Tuesday, 24th January, 2017**

to the People and Communities Committee for its consideration in the context of the 2017/18 committee cash limit.

A supplementary report from the Director of City and Neighbourhood Services was then tabled at the meeting for the Members consideration which included 3 cost saving options.

The Members considered the 3 options and following detailed consideration it was

Moved by Councillor Jones,
Seconded by Councillor Beattie,

That the required saving of £17,500 be made by making pro rata savings from the following projects:

- a reduction in the partnership funding to Heathy Cities by £8,290;
- a reduction in the partnership funding to Keep NI Beautiful for Eco-Schools by £1,842; and
- a reduction in the programme funding to the Park Life Scheme by £7,368.

On a vote by a show of hands, 8 Members voted for the proposal and 3 against and it was declared carried.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. agreed that the report would not be subject to call-in, given that it would cause an unreasonable delay and would be prejudicial to both the Council and the public's interests in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2017;
2. agreed that a cash limit of £76,242,845 be set for the People and Communities Committee, for the year 2017/2018, with the individual service cash limits detailed in the report;
3. agreed that the required saving of £17,500 to fund the reduction of the 3G hourly hire charges pitch would be made by a reduction in partnership and programme funding to the Healthy Cities (£8,290); Keep NI Beautiful for Eco-Schools (£1,842); and the Park Life Scheme (£7,368); and
4. noted the next steps in the rate setting process.

Chairperson

City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Wednesday, 11th January, 2017

MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Graham (Chairperson);
Aldermen Haire, McGimpsey, L. Patterson and Spence; and
Councillors Beattie, Dorrian, Dudgeon,
Hargey, Howard, Johnston, Kyle, Magee,
McAteer, McDonough-Brown, Mullan,
O'Hara and Walsh.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. D. Durkan, Director of Development;
Ms. N. Gallagher, Director of City Centre Development;
Mr. N. Grimshaw, Director of City and
Neighbourhood Services; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies for inability to attend were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 7th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd January.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Dudgeon declared an interest in the Item "Request to present to Committee – Belfast City Centre Management" in that, as a representative of the Council, he was a Board Member.

Presentation

Cyber

The Chairperson welcomed Mr. Stephen Wray, Deloitte and Director of Cyber, and Mr. David Crozier, Head of Strategic Partnerships and Engagement in the Electronics, Communications and Information Technology (ECIT) institute at Queen's University, to the meeting.

The Director of Cyber provided the Committee with an overview of what cyber security was and why it was important in terms of city growth. He advised the Committee that Belfast had emerged as a global hub for cyber security and highlighted that the Centre for Secure Information Technologies (CSIT) at Queen's University was the largest cyber

**Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 11th January, 2017**

security centre in Europe and that it was recognised by Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ) as academic centre of excellence.

He outlined to the Members that, globally, cyber security was a tremendous growth area and that there was a shortage of talent, with 1million open job roles currently in the field, with an average salary of £40,000. The Members were advised that Belfast was the number one in the world for USA Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in cyber security, with 1,200 new jobs having been created here in recent years by companies including IBM, AlertLogic, Proofpoint, Whitehat, Rapid7 and BlackDuck. The Committee was advised that both Scotland and Ireland had strategies on cyber security and that, given Northern Ireland had proven itself to have excelled in the subject, it was therefore important to continue to build on that momentum. Mr. Wray advised the Committee that the Department of the Economy (DoE) had highlighted cyber security as a key priority to drive economic growth in Northern Ireland.

The representatives provided the Members with a number of high profile examples where companies, such as TalkTalk and the NHS, had been hacked and outlined the hassle and data breaches which were caused. In response to a Member's question regarding companies' responsibilities in protecting personal data, Mr. Wray advised the Committee that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) would come into force in May 2018. He outlined that GDPR were EU privacy and data protection compliance requirements which would require all companies holding personal consumer data to have a certain level of security and would impose fines on companies which did not. He highlighted that this would come into force before the earliest possible Brexit, so UK companies would have to comply with the legislation.

In response to a further Member's question in relation to whether training on early digital safety should be incorporated into the early years curricula, Mr. Crozier advised the Members that he sat on a subject advisory panel for a forthcoming 'digital technology' GCSE. He advised the Members that he felt there was always more to do but that Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) were key and it was promising that Northern Ireland had the best results for maths at a primary level in Europe.

After further discussion, the Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation and they retired from the meeting.

Restricted Items

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

Interactive 3D City Model

The Director of City Centre Development reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 14th September, 2016, it had agreed that aerial photography be carried out for the creation of a 3D model of the city. She advised the Committee that the necessary flights and photography had now been undertaken and outlined that she was seeking Committee permission to engage with VuCity to develop the next stages of a 3D model

**Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 11th January, 2017**

of Belfast. The Members were advised that the next stage of work would include the modelling of the areas which had been photographed, processing and software development, software updates and ongoing support.

In response to a Member's question, the Committee noted that this stage of work would cost approximately £36,000.

After discussion, the Committee:

- noted that the necessary flights / photography had been successfully undertaken;
- agreed that work would commence on the next stages, namely:
 - modelling of areas photographed at a cost of approximately £500 per square mile: City Core, City Airport, Titanic Quarter, North Foreshore;
 - processing and Software development;
 - software and modelling updates;
 - ongoing support and maintenance;
- agreed that an appropriate partnership with VuCity be established with a suitable operating model to develop the next stages of the 3D Model; and
- agreed that the VuCity demonstration video would be made available to the Planning Committee at a future meeting.

Potential Land Acquisition

The Committee noted and endorsed the decision taken by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, that the Council would pursue the potential acquisition of Commission House, on the basis of the Land and Property Services valuation, but subject to the Council obtaining its own independent valuation and undertaking other due diligence, with a further report to be submitted to the Committee prior to any final decisions.

Zoo Report

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services provided the Committee with an overview of the recommendations which had been made by the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) in relation to the Belfast Zoo.

He outlined to the Members the Action Plan which had been created to execute the recommendations and advised the Committee that EAZA had stated that it was content to receive updates on the progress which had been made and that it did not feel that a follow up visit was required.

After discussion, the Committee:

- noted that an acting Zoo Manager had been appointed;
- noted the progress with the actions on the issues which had been raised by EAZA; and

**Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 11th January, 2017**

- agreed to receive updates on the progress of the action plan.

Request to Present to Committee

Belfast City Centre Management

The Committee agreed to accede to a request from Belfast City Centre Management to present at the Committee meeting on 8th March, 2017.

Castlebrook Investments

The Committee agreed to receive a presentation from Castlebrook Investments at a future meeting in relation to the development of the former Royal Exchange site.

Positioning Belfast to Compete

Routes Conference 2017

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the upcoming business tourism event taking place in Belfast in April 2017, the annual Routes Europe Conference.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Note the update on the Routes Europe Conference which will take place in Belfast for the first time on 23-25 April 2017.**

3.0 Main report

3.1 In October 2016, the Council agreed to commit £100,000 to support the costs of hosting the 2017 Routes Europe event at Belfast Waterfront. Routes Europe have indicated that the benefits to a city hosting the event in terms of positive PR coverage, potential new airline routes announcements and additional leisure/business tourism visitors, could be in the region of more than £50million. This is based on feedback and measurement of Routes Conferences that have been held in other cities.

3.2 The bid for Belfast involves financial contributions from a range of partners. These include:

**Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 11th January, 2017**

- **Approximately £348,000 agreed by Invest NI. (In addition, they have spent £137,000 securing the Routes Conference for Belfast City)**
 - **Tourism Ireland (TIL) - £20,000**
 - **Tourism NI (TNI) - £165,000**
 - **Visit Belfast - £20,000**
 - **BWUH Ltd - £10,000**
 - **Local airports - approximately £100,000 each**
- 3.3 In addition to these funding contributions, all partners are also making additional contributions in-kind in order to ensure the success of the event.**
- 3.4 Routes Europe is a particularly attractive Conference due to the economic impact that it will have, particularly on potential new air routes. It is the largest regional gathering for all aviation-based companies operating in Europe. This major international event brings together decision makers from airlines, airports and tourism authorities to negotiate and build relationships that will shape the world's future air route networks. Routes events occupy a unique position, both in the field of aviation and as an economic development catalyst. Air transport is one of the means of regional economic development and Routes delivers to the event – and the host city – the key decision makers within the industry.**
- 3.5 Routes Europe is an annual event which takes place in major European cities over a three day period. Following the successful bid by Belfast, the Routes Europe 2017 event will take place in the city on 23-25 April 2017. The delegates are considered to be 'guests' of Routes and therefore of the host city, which will provide Belfast with a rare opportunity to bring influential decision makers into the city, make them welcome, build a relationship with them and seek future partnerships.**
- 3.6 It is estimated that the event will attract around 1,000 delegates representing more than 100 global airlines, airports and tourism promotion agencies. In addition to the significant financial impact of the delegate spend – estimated at around £1.3million – the event presents an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the economic and tourism potential of the city of Belfast to a range of decision-makers, focusing on the key messaging identified within the emerging city narrative whilst showcasing all that is on offer for airlines, tourists, businesses and inward investors. It also provides the City with an opportunity to positively change perceptions about our airports and Belfast as a destination. There is a significant promotional campaign underway for the event at present, and one of the key recent promotional opportunities has been at**

the World Routes conference which took place in Chengdu, China in September 2016.

- 3.7 The main Conference and showcase will take place in the Belfast Waterfront while a welcome reception will be held in Belfast City Hall and a gala networking event in Titanic Belfast. Organisers and the local team are working closely together on a programme of supporting events across the city. This 'Team Belfast' approach has ensured joined-up working with all partners. Research shows that the host city has a significant impact on delegates' overall satisfaction and the Belfast Waterfront will be able to showcase that it can deliver well-organised meetings and a high standard of events in a luxurious, state of the art, riverside location presenting a positive impression of the city.
- 3.8 In addition to the main conference programme, the local planning group is currently looking at animating the city during the event. This may include banners as well as some cultural animation. Tourism NI is also providing four delegate tours and these will be offered as part of a side programme to the main conference.
- 3.9 The Routes Europe Conference has the potential to accelerate air route development. Previous host cities report that they have secured agreement on up to six new routes after holding the event as well as increases in airline operations over subsequent years. Members will be aware that air route connectivity has been identified as one of the most critical elements required to support future tourism and business growth. The Integrated Tourism Strategy noted that limitations in air route connections to key business destinations was one of the most significant challenges to the ambition of doubling the value of tourism. Routes Europe helps support a fundamental part of the business tourism strategy – business and leisure tourism is of key importance in growing the tourism industry and doubling tourism spend by 2020.
- 3.10 The Northern Ireland Executive has invested in a range of incentives to secure key routes from the region's airports. Despite this, there are opportunities for further development – particularly to a number of key European business hubs – and it is considered that this event will be a critical part of work to secure these new routes. Longer-term benefits will also come from the extensive international PR coverage for Belfast that the Conference will generate and this can be used to profile the city as an attractive leisure and business tourism destination and to carry some of the key messages around the business and investment opportunities in the city.

3.11 To ensure the successful delivery of the event and ensure that the City realises the full benefits of hosting such a Conference three working groups have been set up to co-ordinate the event:

- **Marketing/Communications group**
Met 7 November. Working group with Event-ful Event Management company and all stakeholders to get partners up to speed on all aspects of event.
- **Logistics group**
Met 14 November. Working group with Invest NI, Visit Belfast, Event-ful Event Management, Tourism NI, Belfast International Airport, Belfast City Airport and Belfast Waterfront specifically relating to logistics, airport welcome, coach tendering and delegate transport and scheduling.
- **Events group**
Met 15 November. Working group with Invest NI, Visit Belfast, Event-ful Event Management, Tourism NI and Belfast City Council specifically relating to Welcome reception, networking event and animating the city

3.12 These groups will continue to meet in the run-up to the event in order to ensure that all planning details for the event are taken care of and that the City makes the most of this opportunity to showcase Belfast as a successful business and tourism destination. A further progress report on all of this work will be brought to Committee prior to the April 2017 event.

3.13 Financial and Resource Implications

The £100,000 funding allocation has already been approved by the Committee and is built into the 2016/17 budget and Q2 year end forecast.

3.14 Equality or Good Relations Implications

No specific equality or good relations implications.”

The Director of Development confirmed that the full programme for the conference would be circulated to all Members and, in response to a Member’s question, he emphasised that their attendance would be encouraged.

The Committee adopted the recommendations within the report and agreed that a further report be submitted to the Committee in advance of the conference to provide the Members with key information.

Growing Businesses and the Economy

Support for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the proposed direction of travel regarding the Council’s support for Business Start-Up, Business Growth, Job Creation, Skills Development and Investment in order to meet the ambitions set out in the Belfast Agenda.

1.2 The Belfast Agenda has recently been issued for consultation, with ambitious targets to grow the Belfast economy through supporting small businesses, attracting investment, creating jobs and developing skills. Whilst Belfast City Council has been involved in the development and delivery of support services to small businesses for almost 20 years, a significant step-change is now required in the services and programmes provided within the Development Department. The transfer of enterprise powers, alongside the Community Planning powers, provides a clear opportunity for the Council to take a much more significant leadership role in this regard.

1.3 This report sets out the current thinking on significantly enhancing the small business and investment services and aligning this with the planned employability and skills programmes.

1.4 It should be noted that further reports will be brought back to Committee as specific business propositions are developed. However it is vital that there is additional investment in 2017/18 under the Belfast Agenda budget line to enable this preparatory and developmental work to be undertaken.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is asked to:

- **Note and approve the direction of travel for Council support for business Start, business growth, job creation, skills development and Investment, as set out in 3.10-3.18**
- **Agree to receive update reports setting out full details of the new programme activity at a future meeting of the Committee**

- Agree that a tender exercise can be undertaken at this point for a Small Business Procurement Support Programme to begin in 2017/2018.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Belfast Agenda Targets

Members will be aware that inclusive economic growth is a central theme of the Belfast Agenda. Over the next five years the draft Belfast Agenda commits the Council to lead on:

- The creation of 15,000 new jobs;
- Support for 4,000 small business start-ups; and
- Attracting £1 billion of private sector Foreign Direct Investment.

3.2 Current Challenges

Low Business Start-up rates. Members will be aware that the business start-up rate in the City lags significantly behind other locations across Northern Ireland and is also lower than other comparator cities in UK and Ireland. The recent Centre for Cities Outlook Report indicated that Business Start-up rates in Belfast were the lowest of all 63 cities considered as part of the analysis, at less than 30 people per 10,000 of population starting a business in the city. This compares to 100 in London and 56 in Bristol.

3.3 *Low Productivity Levels.* The secondary challenge is that the productivity levels in Belfast are much lower than other cities. This has an impact on wage levels and overall city competitiveness. The deficit can be illustrated by looking at levels of innovation in the economy, as measured by the number of patents filed. In the Centre for Cities Outlook, Belfast ranks 60 out of the 63 cities in terms of patents filed by businesses. In Belfast, the figure is 1.1 patent filed per head of population. This can be set against a figure of 102 patents per head of population for Cambridge, 20 in Aberdeen and 8 in Bristol.

3.4 Not enough people with high enough skills. One of the major contributory factors to a lower productivity rate is the skills levels in the City. While Belfast performs relatively well in terms of higher level skills, it ranks 62 out of the 63 cities in terms of residents who have no formal qualifications. This not only impacts on productivity levels but also creates additional social challenges within the city. Forecasts suggest that only 1 in 6 of new jobs to be created will be open to those with no

or low skills levels. This presents a significant risk for those residents who currently have no or low skills in terms of their ability to access employment opportunities in the future.

3.5 *Need to continue focus on FDI.* Whilst Belfast has over the last 7 or 8 years, performed very well in terms of inward investment (ranking second behind London in UK terms), it is vital that this success is built upon and that the proposition is developed further for a post Brexit situation, to ensure that Belfast can compete successfully with other similar cities.

3.6 Therefore the broader challenges in terms of business start, business growth, Investment and skills development are:

- The need to grow the overall number of businesses starting up in the city
- The need to make those businesses more viable, productive and competitive
- The need to ensure that businesses have access to the talent pipeline and expertise and that they need to help them reach their potential
- The need to maintain and improve the profile of the city as a dynamic, cost competitive investment location.
- The need for implementation of a Belfast skills development strategy, linked to the Belfast Works programme

3.7 In developing linked programmes of work to address these challenges, the aim will be to make indigenous businesses themselves more competitive, attract more business to the City and hence create more jobs, skills pipelines and also increase the rates base.

3.8 What we already do

- Starting a business: current activities include a range of targeted outreach initiatives with key groups to encourage them to consider starting a business. This includes targeted support for social enterprises and for students starting a business
- Growing a business: our current support in this area is focused on a number of key projects including the Innovation Factory, export development opportunities for local businesses through our international links and initiatives to help businesses to access opportunities from public procurement
- Investing in Belfast: This involves a wide range of programmes working alongside Invest NI. In the last 18 months our activities have increased extensively

with a new international relations framework and more business/investment focused relationships with China, Boston and Nashville, a programme of inward visits, new marketing plans and investment portfolios.

- **Skills Development:** In the last 18 months a new **Employability and Skills Framework** has been developed which includes; the development of programmes to deliver skills development and employment opportunities for those furthest from the labour market; engagement with educational institutions to support higher level skills programmes in line with employer needs; and programmes to support upskilling for those seeking to progress in employment.

3.9 What we are proposing to do:

Meeting the targets outlined in the Belfast Agenda will require a significant uplift in the investment and resource commitment from the Council to ensure that, along with partner organisations, we develop a menu of the right support services and programmes.

3.10 A Small Business Support Service

We propose to develop and market a comprehensive and coordinated 'small business service' that will ensure that companies get access to the help they need, when they need it and that there is no duplication in provision across partner organisations.

3.11 In 2017/18 the development of such a service will involve:

- Exploring the viability of additional financial incentives for specific target groups in starting a business e.g. young people, residents in disadvantaged areas;
- Developing a mentoring programme for small business starts, with access to expertise and helping to support business to business links;
- Collaboration with universities, Belfast Metropolitan College and Catalyst Inc. to develop a strong tech start programme. This will include looking at new models of flexible workspace provision alongside wrap-around support services in line with the business needs
- Developing large-scale enterprise education initiatives to embed the entrepreneurial culture at an early age and to promote positive role models who have started their own business. There will be a focus on new growth sectors and emerging areas.

**Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 11th January, 2017**

- **Expansion of Student Enterprise programmes, building on the award-winning Belfast Enterprise Academy, to help college and university students develop their business ideas alongside their academic studies**
- **Expansion of the core Business Start (Go for It) programme focusing on those businesses that have the greatest growth potential or that are in key growth sectors.**
- **Development of the Innovation Factory, with a target of creating almost 400 additional jobs by 2020 across over 100 new businesses as well as exploring opportunities for additional workspace provision, focused on key growth sectors e.g. creative and digital businesses.**
- **Developing a number of specific sector growth strategies. These will be based on existing specialisms and will include industries such as cyber security, financial technology and creative and digital. Key actions are likely to include generating additional international business opportunities through Sister City and wider global connections, targeted skills development initiatives in the key sectors, support for additional research and development, developing additional networking opportunities to encourage greater collaboration between local companies (and FDI businesses located here)**
- **Exploring potential accelerator projects and investment funds to support high growth businesses. We are currently working with Boston-based funds partners to look at the potential of running a similar programme in Belfast. We also intend to use the Resilient City global networks, which may also assist in the development of a small business commission for the city.**
- **Delivery of a 1-2-1 business mentoring programme for all companies interested in business growth. This will include support on issues such as marketing, doing business online, exploring export markets, managing cashflow and new product development**
- **Development of export development and international business opportunities, focusing on Sister City connections.**
- **Helping companies to explore new business opportunities presented by public procurement. We have already delivered previous support programmes of this nature and the participating companies have accessed more than £1.5million in new business**
- **Exploring supply chain opportunities arising from new regeneration and development opportunities and**

ensuring that local businesses are aware of and positioned to take advantage of these opportunities.

3.12 Investment Advice Service

We would propose to establish an Investment Advice Service which will:

- Develop and actively market the unique 'City Proposition' for international investors and aim to improve the experience of new and existing investors in the City
- Work with Sister City and other key investment destinations to promote Belfast as an investment location for key sectors and to encourage investment in the City's future infrastructure development
- Work with London and Dublin in particular to explore business opportunities post-Brexit and to develop the City's business proposition to exploit the future growth and investment potential.

3.13 Skills Development and Employability

- The Employability and Skills Framework adopted by the committee last year, following consultation, outlines the ambition to:
- Link to the Belfast Works Programme to develop skills and employment opportunities for those furthest from the labour market,
- Engage with educational institutions to support higher level skills programmes in line with employer needs and programmes to support upskilling for those seeking to progress in employment, with particular focus on key growth sectors.
- Develop and roll-out future phases of the Hospitality Employment Academy (HEA) and development of other similar programmes in other key growth sectors.
- Develop higher skills programmes in key sectors, e.g. cyber sector, to ensure the development of world-class research leadership as well as an increased graduate talent pool for business.

3.14 Leadership

The Council has just set up a new Economic Think Tank for the City with key anchor institutions and Belfast Business. This will be developed further into a wider Economic Forum for the City to help advice the Council in stepping up these activities.

3.14 Research and Specific Support

It is proposed that a number of research pieces are undertaken to inform the proposed new interventions and also to ensure that progress is tracked. These will include:

- **Accessing ongoing policy support from the UU Economic Policy Centre:** as a sponsor of the Centre, the Council is represented on the Advisory Board and has access to a wide range of research and analysis work that impacts on our key priority areas of work. These include economic inactivity, the impact of Welfare Reform and implications of Corporation Tax reductions
- **Research to help establish an enterprise framework for the city:** this research will identify the quantum between current start-up levels and where the city needs to be in terms of volume of businesses. It will also look at how the productivity levels in the city can be improved by encouraging more high level start-ups. This will help the Council to fine-tune its own activity and will help influence investments by other partners, many of whom are also part of the Community Planning Partnership. It will shape the Business Start and Business Growth work
- **Research on barriers to starting a business:** this research will help understand perceived barriers. This will be shared with partners involved in the delivery of Business Start support and will help shape future investment.

3.16 One of the specific programmes for which the business case has already been developed is the programme to help companies access public procurement opportunities, including opportunities from Belfast City Council. This support has been ongoing for a number of years and participating companies have benefitted greatly from their involvement. Over the last three years, 71 local companies have taken part and they have secured new business to a value of more than £1.5million – an average win of almost £22,000 per participating company.

3.17 The current programme will end in March 2017. It is proposed that a tender for delivery of the new programme is issued with an option for the delivery of up to 4 programmes involving up to 100 participants, subject to budget availability on an ongoing basis. The final programme costs will not be available until the procurement process is completed but it is

likely that the cost for each programme will be in the region of £50,000. The amount has been set aside in budget estimates for the coming financial year and is included in the medium-term financial plans.

3.18 Inclusive Growth

While this programme is driven by the economic objectives of the Belfast Agenda, the need to pursue an inclusive growth agenda is also clear throughout the Agenda. This commitment will help shape the specific interventions, ensuring that, where opportunities are created, specific efforts are made to consider how Belfast residents can avail of these opportunities

3.19 Financial and resource implications

It is clear that this programme of work is a significant step-up from the current provision. This will require additional investment from the Council as well as the ability to lever partnership funding from other public and private sector organisations. It will also take a number of years to build up the services and to demonstrate progress.

3.20 As part of the rate setting process, some preliminary financial assessment has taken place around the delivery of priority areas for the Belfast Agenda. At this stage officers have recommended a total of £750,000 be included in the rate to enable these services to be developed in 2017/18 along with the Belfast Works Programme and the Smart Cities Framework.

3.21 Funding for existing programmes which are supported by ERDF funding, including Go Social, Business Start and Business Growth programmes have been built into the departmental estimates.

3.22 The Procurement Support Programme will cost £50,000 per programme approval is required to commission up to four programmes over a four year period, subject to satisfactory performance and budget availability. This cost is accounted for in the Development Department's estimates for 17/18.

3.23 Equality and good relations implications

Programmes have and will continue to be designed to help remove barriers to participation and promote equality of opportunity.'

**Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 11th January, 2017**

In response to a Member's question in relation to how the Council could better inform the public about the major projects and developments in which it was involved, the Director of Development advised the Committee that he had recently met with Dublin City Council, which issued a bi-annual 'Dublin Economic Monitor' magazine which indicated the economic performance across the four local authorities in Dublin. The Chief Executive advised the Members that she had spoken with the Director of Development about the idea and that they were considering producing a similar publication for Belfast.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Finance, Procurement and Performance

Risk Update – Corporate risk

The Director of City Centre Development advised the Committee that, in August 2016, the Chief Officers had undertaken a comprehensive risk review and had identified sixteen corporate risks. She reported that the 'failure to deliver the City Centre Regeneration and Investment Strategy (CCRIS)' had been identified as a key risk.

She advised the Committee that there were both internal and external factors which could impact upon the delivery of the programme. These included:

- market failure / economic downturn;
- lack of buy-in / financial support from key external stakeholders;
- lack of clear land use policy;
- insufficient or ineffective use of resources;
- failure to comply with legal regulations e.g. State Aid;
- reputational damage due to lack of good governance; and
- failure to properly define or measure outcomes.

She outlined to the Members the action plan which had been created to manage the risks and how the actions would lower the overall risk rating from high to significant.

The Director reported that a number of controls were already in place to manage the risks, including an approved strategy which set out a clear direction of travel, a robust governance structure, a monthly Programme Board chaired by the Chief Executive, as well as legal and policy processes around procurement and economic appraisals.

The Members were also advised that there were a number of sources of assurance, including economic data, external stakeholder groups and Project Boards and programme and project plans with milestones and financial assessments.

The Committee noted:

- the key risks which could impact on the delivery of the CCRIS, the controls that had recently been put in place and the additional risk actions that were required; and

**Growth and Regeneration Committee,
Wednesday, 11th January, 2017**

- that the risk management plan would be implemented over the next four months, with an update on delivery submitted to the Committee in May, 2017.

Chairperson

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City Growth and Regeneration Committee

Tuesday, 24th January, 2017

SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Graham (Chairperson);
Aldermen Haire and Spence; and
Councillors Beattie, Dorrian, Dudgeon,
Hargey, Johnston, Magee,
McAteer, Mullan, O'Hara and Walsh.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. D. Durkan, Director of Development;
Ms. N. Gallagher, Director of City Centre Development;
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman McGimpsey and Councillor Howard.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Restricted Item

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.

Cash Limits 2017/18

The Director of Finance and Resources presented the Members with the proposed Cash Limit for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for the year 2017/18, as recommended by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 20th January, 2017.

He outlined to the Members the next steps in the rate setting process which would lead to the district rate being set by the Council at its meeting on 1st February.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. agreed that the report would not be subject to call-in, given that it would cause an unreasonable delay and would be prejudicial to both the Council and the public's interests in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2017;

Special City Growth and Regeneration Committee
Tuesday, 24th January, 2017

2. agreed that a cash limit of £15,841,354 be set for the City Growth and Regeneration Committee, for the year 2017/2018, with the individual service cash limits detailed in the report; and
3. noted the next steps in the rate setting process.

Chairperson

Licensing Committee

Wednesday, 18th January, 2017

MEETING OF LICENSING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Armitage (Chairperson);
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Campbell);
Aldermen L. Patterson, Sandford and Spence;
and Councillors Boyle, Clarke, Collins, Copeland,
Dudgeon, Groves, Heading, Magennis,
McConville, McDonough-Brown and Milne.

In attendance: Mr. S. Hewitt, Building Control Manager;
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor; and
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported on behalf of Alderman McCoubrey.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 14th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd January, 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

Presentation - Police Service of Northern Ireland

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 17th August, it had considered four applications for Temporary Street Trading Licences to trade on the Boucher Road, during the Tennents Vital event. It was reminded further that the Police Service of Northern Ireland had lodged objections to those applications and that it had been invited to send a representative to that meeting in order to clarify any issues which might be raised. However, no one had attended and, accordingly, the Committee had agreed that a senior representative be invited to a future meeting to discuss issues around representations made by the Police Service in relation to licensing applications.

It was reported that Inspector D. Hardy and Constable S. O'Hare were in attendance and they were welcomed by the Chairperson.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 18th January, 2017**

Constable O'Hare informed the Members that he had submitted the objections to the four applications for Temporary Street Trading Licences on the Boucher Road. He explained that the Tennents Vital festival had attracted an attendance of between 40,000 and 45,000 patrons and that, in his view, the presence of stalls along parts of the Boucher Road whilst patrons were exiting the venue would have had the potential to create significant problems for the Police Service, particularly in terms of crowd safety and given the limited number of officers who been allocated to that area.

Inspector Hardy apologised for the fact that the Police Service had not been represented at the meeting on 17th August, which he indicated had been due to resources across the City being stretched at that time. He accepted that the Council should have been notified in advance of that meeting that no one would be attending and confirmed that, in future, every effort would be made to ensure that, where the Police Service had lodged an objection to an application, a representative would be available and that they had been fully briefed beforehand.

In response to a question from a Member, Constable O'Hare stated that he had assumed the role of licensing officer for Belfast in May, 2016 and that he had attended three meetings of the Licensing Committee since then.

In terms of concerns which had been expressed by a Member around the level of resources which the Police Service had allocated to the Tennents Vital festival, Inspector Hardy confirmed that it was normal practice for a risk assessment to be undertaken in advance of such an event and that factors, such as the likely number and the profile of patrons, would be taken into account in determining the level of resources to be allocated. He added that, whilst he had no information to hand on, for example, the number of officers who had been on duty or on the number of arrests, it was his understanding that the festival had been a success and that no major issues had been identified.

The Building Control Manager explained that the Building Control Service worked closely with the Police Service of Northern Ireland and other key agencies in planning for major events such as the Tennents Vital festival and confirmed that it had had no concerns around the level of resources which had been allocated by the Police Service to that event.

The Chairperson then afforded the Members the opportunity to raise with the representatives any other issues of concern.

A Member referred to the fact that councils would soon be responsible for administering and implementing that part of the Roads (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (Northern Ireland) 2010 relating to the holding of events on public roads. It was pointed out that the Council had concerns around the logistics and the potential liabilities and costs associated with the legislation and an assurance was sought that the changes would not affect the role of the Police Service of Northern Ireland when dealing with special events in the future.

In response, Inspector Hardy confirmed that the Police Service was aware of the role to be played by councils under the aforementioned Act and of the concerns which had been raised by them in that regard. He confirmed that the Police Service would

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 18th January, 2017**

maintain its current role whilst the legislation was being progressed and that it was keen to work with councils to develop the processes, procedures and guidance required thereafter to deliver events safely across the City. He pointed out that, whilst the Police Service did not charge currently for policing special events, it was his understanding that, under the Act, such costs would be borne by organisers and that events involving, for example, community organisations would be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

A further Member alluded to the recent rise in drugs related deaths in Belfast and across Northern Ireland generally and sought from the representatives information on any measures being taken across the City by the Police Service to address the issue.

Constable O'Hare assured the Members that the Police Service played a proactive role in addressing the issue of illegal drugs through, for example, the Get Home Safe campaign, which operated from Thursday night till Sunday night. He explained that he was examining the possibility of organising in the near future a seminar for licensees in order to raise their awareness of drugs issues and that an invitation would be extended to Council officers. Reference would be made at that event to an issue which had been raised by a Member around the benefits of drugs testing and drugs amnesties in nightclubs, which had been shown to be successful elsewhere.

Inspector Hardy reported that the Police Service did not have the resources available to monitor all licensed premises across the City on a sustained basis and that venues were targeted primarily on the basis of information which it received from various sources. He made the point that there were legal difficulties associated with providing the Committee with detailed information on premises which had been linked to drugs, as had been suggested by a Member, but confirmed that the Police Service had no difficulty in working with the Council, through the Licensed Premises Group, to explore other ways in which problematic premises could be addressed under the Entertainments Licensing legislation.

Finally, a Member pointed out that she was aware of entertainments licensing applications having been considered by the Committee, where there had been allegations of serious assaults by door supervisors, some of which had not been objected to by the Police Service.

In response, Constable O'Hare confirmed that, since a new regime had been introduced, which provided for dedicated officers to conduct regular checks of licensed premises, incidents involving door supervisors had fallen by two thirds. He pointed out that, whilst he would not necessarily be made aware of all investigations being undertaken by other officers around the conduct of door supervisors, he would, on most occasions, review a premises' file, consult with a licensee and submit comments to the Council.

The Chairperson thanked Inspector Hardy and Constable O'Hare for their contribution and they left the meeting.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

Fees for Street Trading Licences

The Committee agreed to defer until its next meeting a report in respect of proposed fees for Street Trading Licences to enable officers to provide additional information and to examine options for introducing the proposed fees on a phased basis over the term of a licence and for establishing a fee for a licence to cover one day only.

Consideration of Entertainments Licences with Previous Convictions

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

1.1 To consider, under the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions (NI) Order 1985 (the Order), current enforcement procedures and consideration of Entertainments Licensing applications when the applicant has been convicted of offences under the Order.

1.2 Members will recall that, at your meeting on 21st September, 2016, you agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting providing information on breaches and associated convictions and penalties resulting from inspections which had, during the past five years, been undertaken by Council officers under the Entertainments Licensing legislation.

1.3 The Committee agreed also that the report should outline the enforcement approach undertaken by the Council, depending upon the nature of the offence detected, together with proposals for enabling it to review those applications where there had been a conviction for a breach of the legislation which had posed a serious risk to the safety of patrons.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Taking into account the information presented, the Committee is requested to note the content of the report and provide comment and recommendations regarding how Officers deal with the enforcement of Entertainments Licensing legislation and any breaches found which may result in the initiation of legal proceedings.

2.2 Members may also wish to advise on how they would prefer future applications to be presented to the Committee where the applicant has been previously convicted.

2.3 As all matters pertaining to policy and legislation in relation to licensing matters are not delegated, any decision will be subject to ratification by the Council.

3.0 Main Report

Key Issues

Powers to deal with Offences under the Order

- 3.1 Where an applicant has been convicted of an offence under the Order the Council may:**
- 1. revoke an existing Entertainments Licence if the licence holder is convicted of an offence, or**
 - 2. refuse an application on the grounds that the applicant has been convicted of an offence under the Order within the period of 5 years immediately preceding the date when an application was made.**

Powers to deal with serious threats to Public Order or Public Safety

- 3.2 If it appears to the Council that the provision of entertainment at any place in respect of which an Entertainments Licence is in force is causing, or is likely to cause, a serious threat to public order or public safety it may order the suspension of that licence.**
- 3.3 The Council may, at any time, revoke an order to suspend an Entertainment Licence. Prior to doing so, the Committee should satisfy itself that all the matters that gave rise to the decision to suspend the licence have been satisfactorily dealt with and that provision of entertainment at the premises will no longer cause a serious threat to the public.**
- 3.4 Authority to revoke, refuse or suspend a licence is fully delegated to the Licensing Committee.**
- 3.5 If the licence is revoked, refused or suspended then the applicant may appeal the Council's decision within 21 days of notification of that decision to the County Court.**

Enforcement approach undertaken by the Service

- 3.6 Our role in Building Control is primarily that of ensuring that licensed premises are operated safely and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the licence and obtained through working constructively with the licensee in accordance with the principles of Good Enforcement. Where legal action is taken it is seen as a last resort to deal with those offenders either operating without a licence or found to be committing offences of a more serious nature.**
- 3.7 There are currently 411 premises licensed for indoor entertainment in Belfast and 44 other venues where entertainment may be held either outdoors or within a marquee.**

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 18th January, 2017**

- 3.8** As part of our application process, officers engage extensively with the applicant, licensee and any other representative associated with the application in order to help ensure the respective parties understand their responsibilities and duties as a licence holder. This helps ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the Entertainments Licence.
- 3.9** All venues are inspected as part of the annual renewal application process but are also subject to further inspection as part of our During Performance Inspection (DPI) protocol.

During Performance Inspection and Enforcement Protocol

- 3.10** The DPI is not only carried out to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of the licence but, importantly, it enables staff to develop a good working relationship with the person in charge of the premises and to help them understand their obligations in safeguarding the public.
- 3.11** The Service has an established risk rating process which enables targeted inspections to be carried out when entertainment is taking place where they are needed most. The risk is subject to regular review upon the completion of any DPI and updated accordingly.
- 3.12** The risk rating ultimately determines the frequency and number of inspections carried out on the premises over the annual period of the Entertainments Licence. However, other inspections can be arranged, as and when required, for monitoring purposes if a complaint is made or an issue occurs.
- 3.13** The following table provides a breakdown of the outcomes of DPI's by the Service over the last 5 years.

Outcome	Number	Action
Satisfactory	1580	None
Part Satisfactory	587	Letters Sent – 587 Office Meetings – 81
Not Satisfactory	100	Letters Sent (inc. PACE Letter) – 100 Office Meetings and resolved outside of court – 59

- 3.14** Generally, the majority of licensees and premises have been found to be compliant. The nature of the breaches and offences we have

uncovered over the last five years range from an emergency exit sign not being illuminated at the time of the inspection to locked exits or overcrowding of the premises.

- 3.15 'Part Satisfactory' decisions will normally require a letter to be sent to the licensee highlighting the problems uncovered and requesting that they be rectified as soon as possible. This is then followed up with another DPI a few weeks later to ensure the problems have been corrected.
- 3.16 Depending upon the severity of the problems failure to rectify them may mean an office meeting has to be arranged or legal proceedings are initiated against the licensee.
- 3.17 In circumstances where the inspection brings to light defects which give rise to more serious concerns about the safety of patrons a meeting will be arranged with the management of the premises to discuss how they may be resolved. The meeting also allows Officers to question the licensee and explore how well they are managing the premises.
- 3.18 A decision of 'Not Satisfactory' is recorded when significant defects or breaches have been found. Examples of this may be a locked exit, overcrowding of the premises or the fire alarm system being disabled. These problems and defects will normally result in legal proceedings being initiated against the premises. However each case is considered on its own merits and there are some circumstances in which, after consultation with Legal Services, an alternative solution may be offered.
- 3.19 Since 2011, through the adoption of the above procedures, the Service has secured a total of 41 prosecutions. These are broken down, as follows:
- 13 in 2011/2012
 - 8 in 2012/2013
 - 2 in 2013/2014
 - 5 in 2014/2015
 - 13 in 2015/2016

Initiation of Legal Proceedings

- 3.20 For any serious breaches discovered, we send formal correspondence in the form of a letter containing the PACE Caution to the licensee or defendant to afford them the opportunity to provide an explanation in relation to the suspected offences and any evidence or information which may be relevant.
- 3.21 The matter is then referred to Legal Services to consider whether legal proceedings should be initiated. Unfortunately under the terms

of the 1985 Order it is not possible to take cases in the Crown Court so all cases must be brought in the Magistrates Court.

Alternative Proceedings and resolved outside of Court

- 3.22 A prosecution will not always ensue, as each situation and case has to be determined on its own merits. It is unlawful to adopt a policy whereby every offence results in prosecution regardless of the circumstances.
- 3.23 There are a wide range of alternative resolutions available under the Council's Regulation and Enforcement Policy. These range from informal warnings through to formal cautions.
- 3.24 Most alternative disposals have been either by way of administering a formal caution or through a formal meeting held with the applicant/licensee which would involve a thorough review of their premises, the passive and active measures they have in place and their management arrangements to ensure the premises operates safely and effectively.

Penalties

- 3.25 As Members are aware, the penalties handed down by the Court in recent years are not always considered a true reflection of the severity of the offences discovered. Members may recall that in the Council's response to the review of entertainment licensing, in June 2015, the Committee provided alternative proposals on how to deal with breaches to the legislation.
- 3.26 Additionally, a letter has also recently been sent to the Minister for Communities, Mr Paul Givan MLA, to request that sentencing guidelines for breaches of the entertainments licensing be provided as part of his Department's review of entertainment licensing.
- 3.27 A summary of the problems, breaches and convictions and subsequent penalties handed down to licensed premises since 2011 has been circulated to Members.

Review of Applications where the applicant has been convicted for breaches of the legislation and posed serious risks to the safety of patrons

- 3.28 Members are advised that, since 2011, the Committee has considered a total of 81 Committee reports as a consequence of legal action and previous convictions of applicants. Some of the applicants offences have been considered on more than one occasion due to the '5 year rule'.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 18th January, 2017**

- 3.29 The Service believes that it takes a fair but robust approach to ensure applicants comply with the terms, conditions and restrictions attached to their Entertainments Licence.
- 3.30 In addition, Members can be assured that, in cases where legal proceedings are initiated we continue to engage proactively with all licensees to work to improve their overall safety procedures.
- 3.31 It was apparent, at the meeting on 21st September, 2016, that Members were concerned that, in some instances, the courts were handing down penalties for offences which did not reflect the seriousness of the offence.
- 3.32 It is not possible for the Council to appeal sentences to the County Court. The only mechanism available to challenge the level of penalty in the Magistrates Court is by way of judicial review. The threshold for successfully challenging a decision this way is quite high. It is not enough to demonstrate that the decision was unreasonable. The Council must establish that the decision was so irrational that it clearly falls outside the broad area of the lower courts sentencing discretion.
- 3.33 The Council has previously successfully challenged a sentence which was considered to be too lenient and a further judicial review is currently being considered by Legal Services in relation to a recent decision.
- 3.34 A further deterrent action which could be taken and which, to date, has not been utilised would be for Committee to consider the revocation of an Entertainments Licence immediately after a licence holder is convicted of an offence.
- 3.35 This would mean that as soon as an applicant is convicted of an offence, rather than when their licence falls due for renewal, the licence holder will be invited to appear before Committee and convince Members as to why their licence should not be revoked.
- 3.36 This would have the benefit that, regardless of any Court penalty, Members would have the opportunity to impress upon the applicant the severity of their offence and seek assurances in relation to future management of the premises. Whilst it is not possible to attach conditions to an extant licence undertakings could be sought from a licensee in terms of additional controls to be put in place at the premises. Compliance with such an undertaking would be relevant to their fitness in any future renewal application.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.37 Officers carry out during performance inspections on premises providing entertainment which is catered for within existing budgets.

Equality and Good Relations Implications

3.38 There are no equality or good relations issues associated with this report.”

After discussion, the Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed to adopt the approach, as set out within paragraphs 3.34 to 3.36 of the report, as soon as a licence holder had been convicted of an offence under the Entertainments Licensing legislation. The Committee noted also that a report on the outcome of a review of the level of costs which the Council could apply for in relation to prosecutions taken under the entertainments licensing legislation, which it had requested previously, would be included on the agenda in the near future.

**Consideration of Representations Received
Outside the Statutory 28-Day Period**

The Committee considered the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues

1.1 Members will recall that, at your meeting on 14th December, when agreeing to consider objections to the grant of a Seven-Day Annual Entertainments Licence for the Hawthorn Bar, which were received outside the 28 day statutory period, the Committee further agreed that officers submit to a future meeting a report outlining potential options for dealing with such representations which were submitted outside the statutory timeframe.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Committee is requested to consider the proposal for dealing with representations received outside the 28 day statutory period and determine if you wish to adopt the proposal or adopt it with any necessary modifications arising from your discussions.

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

Legislative Requirements

3.1 In accordance with Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1985, any person wishing to make any representation in relation to an application for the grant, renewal or transfer of an Entertainments Licence shall give notice to the council, stating in general terms the nature of the representation, not later than 28 days after the date of the application.

- 3.2 Under Paragraph 5(8), in considering any application for the grant, renewal or transfer of an Entertainments Licence, the council must have regard to any representations received within 28 days and must give an opportunity of appearing before and of being heard by the council to any person who has made such representation.**
- 3.3 Similar requirements are in place for other application types the Committee consider, namely:**
- Amusement Permits under the Betting and Gaming (NI) Order 2004 and Betting, Gaming, Lotteries & Amusements (NI) Order 1985;**
 - Sex Establishment Licences under Article 4, Schedule 2 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1985.**
- 3.4 For both these application types the council must also have regard to representations which have been received within the 28 day statutory period.**

House of Lords Judgement

- 3.5 The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1985 permits the Committee to consider objections received outside the 28 day statutory period but it is a matter for the Committee to decide whether or not to exercise its discretion in such instances.**
- 3.6 Members are reminded of the House of Lords decision in the case of Belfast City Council v Miss Behavin' Ltd. which, in 2007, upheld Belfast City Council's decision to refuse an application for a sex establishment. In delivering that judgement the Court held that it would be perverse if relevant information could not be taken into account just because it had been received outside the statutory time period.**
- 3.7 The Court stated that the 28 day period should be treated as being administrative as opposed to mandatory. The Court ruled that the council was entitled to take into account late objections when deciding on an application and, in fact, there could be circumstances in which its failure to take that information into account would itself be judicially reviewable.**
- 3.8 This was also the view taken by the High Court in Northern Ireland in cases such as Ava Leisure, in which the Court held that the failure to take into account an objection just because it was out of time was unlawful.**

- 3.9** In the Miss Behavin' case, Lord Neuberger declared that if an objection which revealed to a council for the first time certain highly relevant information was received one day late, it would be a little short of absurd if it could not be taken into account.
- 3.10** He stated that it might reveal, for instance, that a family with a large number of small children had moved into the flat above the subject property, or that the applicant had a string of relevant convictions. In such cases, it would be contrary to the purpose of the 1985 Order, and to the public interest generally, if the council was obliged to ignore the information.
- 3.11** He further declared that it would be the duty of council officers to open and read any letter received; such an officer would be placed in an impossible situation if she or he had read a late letter of objection, with new and important information, but was effectively precluded from communicating this information to Council members.
- 3.12** Additionally, it was stated 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.
- 3.13** In light of the above, Committee is advised that, in considering applications for Entertainment Licence, Amusement Permit or Sex Establishment Licences it has a discretion, but not a duty, to consider objections received outside the 28 day statutory period.
- 3.14** A copy of both the Miss Behavin' and the Ava Leisure decisions have been circulated to Members.

Consideration of objections received outside the 28 day statutory period by Committee

- 3.15** A review of applications since 2013 for which objections were received outside the 28 day statutory period and subsequently brought to Committee for consideration was undertaken and details of those applications have been forwarded to Members.
- 3.16** Members will note that for all 12 applications, which include both indoor and outdoor entertainment licence as well as amusement permit applications, the Committee has, in each case, exercised its discretion to consider objections received outside the 28 day statutory period.

Consideration of representations received outside the 28 day statutory

- 3.17** Whilst late objections have been considered in the past there is nothing to preclude the Committee from determining that, in future, this will not always be the case. Legal Services have advised that given the Miss Behavin' decision discussed above it would be unlawful to refuse to consider all representations received outside the 28 day period.
- 3.18** It should also be borne in mind that when assessing applications the Committee is often tasked with assessing competing Convention rights, those of the business owner and those who are affected by the operation of that business. It is therefore important to ensure that both parties have a fair opportunity to express their case.
- 3.19** Should Committee wish to set guidance as to when late objections may be considered it is important to make provision for unforeseen and exceptional circumstances so that new relevant information, which comes to light through a late objection, is not precluded from being presented to Committee.
- 3.20** It is proposed that a more rigorous test of the merits of each late objection be undertaken which, unless Members are satisfied, will mean the objection is not taken into account.

Proposal for dealing with late representations

- 3.21** For any representation which is received outside the 28 day statutory period Members may wish to consider adopting the following criteria:
- 1.** Has a reasonable explanation been provided, in writing, by the objector as to why their representation was not made within the 28 day period;
 - 2.** Does the representation provide substantially different additional information to that already contained within representations that have been received within the 28 day period;
 - 3.** How far outside the 28 day period were the representations received;
 - 4.** The proximity of the objectors to the premises;
 - 5.** The number of other representations received outside the 28 day period;

6. Whether there are any other material considerations which would warrant consideration of the objection.

- 3.22** At present, when a late objection is received, a preliminary report is brought to Committee to seek its view on whether the late objection would be considered. If Committee agrees to do so all parties are invited to a subsequent meeting of the Committee which will receive a detailed paper. As part of the preparation for that meeting, both the applicant and objectors are required to submit their representations which are exchanged with the parties, considered by officers and addressed in the case officers report.
- 3.23** Committee had requested that officers consider the possibility of rolling up the process so that all matter could be dealt with at one hearing. Having done so officers are concerned that this will be more cumbersome for Committee, members of the public and officers.
- 3.24** A rolled up hearing would mean the parties would have to lodge formal representations in accordance with the Operating Protocol. Officers would have to investigate the issues raised in those representations and the objector would have to appear before Committee without any certainty as to whether they would be heard. It would also cause difficulties for applicants as they would not know until the last minute whether they had to address the objections in their deputation to Committee.
- 3.25** In light of these concerns officers would recommend that the present approach is maintained.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.26** There are no financial or resource implications associated with this report.

Equality and Good Relations Implications

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

After discussion, the Committee agreed to maintain the current approach for considering representations which had been received outside the statutory 28-day period and agreed also that the criteria set out within paragraph 3.21 of the report should, in future, form the basis for considering such representations.

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

Licences/Permits issued under Delegated Authority

The Committee noted a list of licences and permits which had been issued under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

**Applications for the Grant/Renewal/Variation of
Entertainments Licences with Previous Convictions**

The Building Control Manager submitted for the Committee's consideration the following report:

“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues

- 1.1 To consider applications for Entertainments Licences where the applicant has been convicted of an offence under the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions (NI) Order 1985 (the Order) within the previous five years.**

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Taking into account the information presented, you are required to consider the applications and to:-**

- 1. approve the applications, or**
- 2. should you be of a mind to refuse any of the applications, or approve any applications with additional special conditions, an opportunity of appearing before and of being heard by the Committee must be given to the applicants.**

3.0 Main report

Key Issues

- 3.1 Members are reminded that the normal process for dealing with Entertainments Licence applications which are not the subject of objections is that the licence will be granted as provided for in the Council's Scheme of Delegation.**
- 3.2 However, as each applicant has been found guilty of committing an offence within five years of the application for a licence being submitted to the Council, you are required to consider the following applications:**

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 18th January, 2017**

Premises and Location	Applicant	Application Type	Offence Details	Date of Conviction and Penalty
<p style="text-align: center;">AM:PM</p> <p>38-44 Upper Arthur Street Belfast BT1 4GH</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">AM:PM Limited</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Renewal and Variation</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">20th May 2016</p> <p>Rear final escape door was obstructed.</p> <p>Rear escape stair was obstructed.</p> <p>Rear escape corridor on the ground floor was obstructed.</p> <p>Fire door was held open on the ground floor escape route.</p> <p>All escape routes, including stairways, were not maintained with non-slippery and even surfaces.</p> <p>The appropriate pre-entertainment checks were not completed</p> <p>Entertainment was being provided on the 2nd floor which is an area not covered by the Entertainments Licence.</p> <p>The Entertainments Licence was not being displayed.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">On appeal: 6 January 2017</p> <p>£2750 and £66 Court costs.</p> <p>Charges 1-5 £500 each, Charge 6 withdrawn 7-8 £250 each.</p> <p>Original penalty was £3250 – charge 6 was withdrawn – penalty reduced to £2750.</p>

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 18th January, 2017**

<p style="text-align: center;">Hole In The Wall</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1-3 Baltic Avenue Belfast BT15 2HR</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">H.I.T.W Limited</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Renewal</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">13th February 2016</p> <p>An exit route from the side of the bar was blocked with a speaker and a fridge.</p> <p>Mag lock was installed to a final exit door and prevented the door from being open and a final exit within the smoking area was locked and the replacement of a push bar with a tea spoon on another fire exit door.</p> <p>An exit route to the fire panel and final exit was blocked with tables and chairs and a door leading to an exit route was locked.</p> <p>There was no 'Fire Exit Keep Clear' signs fitted to doorsets, as required, and break glass Fire Action signs were missing.</p> <p>The Emergency Exit signs were not illuminated throughout the premises.</p> <p>No evidence of any pre-event log book checks being carried out.</p> <p>No Evacuation Procedures in place.</p> <p>Staff were not instructed or trained on the action to be taken in the event of a fire.</p> <p>The noise limiting device was not operating when entertainment was being provided.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">On appeal 25th November 2016</p> <p>£6000 and £66 Court costs.</p> <p>Original penalty was £9000 but following Appeal by the applicant it was reduced to £6000.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Boyle's Bar</p> <p style="text-align: center;">91 Falls Road Belfast BT12 4PE</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mr. Stephen Carson</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Grant</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">26th February 2016</p> <p>Entertainment was taking place without a valid Entertainments Licence.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">13th December 2016</p> <p>£250 and £66 Court costs.</p>

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 18th January, 2017**

3	St Paul's GAC 98c Shaws Road Belfast BT11 8LN	Dr. Paul Donnelly	Renewal	<p style="text-align: center;">28th March 2015</p> Entertainment was taking place in an area (1st Floor) not covered by the Entertainments Licence. The appropriate pre-entertainment checks had not been completed prior to entertainment taking place. A games machine was obstructing a final exit. The main entrance door was not being manned.	<p>10th November 2015</p> 12 months Conditional Discharge and ordered to pay court costs of £69.
		Mr. Billy McLarnon		<p style="text-align: center;">2nd February 2011</p> Ground floor of the premises was overcrowded	<p>11th November 2011</p> £500 and ordered to pay court costs of £69.
	Voodoo 9-11 Fountain Street Belfast BT1 5ED	Phoenix Wine and Spirits Store Limited	Renewal	<p style="text-align: center;">4th November 2011</p> Locked fire exit Obstructed means of escape The appropriate pre-entertainment checks had not been completed prior to entertainment taking place.	<p>4th September 2012</p> £270 and ordered to pay court costs of £69.

.3 Notwithstanding the possibility of refusing an Entertainments Licence on any other grounds, the Council may refuse an application on the grounds that the applicant has been convicted of an offence under the Order.

Application History

AM:PM

3.4 These are the first offences committed by the applicant and, therefore, this is the first time since the applicant was convicted that the Committee has an opportunity to take them into account in considering the applications for the renewal and variation of the licence.

- 3.5 The variation application is to include the 2nd floor area on the Entertainments Licence. One of the offences witnessed on 20th May, 2016 was that entertainment was being provided on the 2nd floor which, at that time, was unlicensed.
- 3.6 Due to the seriousness of the offences, officers met with the applicant immediately after legal proceedings were initiated to discuss them and to seek assurance that the applicant had taken appropriate steps to ensure that there would be no recurrence of these or any other safety issues.
- 3.7 Since then, the premises have been subject to two further during performance inspections, as well as a renewal inspection, to ensure that there has been no recurrence of these or any other safety issues and we have found that management procedures are being implemented effectively.

Hole in the Wall

- 3.8 These are the first offences committed by the applicant and, therefore, this is the first time since the applicant was convicted that the Committee has an opportunity to take them into account in considering the application for the renewal of the licence.
- 3.9 Due to the seriousness of the offences, officers met with the applicant on several occasions to ensure that the problems were resolved and revised measures were put in place to prevent further problems. The meetings involved a critical analysis of the passive and active safety measures as well as the management procedures that the applicant had in place for the premises.
- 3.10 Since then, the premises have been subject to two further during performance inspections, as well as a renewal inspection, to ensure that there has been no recurrence of these or any other safety issues and we have found that management procedures are being implemented effectively.

Boyles Bar

- 3.11 This is the first offence committed by the applicant and the Committee now has an opportunity to take it into account in considering the application for the grant of the licence.

The premises were previously licensed for entertainment but this was under a different name and management and expired in 2009.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 18th January, 2017**

- 3.12** A grant application was received in November, 2013 and the applicant was advised on numerous occasions that they were not permitted to provide entertainment until an Entertainments Licence was issued. Despite these warnings, entertainment was found to be taking place without a licence and legal proceedings were initiated.
- 3.13** A new grant application was subsequently made and is placed before you for your consideration.

St Paul's GAC

- 3.14** This is the fourth time that an application for the premises has been considered by the Committee since being convicted in 2011 and for the most recent 2015 offences. Three previous renewal applications have subsequently been considered by the Licensing Committee, namely, on 15th August, 2012, 18th September, 2013 and 19th August, 2015.
- 3.15** The 2012 and 2013 reports were in relation to the 2011 offence and the most recent report of 2015 was regarding both the 2011 and the 2015 offences. However, after consideration, the Committee agreed to renew the Entertainments Licence on each occasion.
- 3.16** The 2011 offence may now appear to be outside of the legislative five year period but as this application was made in September, 2016 both are still applicable. However, this is the final year you are required to take the 2011 offence into consideration.

Voodoo

- 3.17** This is the third time an application for the premises has been considered by the Committee since the applicant was convicted on the 4th September, 2012.
- 3.18** Two previous renewal applications were brought before the Committee on the 21st August, 2013 and the 16th September, 2015 and, after consideration, you agreed to renew the licence on each occasion.
- 3.19** Since you last considered the application the premises have been subject to five further during performance inspections as well as a renewal inspection to ensure that there has been no recurrence of these or any other safety issues and we have found that management procedures are being implemented effectively.

Representations

- 3.20 Notice of the applications has been advertised and no written representations have been received.

PSNI

- 3.21 The PSNI has confirmed that it has no objections to the applications.

NIFRS

- 3.22 The Northern Ireland Fire Rescue Service has been consulted in relation to each of the applications and confirmed that it has no objections.

Applicants

- 3.23 The applicants and/or their representatives will be available at your meeting to answer any queries you may have in relation to their respective applications.
- 3.24 Copies of the application forms for each of the premises are have been circulated to the Committee.

Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.25 Officers carry out during performance inspections on premises providing entertainment, which is catered for within existing budgets.

Equality and Good Relations Implications

- 3.26 There are no equality or good relations issues associated with this report."

AM:PM, 38-44 Upper Arthur Street

The Committee agreed that it would be beneficial to obtain further information on this application from the applicant on the circumstances which had given rise to his prosecution and, accordingly, Mr. E. McCusker, was welcomed by the Chairperson.

Mr. McCusker informed the Members that he had operated the premises for the past fifteen years and that this had been the first occasion on which he had been prosecuted for offences under the Entertainments Licensing legislation. He explained that, immediately following the inspection on 20th May, 2016, the management team had put in place comprehensive measures to prevent a recurrence. He confirmed that he had made a significant investment in a bespoke application, which was now used by

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 18th January, 2017**

managers to ensure that all of the required pre-event checks had been carried out in advance of entertainment taking place. In addition, an adjacent property had been rented for the storage of those items which had the potential to cause the type of obstruction which had been identified previously.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. McCusker for his contribution.

The Committee agreed, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to approve the application for the renewal and variation of the Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for AM:PM, 38-44 Upper Arthur Street.

Hole in the Wall, 1-3 Baltic Avenue

The Building Control Manager provided a brief overview of the application. He stated that the applicant had, in accordance with normal practice, been invited to attend the meeting in order to address any issues which might be raised by the Committee. However, he had just been informed that the applicant was not present.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Heading,
Seconded by Councillor Dudgeon,

That the Committee, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, agrees to defer until its next meeting the application for the renewal of the Seven-day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence in respect of the Hole in the Wall, 1-3 Baltic Avenue, and that the applicant be invited again to attend.

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

Boyles Bar, 91 Falls Road

The Committee agreed, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to grant a Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for Boyle's Bar, 91 Falls Road.

St. Paul's GAC, 98c Falls Road

The Committee agreed, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to renew a Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence in respect of St. Paul's GAC, 98c Falls Road.

**Licensing Committee,
Wednesday, 18th January, 2017**

Voodoo, 9-11 Fountain Street

The Committee agreed, in its capacity as Licensing Authority, to renew a Seven-Day Annual Indoor Entertainments Licence for Voodoo, 9-11 Fountain Street.

Chairperson

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Planning Committee

Tuesday, 17th January, 2017

MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Johnston (Chairperson);
Alderman McGimpsey; and
Councillors Armitage, Dorrian, Garrett, Hussey,
Hutchinson, Lyons, Magee, McAteer and Mullan.
- In attendance: Mr. P. Williams, Director of Planning and Place;
Mr. E. Baker, Development Engagement Manager;
Ms. N. Largey, Divisional Solicitor;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Miss. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of and Councillors Bunting, Carson and Jones.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 13th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 3rd January, subject to the omission of those matters in respect of which the Council had delegated its powers to the Committee.

Declaration of Interest

Regarding item 11. r) LA04/2016/2430/F - Installation of Mew Island Optic within transparent structure Victoria Wharf Titanic Quarter, Councillor Armitage declared an interest, in so far as he had brought the proposal to the East Area Working Group Committee for consideration.

Councillor Garrett declared an interest regarding item 11.q) LA04/2016/1362/F - Construction of a sensory garden to include; play equipment, safety surfacing, hard standings, tree and shrub planting, with a 2.4 high paladin fence at land leading to 115 Blacks Road, in that he had assisted in the funding application.

In respect of item 11.b) LA04/2015/1102/F - Sub division of a dwelling to form a pair of semi-detached houses (retrospective) at 42 Strathmore Park South, Councillor Magee declared an interest, in that he had met with the applicant but had referred them to another Councillor, and he had not formed any opinion on the matter, prior to the meeting.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

Planning Appeals Notified

The Committee noted the receipt of correspondence in respect of a number of planning appeals which had been submitted to the Planning Appeals Commission, together with the outcomes of a range of hearings which had been considered by the Commission.

Planning Decisions Notified

The Committee noted a list of decisions which had been taken under delegated authority by the Director of Planning and Place, together with all other planning decisions which had been issued by the Planning Department between 6th December and 9th January.

Departmental Performance Update

The Development Engagement Manager provided the following information on the Department's performance to date:

Planning Applications

- 121 applications had been validated in December, 2016; and
- Overall numbers of applications validated this year had increased by 19% (1,279 up to 31st December, 2015 compared to 1,564 up to 31st December, 2016).

Planning Decisions

- 129 decisions had been issued in December, 2016.
- 95% approval rate;
- 89% decisions had been issued under delegated authority; and
- the number of decisions issued to date had increased by 36% over the same period in 2015. (1,066 up to 31st December, 2015 compared to 1,574 up to 31st December, 2016).

No. of applications in system by length of time

- 1,062 live applications were in the system at end of December, 2016;
- 63% of applications were in the system for less than 6 months; and
- Less than 38 legacy applications were outstanding (reduced from 780 at transfer in April, 2015).

Performance against statutory targets (figures available up to 30th November)

- The statutory target for processing major development planning applications from the date valid to decision issued or withdrawal date was within an average of 30 weeks. Up to 30th November, 2016 the average processing time to decide major applications was 65.2 weeks. This, however, included legacy applications and those Major applications which had been delayed whilst a Section 76 agreement had been put in place;

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

- The Development Engagement Manager pointed out that Department for Infrastructure are in the process of reviewing the statutory targets;
- The statutory target for processing local development planning applications from the date valid to decision issued or withdrawal date was an average of 15 weeks. Up to 30th November, 2016, the average processing time to decide local applications was 14.6 weeks; and
- The statutory target was that 70% of all enforcement cases are progressed to target conclusion within 39 weeks of receipt of complaint. Between 1st April and 30th November, 2016, 76.6% of enforcement cases had been concluded within 39 weeks.

Noted.

Local Development Plan Risk Management

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 progress being made to manage the corporate risk that is of direct relevance to the Planning Committee.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 That the Committee notes the arrangements in place to manage this risk and the progress being made to implement controls / measures to reduce the level of risk further and the proposed six monthly process for reporting.

3.0 Main report

3.1 The new corporate risk management process

3.1.1 Members will recall that the corporate risk register and related processes were subject to a fundamental review in 15-16. This included a review and re-score of all the corporate risks, including target risk scores. For each corporate risk a ‘Risk information form’ was produced, detailing relevant controls, proposed actions (including timescales) and responsible officers. It was also agreed that management would begin to report to the relevant committees on the progress being made to manage these key risks.

3.2 Managing Corporate Risks to an Acceptable Level

3.2.1 CMT has reviewed and, where appropriate, has updated the assessment of the corporate risks, the results of which are plotted on to the corporate risk map. The corporate risk map shows the progress that is being made to manage the corporate risks down to an acceptable level.

3.2.2 The risk of particular relevance to the Planning Committee is as follows:

‘Fail to deliver the Local Development Plan Programme in line with legislative timeframes.’

3.2.3 Progress in managing this risk is set out below.

3.3 Risk assessment

3.3.1 Following detailed review, this corporate risk has now been assessed in terms of ‘impact’ and ‘likelihood’ (using the Council’s risk scoring system) as follows:

- **Impact – 4 (major)**
- **Likelihood – 4 (likely)**

3.3.2 This represents a small change or improvement in the overall risk matrix assessment rating from current Severe to High which reflects some of the progress being made in through the measures identified in paragraph 3.3 below. The establishment of the governance structures and the ongoing work to secure additional resources has underpinned the improvement in the rating although the risk still remains High.

3.3.3 This assessment reflects that the Plan can be subject to challenge from a number of sources at a number of stages during the course of consultation. There are high expectations regarding the delivery of the LDP and there are also timing issues regarding the enquiry processes and procedures. There are a number of other factors that may impact on the council’s ability to deliver the plan, including the resourcing and scheduling of Inquiry dates and availability of key statutory partners to support to the development of the plan. The delivery of the plan is important to support the Belfast Agenda, however, it is noteworthy that the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan, developed by the department, was recently adopted but could be subject to further legal challenge.

3.4 Current measures in place to manage the risk

3.4.1 In order to mitigate the risk the council has appointed a Development Planning and Policy Manager and committed to providing the resources to ensure the Local Development Plan can be delivered in accordance with legislative timeframes as agreed with the Department for Infrastructure. A Local Development Plan steering group has also been established to ensure that the LDP is linked to the emerging Community Plan and developed in consultation with the key statutory consultees.

3.4.2 In addition, a project management team has been established to ensure all consultees are engaged in the plan development processes. The project management team will ensure the screening and scoping for the Countryside, Equality and Sustainability assessments, including the Strategic Environmental Assessment.

3.4.3 Other key controls to manage this risk include:

- Internal performance management monitoring and process review process comprising of quarterly reporting via Corvu Regular and reporting to Planning & SP&R Committees;**
- A business plan linked to the agreed timetable setting out key dates and targets for the 16/17 period; and**
- The approval and adoption of the Plan Timetable and Statement of Community Involvement.**

3.5 Areas for further action

3.5.1 A number of additional actions are scheduled: These include:

- The finalisation and publication of the draft Preferred Options Paper;**
- Complete resourcing for the team to take forward the Plan;**
- Continued Integration with the work for the Community Plan;**
- Completion of the Sustainability and Equality scoping exercises;**
- A consultation exercise in relation to the Preferred Options Paper; and**
- Effective engagement with other local authorities via regional working groups to supplement the statutory consultations**

3.6 Council performance

3.6.1 The Policy Options paper (POP), setting out the key plan issues and the preferred options available to address them was signed off by council on 1 December 2016 and will be launched for consultation in January 2017. A range of joint engagement events with the Belfast Agenda are planned and we have written to the key consultees with a draft of the preferred options in advance of the consultation. The planned consultation will target local community groups and under-represented (Section 75) groups providing them with information on the POP and inviting them to respond within 12 weeks consultation.

3.7 Assurance

3.7.1 Regular review and progress reports on the plan development will be provided to Committee. In line with the adopted SCI there will milestones checks to ensure compliance with our statutory responsibilities and monitoring obligations including an internal review against progress following the publication of the POP. The Department for Infrastructure/Planning Appeals Commission will also monitor progress. Progress will inform financial reporting and forecasting for in year and medium term financial forecasting.

3.7.2 There has been ongoing engagement with the Department for Infrastructure in relation to the overall timetable and it has been agreed that the timetable for the plan will be reviewed on an annual basis in the context of the wider processes / procedures for all the emerging plans. This will require a formal review of the timetable and take account of the experience to date with the Preferred Options Paper and associated consultations.

3.8 Progress Updates to Committee

3.8.1 In order to ensure that members have an understanding of the corporate risks that relate to their committees and have clear information on how they are being managed, we propose that committee is provided with progress update reports on a six monthly basis, unless of course reports are required more urgently.

4.0 Financial & Resource Implications

None.

5.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications

None.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report.

**Consultation Response on the Review of Permitted
Development Rights for Mineral Exploration**

The Committee was reminded that the former Department of the Environment had issued a ‘Call for Evidence’ to inform the future approach to Permitted Development Rights for Mineral Exploration, as set out in Part 16 of the schedule to the Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015. The Council had issued a formal reply to the consultation in April, 2016 outlining a number of recommendations to be incorporated into any subsequent policy review.

Subsequently, the Minister for Infrastructure, on 6th June, 2016, responded to a motion calling for the protection of Woodburn Forest, and announced that he intended to remove permitted development rights for petroleum (oil and gas) exploration.

It was reported that this public consultation sought comments on the proposed removal of permitted development rights for petroleum exploration from Class A of Part 16 of the Schedule of the Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 (GPDO), in particular:

- Petroleum exploration - Option 1 sought to remove permitted development rights for the drilling of boreholes for petroleum exploration including the drilling of boreholes preparatory to petroleum exploration. Option 2 afforded permitted development rights for the drilling of boreholes preparatory to petroleum exploration only; and
- Minor amendments in respect of permitted development rights for all mineral exploration.

The recommended response was set out in Appendix A (copy available on the Council’s website). The summary of the draft response was as follows:

- Council agrees with the removal of the permitted development rights for the drilling of boreholes for petroleum exploration from Class A of Part 16 of the GPDO. This would ensure that any future proposals must be subject to a planning application, which would enable councils to fully assess any potential adverse impact on

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

local communities, landscape quality, built and natural heritage, and the water environment.

- Regarding the two options tabled by Department for Infrastructure, Council considers the latter to be the most appropriate. It still affords permitted development rights for the drilling of boreholes for preparatory exploration such as the carrying out groundwater monitoring, seismic monitoring and the location and appraising the conditions of mines. Both the Department for the Economy and the British Geological Society support this option and it was considered that such preparatory drilling for potential petroleum exploration would normally be no more intrusive than that for non-energy minerals, which would continue to be allowed under the permitted development rules. This would bring Northern Ireland into line with England, Scotland and Wales.
- The introduction of a height restriction of 15 metres for any structure assembled or provided to Part 16 of the Schedule of the GPDO was welcome. Modern rigs used for the drilling of the boreholes typically range between 10 and 15 metres in height. This amendment would bring Northern Ireland into line with England, which recently changed the height restriction from 12 metres to 15 metres in April, 2016.
- The extension of the time period from 21 to 28 days was considered an appropriate measure and it would allow councils more time to fully assess whether permitted development rights, under Part 16 of the Schedule to the GPDO, should be removed or restricted.
- The review also proposed a technical amendment to introduce a 'relevant period' within Part 16 of the GPDO. This provided greater clarity regarding the timeframes where a direction had or hadn't been issued under Article 7 of the GPDO and was welcomed by Council.
- In summary, the proposed amendments to the legislation are welcomed. However, Council considers if Permitted Development was to be retained, there needs to be clear guidance in relation to the information requirements to enable planning authorities to effectively consider proposals.

The Committee agreed that the response, as outlined in Appendix A (copy available on the Council's website), be issued to the Department for Infrastructure on behalf of the Council.

Transport NI - York Street Interchange Notice of Intention to Proceed

The Committee noted the receipt of correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure, which related to the Notice to Proceed with the project at York Street Interchange.

Transport NI -The Dalton Street, Belfast (Stopping Up) Order NI 2017

The Committee noted the receipt of correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure, which related to the notice for a Stopping-Up Order at Dalton Street.

Extinguishment of Public Rights of Way - Benmore Drive

The Committee noted the receipt of correspondence from the Department for Communities, which related to the extinguishment of a Public Rights of Way at Benmore Drive.

Extinguishment of Public Rights of Way - Beechpark Street

The Committee noted the receipt of correspondence from the Department for Communities, which related to the proposed extinguishment of a Public Rights of Way at Beechpark Street and Beechnut Place.

Miscellaneous Items

Listed Buildings

The Committee was advised that correspondence had been received from the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) seeking the Council's views in respect of proposals which had been formulated for the listing of a number of buildings in Belfast.

The Committee was reminded that Article 80 (3) of the Planning Act (NI) 2011 required the Agency to consult with the Council before placing any building on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and supported the proposed listings of the following building by the Department for Communities:

- Parochial House, St Peter's Cathedral, St Peter's Cathedral, St Peter's Square, Belfast, BT12 4BU.

Development Management Improvement Plan

The Development Engagement Manager summarised a report regarding the Development Management Improvement Plan for 2016-2018. He advised that the purpose of the Improvement Plan was to identify and set actions against various areas of the service that needed to be enhanced to improve the customer experience.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

He reminded the Committee that the Improvement Plan had already been considered by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and the Audit Panel, and had been updated (in terms of a progress report) for the Planning Committee.

He provided an overview of the actions and progress of the Improvement Plan which had been divided into the following areas:

1. Processing planning applications;
2. Enforcement;
3. Corporate working;
4. ICT Solutions;
5. Member engagement;
6. Staff engagement; and
7. Customer engagement.

He highlighted a number of key issues for the Improvement Plan to improve the efficiency of the service and enable the Council to make better use of its resources which included:

- processing planning applications;
- performance management;
- charging for Pre-Application Discussions;
- Planning Performance Agreements;
- Developer Contributions Framework;
- enforcement;
- review of NI Direct for call-handling;
- replacement of the Planning Portal;
- Customer Charter; and
- improvements to the planning website

He pointed out that the procurement of new software to replace the existing Planning Portal would have financial consequences which would need to be managed at a corporate and service level.

After discussion, the Committee noted the Development Management Improvement Plan as set out in Appendix 1 (copy available on the Council's Website).

Changes to the Scheme of Delegation

The Development Engagement Manager reminded the Committee that a Workshop had taken place on 15th December, 2016 to discuss the potential changes to the Scheme of Delegation.

He outlined the contents of the report regarding the proposed changes to the powers delegated to the Director of Planning and Place in the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the report for one month, so that the Committee could provide further feedback on the draft Scheme of

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

Delegation as set out in Appendix 3 (copy available on Modern.gov). It was noted that Members of the Planning Committee would send any comments to the Development Engagement Manager over the next two weeks.

The Committee also agreed to include the following points in the amended draft for consideration:

- 3.9.1 – Advising all Members within the DEA of any planning application request for referral to the Committee and the outcome of the request;
- 3.9.1 – The ability to trigger planning application referrals to Committee at any stage of the process;
- 3.9.2(a)i – Current housing scheme limits to remain (any developments over 4 dwellings to be referred to Committee); and
- Possibilities of how to deal with, or remove from the Committee agenda, those applications that fall outside of the Scheme of Delegation (such as employee applications, Council interests, etc.) but are not deemed to be controversial.

The Committee noted that a Special Meeting of the Planning Committee might be required to consider the amended draft and that the final draft would be submitted to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

Planning Applications

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

LA04/2015/1102/F - Sub division of a dwelling to form a pair of semi-detached houses (retrospective) at 42 Strathmore Park South

The case officer outlined the main aspects of the application and explained that, after assessment, it had been recommended for refusal on the grounds that:

- the proposal was contrary to Policy QD 1 of Planning Policy Statement 7: Quality Residential Environments in that it would, if permitted, result in unacceptable damage to the local character and environmental quality, by reason of overdevelopment of the site which does not respect the context of the surrounding area and would set an undesirable precedent; and
- the proposal was contrary to Policy LC1 of the Addendum to Planning Policy Statement 7: Safeguarding the Character of Established Areas in that the proposed development was not in keeping with the overall character and environmental quality of the established residential area.

The Committee received representation from Mrs. A. Stewart, applicant, and Mr. A. Acheson, agent, on behalf of the applicant. They outlined a range of objections to

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

the recommendation for refusal, which included that there were no objections to the proposal, and the character of Strathmore Park South. Mr. Acheson advised that they were encouraged by the policy statements outlined in the case officer report, as it referenced balanced communities and housing choice, the reuse of existing buildings, and the processes of change being important. He also suggested that the conversion was affordable, attractive, sustainable, and flexible and car parking was available to the front of the property. Mrs. Stewart highlighted the need for the sub division of the property. They suggested that a site visit would help inform the Committee further.

The Deputy Lord Mayor, Cllr Campbell, also outlined her support for the application. She suggested that the proposed application was not detrimental to the character of the area and that there was not an increase in the footprint of the site. She concluded that the area was mixed housing, and that the hard-standing area to the front of the property should not be a consideration as a neighbouring development had already set this precedent.

After discussion, given the issues which had been raised regarding the character of the area, car parking, and the size of the proposal, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the application to enable a site visit to be undertaken to allow the Committee to acquaint itself with the location and the proposal at first hand.

The Committee agreed also that appropriate conditions be included within the report for consideration by the Committee in February, so that the option to grant approval to the proposal could be considered.

(Councillor Lyons entered the meeting at this point)

(Reconsidered Item) LA04/2015/0529/F - Construction of a drive-thru restaurant along with car parking, access and general site works at 233-263 Shore Road

(Alderman McGimpsey and Councillors Hutchinson and Lyons took no part in the discussion or decision-making of the application since they had not been in attendance at the meeting on 13th December when it had originally been considered).

(Before the meeting, the Chairperson informed the Committee that a second request to speak had been received from the applicant citing exceptional circumstances. He advised that the group had already made a presentation at the Committee Meeting on 13th December. The Committee agreed to receive the second deputation based on the issue of the zoning of the land for housing in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP)).

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 13th December, given the issues which had been raised regarding the zoning of the land and residential amenity, it had agreed to defer consideration of the application so that the amended plans which had been received could be assessed regarding residential amenity and for a reconsidered potential recommendation for an approval, in spite of it being zoned for housing in BMAP, to be provided for consideration.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

The case officer informed the Committee that, after the agenda had been published, additional information had been received from the agent regarding the zoning of the land for housing in BMAP, flexibility on zoned sites, the Planning Appeals Commission's designation of the site, Surveyor's confirmation of construction costs outstripping the end value, planning history of the site, BMAP's ability to meet housing needs, and the established character and uses of the Shore Road. He advised that the correspondence outlined a range of issues, such as the current site being an eyesore, the site formed a small portion of the housing zone and would not prejudice the remainder of the site and the proposed drive-thru restaurant would be a subordinate use of the site. It was reported that the agent had also submitted plans to address the concerns regarding the use of the restaurant and car park and the applicant would accept a planning condition restricting hours of use of the restaurant and car park from 6am to midnight.

The case officer also highlighted that further correspondence had been received from the applicant clarifying the Planning history of the site. It explained that the purpose of planning approval under Z/2009/0015/F, was to modify part of the layout of the previous approval under Z/2003/2855/F, reducing the number of houses within the northern area of the site from 10 to 5. The reason stated for this amendment was that the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company had vested an area of the land and therefore reduced the developable area of the site. This resulted in a reduction from the previously approved layout from 53 to 48 units.

The case officer outlined the response of the Planning Department to the aforementioned issues raised, as outlined in the Late Items Report Pack.

The case officer advised that if Members were minded to approve the application, it was recommended that delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning and Place to finalise planning conditions. He pointed out that the draft conditions were outlined in the report, however, the recommendation remained that the application should be refused.

The Committee received representations from Ms. D. Smith, representing McDonald's and Mr. R. O'Toole, acting on behalf of the applicant. Mr. O'Toole outlined a range of objections to the recommended refusal which related to the expired permission for housing, retail being consistent with the previous use of the site, and housing developments being unobtainable. He suggested that the current site was an eyesore and that the fencing would remain should the development be refused. He suggested that the impact of the proposal on BMAP would be minimal, the proposal was for only a small percentage of the site, and the application had the potential for job creation and investment in the area. In addition, Ms. Smith explained her objections to the recommendation and suggested that there was a keen commitment to invest in the area. She advised that the proposed restaurant was sustainable, would provide new employment to the area and employees would have access to a range of training and qualifications. She suggested that the company would work hard to keep the site litter free.

After discussion, given the issues which had been raised regarding the viability of housing on the site, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of the application to

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

enable the applicant to provide a viability analysis or robust evidence to demonstrate that marketing of the site for housing had been undertaken. The Committee also agreed that a site visit be undertaken to allow the Committee to acquaint itself with the location and the proposal at first hand.

The Committee noted also that further context be added to the report regarding an overview of housing demand in North Belfast and the City.

LA04/2015/1310/F Construction of seven houses and two apartments with associated car parking and landscaping at 263-287 Beersbridge Road

(Councillor McAteer had left the room whilst the item was under consideration)

The case officer apprised the Committee of the proposal and highlighted that the site was located on land zoned for social housing in BMAP, and adjacent to Avoniel Local Landscape Policy Area (BT 087).

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

The Committee noted also that the quality of the location maps in the case officer's report needed to be larger and of better quality.

LA04/2016/1213/RM - Demolition of existing buildings and the erection of 11 storey building comprising of 3 ground floor retail units, 307 studios for use as purpose built managed student accommodation with associated communal and amenity facilities, including a gym and all associated site and access works at 48-52 York Street

(Councillor Hussey had left the room whilst the item was under consideration)

The case officer outlined the proposed reserved matters planning application.

She advised that the site was located within the Belfast City Centre as designated in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan and within the Laganside and Docks Character Area (CC015).

The Committee approved the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out in the case officer's report and, in accordance with Section 76 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2015, delegated power to the Director of Planning and Place, in conjunction with the City Solicitor, to enter into discussions with the applicant to explore the scope of any Planning Agreements which might be realised by way of developer contributions and, if so, to enter into such an Agreement on behalf of the Council. The Committee agreed also to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Place for the final wording of the conditions.

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

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

LA04/2016/2460/F - Non-compliance with condition 2 of planning permission Z/2013/1267/F, which refers to the submission of a construction management Strategy at Bombardier Aerospace, Wing Manufacturing and Assembly Facility, Airport Road West

The Committee considered the proposed application at the main assembly building for the aircraft manufacturing company, which was accessed from Airport Road West.

It was reported that the application sought permission for non-compliance with the requirements of condition 2 of planning application ref: Z/2013/1267/F which was for 'Alterations to the roof for the installation of roof mounted photovoltaic panels'. This was approved on 12th December, 2013. The condition to be removed related to a safety strategy that had to be in place prior to commencement of construction, given the proximity of the site to the Belfast City Airport.

The case officer highlighted that as the development had now been completed and the airport had no objection.

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

LA04/2016/2430/F - Installation of the Mew Island Optic within Transparent structure at Victoria Wharf Titanic Quarter

(Councillor Armitage, who had declared an interest in this application, withdrew from the table whilst it was under discussion and took no part in the debate or decision-making process.)

(Councillor Dorrian had left the room whilst the item was under consideration)

The case officer outlined the proposed installation of an optic light and associated housing and supporting structures on lands at Victoria Wharf, Titanic Quarter.

It was noted that the application, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, had been presented to the Committee since the project was partially funded by the Council.

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

(Councillor Armitage returned to the Committee table at this point)

LA04/2015/1149/F - 8 detached dwellings and garages (change of house type to that previously approved under Z/2012/1256/RM) on land adjacent to Queens University Belfast Playing Fields

The Committee considered a proposal for amendments to include changes to house types to that previously approved under Z/2012/1256/RM with associated vehicular access, car parking and landscaping.

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

(Councillor Dorrian returned to the Committee table at this point)

LA04/2016/0899/F - Part internal demolition, conversion from 3 flats to 6 flats including internal alterations, a 3 storey rear extension and rear dormer at 113 Eglantine Avenue

The Committee was apprised of the principal aspects of the application.

The Development Plan (BMAP) identified the site as within the development limits of Belfast and within the Malone Conservation Area.

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

(Meeting adjourned for 10 minutes at this point)

LA04/2015/1536/F - 6 apartments at 81, 83 and 85 Channing Street

(Councillor Garrett had left the room whilst the item was under consideration)

The Committee considered the proposed application for the demolition of 3 dwellings and the construction of 6 apartments.

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

LA04/2016/1790/F - 7 flats at 87 Malone Avenue/6 Eglantine Place

The case officer outlined an application which sought the demolition of the existing property and the erection of a new building comprising of 7 flats, using salvaged brick to reform the front and main gable facades, to match the approval Z/2013/0497/F (with minor amendments).

The application site was located within the Malone Conservation Area (Sub Area B: Eglantine/Wellesley/Wellington). The case officer advised that the site had been granted planning permission (Z/2007/0803/F) in 2007 for the conversion from five flats to nine including a side/rear three storey extension and alterations.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

The case officer pointed out that there was an error, under paragraph 3.1, in the report which should read *"In 2014, planning permission was approved for the conversion from five flats to **seven** including demolition of the rear extension, and the construction of a two/three storey extension (Z/2013/0497/F)."*

During discussion, Members' raised issues regarding the properties that had been demolished without authorisation. The case officer advised that this offense was being investigated under the enforcement scheme, however, this application proposed to remedy the breach and reinstate the façade using salvage brick.

Other issues raised by Members' included the impact of the demolition on the conservation area, the design changes from the previous approval, the impact of the proposal on the adjoining building, loss of light, size of rooms, and the amenity space.

The Director highlighted that there was extant planning permission on the site and that building works had commenced.

The Committee, given the issues that had been raised regarding the pre-decision notice and the implementation of the current consent, agreed to defer consideration of the report, so that legal advice could be outlined on the demolition of the façade and the potential consequences to the extant planning permission, at the next committee.

(Councillor Garrett returned to the Committee table at this point)

LA04/2015/1561/F - 3G pitch with flood-lighting, hurling wall, boundary fence with netting, the reconstruction of terracing, 2 new dug-outs and resurfacing of the existing carpark at St. Pauls GAC, 98 Shaws Road

The Committee considered the proposed application.

The case officer informed the Committee that, after the agenda had been published, a request from Environmental Health had been received regarding further information on the Hurling wall structure and floodlight conditions regarding noise mitigation measures for the Hurling Wall and conditions surrounding the hours of operation.

It was noted that the application, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, had been presented to the Committee since the Council had an interest in the application.

The Committee granted approval to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report and agreed also to delegate power to the Director of Planning and Place for the final wording of the conditions.

LA04/2016/1942/RM - Right hand turn junction to provide access from Boucher Road to the Olympia Sports Village

The Committee was apprised of the principal aspects of the application.

It was noted that the application, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, had been presented to the Committee since the Council had an interest in the application.

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

LA04/2016/2372/F - Prefabricated double classroom unit at Christ the Redeemer Primary School, Lagmore Drive

The case officer outlined the proposed application.

It was noted that the application, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, had been presented to the Committee since the Council had an interest in the scheme.

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

LA04/2016/1943/F - Modular community building at Christ the Redeemer Church, Lagmore Drive

(Alderman McGimpsey had left the room whilst the item was under consideration)

The Committee considered the application for a modular community building with associated hard and soft landscaping within the grounds of Christ the Redeemer Church.

It was noted that the application, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, had been presented to the Committee since the Council had an interest in the scheme.

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

LA04/2016/2448/F - Temporary site access to serve construction of a 3G training pitch at Gort Na Mona GAC, Upper Springfield Road

The Committee was apprised of the principal aspects of the application.

It was reported that temporary access was proposed from the Monagh By-pass which was a protected route and the site was unzoned in the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

It was noted that the application, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, had been presented to the Committee since the Council had an interest in the scheme.

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

LA04/2016/0828/F - Demolition of an existing property and replacement with dwelling and detached garage at 27 Newforge Lane

It was reported 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 case officer pointed out that there was an omission, under paragraph 13.0 - Representations from Elected members, in the report which should read "*office meeting arranged and attended by Councillor Boyle.*"

The case officer explained that, after assessment, the application had been recommended for refusal on the grounds, that:

- 1) The proposal was contrary to Policies BH10 and BH14 of the Department's Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage and the Design Guide for the Malone Conservation Area in that the dwelling made a positive material contribution to the character and appearance of the Malone Conservation Area, and no exceptional reason had been demonstrated which, in the judgement of the Council, justified its demolition;
- 2) The proposal was contrary to Policy BH12 of the Department's Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and the Built Heritage and Design Guide for the Malone Conservation Area in that if permitted it would harm the character and appearance of the Malone Conservation Area through inappropriate scale, massing, design and detailing; and
- 3) The proposal was contrary to Policy BH12 of the Department's Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning, Archaeology and Policy QD1 of PPS 7 in that if permitted it would harm the character and appearance of the Malone Conservation Area through loss of mature vegetation.

The Committee refused the application for the reasons as set out in the case officer's report.

LA04/2016/2477/F - Change of use from a butcher shop to a hot food bar with rear roof odour extraction flue at 47 Castlereagh Road

The case officer outlined an application which sought a change of use from retail to a hot food outlet selling hot and cold food and drinks.

**Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 17th January, 2017**

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

LA04/2016/1362/F - Construction of a sensory garden to include; play equipment, safety surfacing, hard standings, tree and shrub planting, with a 2.4 high paladin fence at land leading to 115 Blacks Road

(Councillor Garrett, who had declared an interest in this application, withdrew from the table whilst it was under discussion and took no part in the debate or decision-making process.)

The Committee considered the application which sought permission to provide a new sensory garden/play facility and associated fencing.

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 to the application, subject to the imposing of the conditions set out within the case officer's report.

Chairperson

Planning Committee

Tuesday, 24th January, 2017

SPECIAL MEETING OF PLANNING COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillors Johnston (Chairperson);
Councillors Dorrian, Garrett, Hussey,
Jones, Magee, McAteer and Mullan.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. P. Williams, Director of Planning and Place;
Mr. E. Baker, Development Engagement Manager; and
Miss. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Alderman McGimpsey and Councillors Armitage, and Carson.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were recorded.

Restricted Item

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.

Cash Limits 2017/18

The Director of Finance and Resources presented the Members with the proposed Cash Limit for the Planning Committee for the year 2017/18, as recommended by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 20th January, 2017.

He outlined to the Members the next steps in the rate setting process which would lead to the district rate being set by the Council at its meeting on 1st February.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. agreed that the report would not be subject to call-in, given that it would cause an unreasonable delay and would be prejudicial to both the Council and the public's interests in striking the district rate by the legislative deadline of 15th February, 2017;

**Special Planning Committee,
Tuesday, 24th January, 2017**

2. agreed that a cash limit of £1,520,440 be set for the Planning Committee, for the year 2017/2018, with the individual service cash limits detailed in the report; and
3. noted the next steps in the rate setting process.

Chairperson

Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee

Thursday, 12th January, 2017

MEETING OF BELFAST WATERFRONT AND ULSTER HALL LTD. SHAREHOLDERS' COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Walsh (Chairperson);
The Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Campbell;
Alderman Haire; and
Councillors Copeland, Dorrian, Graham,
Johnston, McDonough-Brown, Mullan and O'Donnell.

In attendance: Mr. D. Durkan, Director of Development;
Ms. C. Toolan, Managing Director of Belfast Waterfront
and Ulster Hall Ltd;
Mr. I. Bell, Business Support Director, Belfast Waterfront
and Ulster Hall Ltd; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

An apology for inability to attend was reported from Councillor O'Neill.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 21st 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 recorded.

RESTRICTED ITEM

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.

Business Plan 2017/2018

The Managing Director of Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. (BWUH Ltd.) provided the Members with an overview of the key contents of the 2017/2018 Business Plan.

**Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee,
Thursday, 12th January, 2017**

In conjunction with the Business Support Director, they provided the Committee with an overview of the company's Year to Date performance and of the Strategic Goals which BWUH Ltd. had agreed upon, which included:

- delivering 50,000 annual conference delegate days, 35,000 of which would be out-of-state visitors, by 2020;
- delivering six National Large Association conferences each year from 2020;
- delivering six International/ European Association conferences each year from 2020;
- reducing the subsidy by £1.6million by 2020;
- creating employment development programmes;
- developing partnerships with other city businesses; and
- supporting local sourcing/procurement strategies where appropriate.

The Managing Director advised the Committee that the company would face some challenges over the next 12 months. She highlighted that the level of competition was growing, with Cardiff and Aberdeen opening new conference centres in 2018, and added that the uncertainty around the impact that Brexit would have was widely thought to be felt over the next two years.

In relation to the to the challenges which BWUH Ltd. would face, the Managing Director explained to the Members that they were working to ensure that the culture in the Sales team was proactive and customer-focused from the outset, rather than reactive and operationally driven.

The Managing Director confirmed that BWUH Ltd. would work closely with the Ulster University and Belfast Metropolitan College in order to develop student placements, apprenticeships and work experience opportunities for local schools. The Committee was also advised that a Management Leadership Programme had been arranged for 18 middle level managers in BWUH Ltd.

In response to a Member's question regarding staffing and recruitment, the Managing Director advised that she had had discussions with the Trade Unions and had outlined to them that there would be some changes in the recruitment of new staff. She explained to the Members that, in line with the entertainment and conference industry, more flexibility was required in relation to working hours and that this would be included in the contracts for new positions. She advised the Members that they would also be looking at annual leave, sick pay and pension requirements for any future employees, but confirmed that the terms and conditions for existing staff would remain unchanged at this time.

The Managing Director outlined to the Committee that one of the commitments which the company had made was to hold a Community Service Day each year, where the entire team, including partners, would spend one day volunteering to deliver a community project, such as refurbishing a classroom or creating a community garden. She advised the Members that they would work with the local representatives to select the project.

**Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee,
Thursday, 12th January, 2017**

In response to a further Member's question regarding the low occupancy rate for the Ulster Hall, the Managing Director advised the Committee that a new Programme Manager had been appointed for BWUH Ltd. and that he would be working to ensure maximum yield for both venues. She reminded the Members that the Grand Opera House would be closing in January 2018 for almost a year for major refurbishment, and that that would create some opportunities for the Ulster Hall, at least in the short term.

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed the Business Plan for the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. for 2017/2018.

Audit, Governance and Risk

Corporate Risk Management Update

The Director of Development reminded the Committee that the corporate risk register and related processes were subject to a fundamental review in 2015/2016. He advised the Members that this included a review and re-score of all the corporate risks, including target risk scores. It was agreed that management would begin to report to the relevant Committees on the progress being made to manage the key risks.

The Committee was reminded that the risk for the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee was an "inability to effectively manage business performance as set out in the contract in order to meet the terms and conditions of the Letter of Offer." The Director outlined the current measures which were in place to manage the risk to an acceptable level, including legal agreements, amendment to Standing Orders, project governance and a number of Service Level Agreements.

The Director of Development also reminded the Members that, in addition to those controls, a fourth Gateway Review of the Belfast Waterfront Conference and Exhibition Centre Project had been completed over a three day period in August, 2016. The Director advised the Committee that this gateway Review had been completed by an independent review team which had determined the 'Delivery confidence assessment' as 'Amber', where they had made a number of recommendations which had either been implemented already or were underway. The Committee was advised that the fifth Gate Review was likely to take place in August, 2017.

The Committee noted the arrangements which were in place to manage the risk, the progress which was being made to implement controls and measures to reduce the level of risk further, and the proposed six monthly process for reporting.

Chairperson

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