

# Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 16th January, 2015

## MEETING OF SHADOW STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Stalford (Chairman);  
Councillors Attwood, Boyle, B. Groves,  
Haire, Hargey, Hutchinson, Jones, Kingston,  
Long, McAteer, McCabe, McNamee, McVeigh,  
Robinson, Rodgers and Spence.

In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;  
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources/  
Deputy Chief Executive;  
Mr. A. Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure;  
Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;  
Mr. J. Walsh, Town Solicitor;  
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

### Apology

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Carson.

### Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 3rd and 19th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Shadow Council at its meeting on 6th January, subject to the omission of the minute of the meeting of 19th December under the heading "European Social Fund – Support for Employability", which at the request of Councillor Stalford had been taken back to the Committee for further consideration. It was reported that a further report in the matter would be submitted to the meeting of the Committee on 30th January.

### Declarations of Interest

Councillor McAteer declared an interest in respect of Item 7(a) Creative and Cultural Belfast Fund.

## Modernisation and Improvements

### Active Belfast Limited- Resourcing and Governance

The Director of Parks and Leisure submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

#### **“1.0 Relevant background information**

**1.1 At its meeting in October, the Committee requested a further paper in its consideration of the composition of the Active Belfast Limited board of Directors.**

#### **2.0 Key issues**

##### **2.1 Resources**

Until such times as the Board is fully populated, Active Belfast Limited has will be minimally resourced. However, it is required to have independent legal and accounting advisors, in line with good governance and charitable law requirements.

Previously, Committee had considered the potential to make a loan available to Active Belfast Limited. However, further legal advice proposes that this is integrated into the contract between Active Belfast Limited and the Council as a grant award.

It is anticipated that this will not exceed £45,000 per annum and will allow the Board of Directors to fulfil their obligations under company law e.g. Directors' indemnity insurance; preparation of annual audited accounts; and independent legal advice. This will be funded through in-service savings and re-alignment of existing revenue budgets.

There is no expectation at this point of any full-time human resource beyond bought-in services.

##### **2.2 Board composition**

In terms of populating the full Board of Directors, the legal advisors propose that it should be a representative board, while at the same time being of a manageable size to make effective decisions.

In line with the Council's aspiration to have stakeholder involvement, the following composition is proposed:

Representative		Process
Independent chair	1	Public advertisement/interview
Elected members	4	Nominated by SP&R Committee
Trade Union representatives	2	Nominations from staff body
Health partner i.e. Public Health Agency	1	Invitation from ABL
Sports partner i.e. Sports NI	1	Invitation from ABL
Funding partner i.e. DCAL	1	Invitation from ABL
Specialist expertise e.g. leisure	1	Public advertisement/interview
Legal/accounting/governance expertise	2	Public advertisement/interview
Education stakeholder e.g. Belfast Metropolitan College, BELB, CCMS	1	Public advertisement/interview
Disability stakeholder representative e.g. Disability Sport NI	1	Public advertisement/interview
<i>Council Programme Director i.e. Assistant Director of Parks and Leisure</i>	1	<i>Nominee of Council (ex officio/observer)</i>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>15+1</b>	

The trust's independent legal advisors have reviewed this proposal to ensure that it is in the interests of Active Belfast Limited. It is anticipated that the full board will be in place by the end of 2015. At the appropriate point, the interim Council-nominated Directors will step down from the Board.

The Council may at any time by notice in writing to the Active Belfast Limited remove or replace its nominees.

### 2.3 Recruitment process

The recruitment for the full board will take up to 12 months. Throughout the appointments process, the Board will continue to operate, with new Members joining over the period. It is planned that the Council nominees, TU nominees and 'partner'

organisations will be in place and inducted before summer 2015. With the public advertisement and interview process for the other 'stakeholder' or specialist positions, it is likely that this will take slightly longer, and will be completed by late 2015.

Advice on the recruitment and training for the new Board will be sought from Pinsent Masons, as well as the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and voluntary sector specialists.

#### 2.4 Fiduciary duty

Members are reminded that the Directors would have a fiduciary duty to the company i.e. their legal duty will be to act in the interests of the Company (rather than say, the Council). Detailed role descriptions will be developed in advance of the recruitment process, and an induction programme would be drafted for the directors highlighting their governance responsibilities to Active Belfast Limited.

As a result of the fiduciary duty, under the Council's Code of Conduct, Councillors who sit on the Board of Active Belfast Limited will not be able to participate in Council discussions on matters related to the contract performance and planning.

#### 2.5 Governance

In line with the accountability framework agreed by Committee in October, work is underway to develop the relevant protocols and reporting mechanisms. This will ensure that there are effective decision-making and performance management arrangements. SP&R Committee (and its successor) will be the committee to which performance reports and decisions will be brought.

#### 3.0 Resource Implications

**Financial:** A revenue grant is made available to Active Belfast Limited, up to £45,000 per annum. This will be funded through in-service savings and re-alignment of existing revenue budgets.

**Staff:** None  
**Assets:** None

#### **4.0 Equality Implications**

**The Leisure Transformation Programme was screened in for a full Equality Impact Assessment. Its conclusions were agreed by Committee in October 2014 and have been integrated into the relevant contractual agreements.**

#### **5.0 Committee decisions required**

**Committee is asked to:**

- 1. Approve the grant award to Active Belfast and authorise the Town Solicitor to give effect to that direction and finalise the necessary documents; and**
- 2. Agree the suggested composition for the Board of Directors for Active Belfast Limited.**

#### **6.0 Documents Attached**

**None”**

After discussion, the Committee agreed:

- (1) to approve the grant award to Active Belfast and authorised the Town Solicitor to give effect to that direction and finalise the necessary documents; and
- (2) to proceed with the appointment of the independent Chair, political representatives and the representatives on the Board who were not subject to public advertisement and that a further report on the positions to be filled by public advertisement be submitted to a future meeting.

### **Democratic Services and Governance**

#### **Presentation - The Role of the National Association of Councillors (Northern Ireland Region)**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 24th October, it had agreed to receive a presentation from representatives of the National Association of Councillors (Northern Ireland Region) on the important role of the Association in representing Members' interests.

Councillor Jones (Chairman of the Northern Ireland Region) was in attendance and he provided the Committee with a presentation. He outlined how the National Association supported Councillors, what the Association did for Councillors, its current aims and objectives and the makeup of the Executive Committee.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

**Finance/Value-for-Money**

**Rate Setting 2015-16**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1 Relevant Background Information**

1.1 This report provides members with an update on the current position with regard to the revenue estimates for 2015/16 and the key issues to be considered before setting the district rate for 2015/16. Members are asked to note that a final decision on the estimates and the district rate cannot be made until there is clarity on the amount of funding for transferring functions and the level of de-rating grant. A further Committee meeting is scheduled for 30 January.

**2 Key Issues**

**Summary Position**

Table 1 below summarises the current revenue estimates position, based on a zero increase in the district rate for 2015/16.

**Table 1  
Summary Revenue 2015/16 Revenue Estimates Position**

<b>Cost Increases</b>	
<b>Increase in Departmental Estimates</b>	<b>£9,266,997</b>
<b>Transfer of Functions Funding Gap</b>	<b>£1,023,653</b>
<b>Regeneration Resource</b>	<b>£448,895</b>
<b>Political Assistance</b>	<b>£175,000</b>
<b>Capital Financing – Transferring Loans</b>	<b>£677,319</b>
<b>Capital Financing – Leisure Efficiencies</b>	<b>£765,951</b>
<b>Capital Financing – Rate Base</b>	<b><u>£2,000,000</u></b>
<b>Total Increased Costs</b>	<b>£14,357,815</b>
<b>Financed By:</b>	
<b>Additional Rates Income</b>	<b>-£13,400,133</b>
<b>Additional De-Rating Grant</b>	<b>-£461,046</b>
<b>Applied Reserves</b>	<b><u>-£496,636</u></b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>Nil</b>

2.1 There are two key elements to setting the district rate and the estimates. The first part of the report deals with the amount of rates income which will be generated from the rate base and the second part deals with all the elements which make up the Council’s estimates.

## 2.2 Rate Income

This will be the first rate set for the new Council. This means that the rate base now includes all domestic and non-domestic properties transferring from Lisburn and Castlereagh. The final Estimated Penny Product (EPP) provided by Land and Property Services (LPS) and validated by Council officers and the Institute of Revenue, Rating and Valuation (IRRV) is £5,616,420. This means if the Council was to set a zero rate an additional £13,400,133 of rates income would be raised, bringing the total rates income to £143,116,491 for the new boundary area in 2015/16.

## 2.3 De-Rating Grant

In addition to district rate income the Council also receives an industrial de-rating grant from DOE. The de-rating grant compensates the Council for the loss of rate income due to the statutory de-rating (lowering of rates) of certain properties. LPS has notified the Council that the de-rating grant will increase by £461,046.

2.4 The DOE, however, have also advised, in their draft 2015/16 budget, that the de-rating grant will be subject to budget cuts. We have been advised that this would mean a reduction of £1,249,902. This is one of the key issues which needs to be resolved prior to the setting of the district rate.

## 2.5 DEPARTMENTAL ESTIMATES

The major driver of growth in the revenue estimates is the impact of the boundary changes. Departmental estimates for 2015/16, including provision for the new areas, have increased by £9.3m (7.87%)

2.6 Table 2 below shows the main pressures on departmental estimates in 2015/16. The key items are discussed below.

Table 2  
Departmental Budget Pressures 2015/16

Staff Transferring from Lisburn and Castlereagh	£3.28m
New Posts for LGR	£0.72m
Employee Pay Rise and Pension Costs	£2.43m
Transferring Assets Repairs and Maintenance	£0.33m
New Council Members Allowances	£0.52m
Waste Convergence and Disposal Costs	£4.29m
Cuts to Government Grants	£0.28m
Ulster Orchestra	<u>£0.15m</u>
Total Expenditure Pressures	£12.10m
<u>Less</u>	

Leisure Transformation Year 1 Efficiencies	-£0.77m
Corporate Efficiencies	<u>-£2.08m</u>
Net Impact on Departmental Budgets	£9.25m

- 2.7 **Staff Transferring from Lisburn and Castlereagh (£3.28m):** The details of all 141 staff from the Lisburn and Castlereagh Councils who will transfer to Belfast on the 1 April 2015, under the LGR transfer scheme, have been received and validated by the Human Resources Section. The costs associated with these transfers have been incorporated into the revenue estimates and the detail of the posts to be added to the establishment is included as Appendix 1.
- 2.8 **New Posts for LGR (£720k):** In addition to the transferring posts, the departmental estimates include the funding for 17 posts required to ensure the delivery of services on a converged basis. Details of these posts are included as Appendix 2.
- 2.9 **Employee Pay Rise and Pension Costs (£2.43m):** This covers the increase in employee costs arising from the national pay settlement and the increased NILGOSC pension contribution costs arising from compliance with the auto enrolment pension regulations.
- 2.10 **Transferring Assets Repairs and Maintenance (£330k):** This is the increase in existing planned maintenance budgets required for the annual maintenance and upkeep of assets transferring to Belfast.
- 2.11 **New Council Members Allowances (£520k):** The central government funding provided for Members allowances during the Shadow Council will end at the 31 March 2015, resulting in an increase in the net expenditure requirements for 2015/16.
- 2.12 **Waste Convergence and Disposal Costs (£4.29m):** This includes the provision of waste management services to the new boundary area, including the additional recycling, haulage and landfill gate fee costs. It also includes the increased costs associated with the implementation of the waste plan to ensure the Council's compliance with statutory waste management targets.
- 2.13 **Cuts to Government Grants (£284k):** This is the loss of income from existing grant funding streams provided to the Council by the DOE, which the DOE have advised will cease in its revised budget proposals for 2015/16. Further detail is provided in Appendix 3.



- 2.14 Ulster Orchestra (£150k): This represents the additional cost of the free use of the Ulster Hall which will be considered by Members as part of the rate setting process.**
- 2.15 Leisure Transformation Year 1 Efficiencies (£766k): These are the first year savings arising from the leisure transformation programme which will be transferred to the capital financing budget as part of the leisure estate capital financing strategy.**
- 2.16 Corporate Efficiencies (£2.084m): These are the savings generated through the corporate efficiency programme and include cost reductions in security, energy management, fleet and procurement contracts as well additional external income generation. The delivery of these savings ensures that the Council has met its commitment as part of the Investment Programme to deliver £20m of efficiency savings by 2015.**
- 2.17 Operational Impact of Service Convergence**
- The following paragraphs provide a summary of some of the key convergence issues which have affected the departmental estimates for 2015/16. Separate reports will be presented to the Transition Committee outlining the detailed arrangements for service convergence at the 1 April 2015.**
- 2.18 Development Dept: 8 community assets will transfer from Castlereagh. This includes 5 directly managed assets and 3 managed under lease and funding arrangements. In addition 25 community organisations will come into the new boundary area and currently 17 are supported by a council grants programme.**
- 2.19 H&ES Department: The extended boundary will mean the provision of Council services to an additional 21,000 households, 53,000 citizens residing in approximately 690 streets and the transfer of approximately 800 businesses and 160 commercial waste customers.**
- 2.20 It is estimated that:**
- the number of noise complaints and public health and housing complaints will increase in line with the population increase i.e. by 20%.**

- an additional 1.5 million bin collections per year with an additional 21,000 tonnes of waste collected, treated/recycled and disposed of as appropriate.
- the number of bulky household waste collections per annum will rise by 20% to 50,000
- approximately 312 additional miles to be cleansed weekly along with an additional 270 litter bins to be emptied and maintained.
- Pest Control service requests will increase by approximately 18% to 5402 per annum and that there will be a 28% increase in the number of manholes to be baited from 66,715 per annum.
- an additional 800 premises (food and other business) will require inspection by the Environmental Health service.
- Building Regulations workload is anticipated to increase by an additional 33%
- additional licensing functions, which include enforcement and administration, will be required for 30 licensed premises, 1 Outdoor licence, 2 Amusement Permits, 5 petroleum licences and 8 Street Trading licences
- at least 32 dangerous or dilapidated buildings have been identified.. These will be triaged against the impact matrix and then built into future submissions for additional funding should it arise or, where the Council can take action.

2.21 Parks and Leisure Department: In 2015/16 an additional 7 pitches, 4 MUGAs, 10 parks, and 15 playgrounds, 1 allotment site, 1 cemetery, 2 bowling green's and 1 BMX track, visitor centre, cottage and barge and 7 pavilions will transfer to Belfast.

2.22 19,400m of pathways plus additional structures (e.g. bridges, fences) and significant tree stock will also transfer.

2.23 In addition to the physical portfolio, it is estimated that the transferring new boundary area will include approximately 60 sporting organisations, 3 Post- Primary Schools, 18 Primary Schools, a wide range of community development organisations and 9 bonfire sites.

2.24 Property and Projects Department: At the 1 April, an additional 51 sites will transfer to Belfast representing a 20% increase to the BCC Estate. (BCC currently has 264 sites).

2.25 **TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS**  
Off Street Car parking and Planning

**At the 1 April 2015 Off Street Car Parking and Planning will transfer to the Council. As part of the rate setting process the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee will have to agree cash limits for the transferring functions.**

- 2.26 Off Street Car Parking operates at a surplus i.e. the income from car parking charges and penalty charge notices exceeds the running costs of the service, whereas Planning operates on a deficit basis i.e. the income from planning fees does not cover the running cost of the service..**
- 2.27 The arrangements for the transfer of functions to local government include the transfer of associated budgets. The DOE envisage that any funding for transferring services will be made on the basis of the net funding of all services transferring.**
- 2.28 A core principle of the transfer arrangements was that the transfer should be rates neutral. However as the Deloitte report (considered by the Committee at its meeting in November 2014) highlights, central government has changed this position to being budget neutral. The implication of this is that if costs are incurred by the Council which have not been budgeted for by central government then no funding associated with this expenditure will transfer. The cuts to central government funding have also increased the risk that the final figures agreed by the Executive for funding to be transferred to local government will be less than the resources required to deliver the transferred services.**
- 2.29 As part of the development of revenue estimates for the car parking and planning service, officers have been engaging with the DOE and DRD to obtain information on income trends, staffing levels, productivity, contract and overhead costs. On the basis of this information revenue estimates have been developed by officers for each of the transferring functions.**
- 2.30 This process has identified areas where costs which will be incurred by the Council are not covered by the proposed central government funding transfer and which will present a funding gap for which provision will need to be made within the revenue estimates.**
- 2.31 The current position with regard to the transfer of functions estimates and the funding gap is shown in Table 3 below.**

**Table 3**  
**Transfer of Functions Funding Gap**

<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>BCC Estimate</b>	<b>Proposed Central Govt. Funding</b>	<b>Funding Gap</b>
<b>Planning</b>	<b>£1,493k</b>	<b>£605k</b>	<b>£888k</b>
<b>Off Street Car Parking</b>	<b><u>-£1,345k</u></b>	<b><u>-£1,480k</u></b>	<b><u>£135k</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£148k</b>	<b>£875k</b>	<b>£1,023k</b>

2.32 While the funding gap of £1,023k has been included in the draft revenue estimates it should be noted that the final decision regarding the funding to transfer to local government has still not been made by the Executive and is not expected until later in January 2015. Appendix 4 provides a summary of the key funding gaps.

#### 2.33 Regeneration

Members will be aware that as part of the preparatory work for the transfer of regeneration powers a significant shortfall had been identified in the proposed transfer of resources to support City Regeneration. While the transfer of regeneration will not now take place until 1 April 2016 it would be prudent for the Council to ring fence resources for regeneration during 2015/16 which could be used to support the preparation for the transfer of regeneration powers and the City Centre regeneration plans. A separate budget of £449k has been included in the estimates for regeneration.

#### 2.34 Political Assistance

The draft estimates include growth of £175k for political assistance. This will be used to the work of party groups and not individual Members.

#### 2.35 Capital Financing

A separate Capital Programme report is being considered by Members at this Committee meeting.

2.36 The capital financing budget for 2015/16 proposed in the revenue estimates is summarised in Table 4 below.

**Table 4**  
**Capital Financing Budget 2015/16**

<b>Existing (Capital Programme) Budget 2014/15</b>	<b>£10.137m</b>
<b>Existing (Leisure Estate) Budget 2014/15</b>	<b><u>£3.230m</u></b>
	<b>£13.367m</b>
<b><u>Increase:</u></b>	
<b>Growth to cover Lisburn/Castlereagh Loans</b>	<b>£0.677m</b>
<b>Growth Leisure Transformation Savings Year 1</b>	<b>£0.766m</b>
<b>Growth Leisure Estate (From New Rate Base)</b>	<b><u>£2.000m</u></b>
<b>Total Capital Financing Budget 2015/16</b>	<b>£16.811m</b>

**2.37 Application of Credit Balance from Reserves**

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed the funding of running costs for 2 projects - Public Bike Hire and Innovation Centre, on an incremental reducing balance basis. The application of a credit balance transfer from reserves of £497k has been included in the draft estimates to ensure that these costs are not added to the district rate in 2015/16.

**2.38 Summary**

While significant progress has been made in the development of the 2015/16 revenue estimates, there are a number of decisions to be made by the Executive which would have a material impact on the level of the district rate for 2015/16. These can be summarised as:-

- With the exception of those grant funding streams which the DOE have proposed to cease, the impact of the central government funding cuts on the Council for 2015/16 will only become clear when the Executive Departmental Budgets are agreed.
- The level of funding for transferring functions has yet to be agreed by the Executive and the current estimated funding gap of £1m could therefore increase.
- The level of de-rating grant which the DOE pays to the Council to compensate it for the loss of rate income due to the statutory de-rating (lowering of rates) of certain properties is under consideration by the DOE as part of the central government cuts.

### **3 Recommendations**

**In view of the uncertainty regarding central government funding for 2015/16, Members are asked to note the progress on the development of the revenue estimates and the proposals outlined in the paper. A further Committee meeting is scheduled for 30 January. If the details are available in regards to the central government funding position Members will be requested, at this meeting, to agree the revenue estimates and district rate for 2015/16.”**

The Director of Finance and Resources outlined the main aspects of the report and provided a detailed presentation on the rates setting process. He pointed out that the Department of the Environment had revised its estimate of the cost of the transfer of functions and that an additional £735,554 was required to run a ‘fit for purpose’ planning function.

After a lengthy discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that the Chief Executive should write to the Minister for the Environment on behalf of the Committee to highlight the issues with funding a ‘fit for purpose’ planning function.

(Councillor McAteer, Deputy Chairman, in the Chair.)

### **Non – Recurrent Expenditure Requirements 2014-15 and 2015-16**

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

#### **“1.0 Relevant Background Information**

**1.1 This report presents the non-recurrent expenditure requirements for 2014/15 and 2015/16 and makes recommendations as to how these can be financed.**

#### **2.0 Key Issues**

##### **2.1 Non – Recurrent Expenditure 2014/15**

**The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee has already approved £2,962,241 of non-recurrent expenditure for 2014/15. This is summarised in Table One below. Members agreed, as part of their consideration of the half year finance position, that this expenditure would be financed from the forecast year end under spend of £4,307,000.**

<b>Table One: 2014/15 Non-Recurrent Expenditure</b>	
Leisure Mobilisation 2014/15	1,171,233
WFH Mobilisation	700,000
Innovation Centre	130,000
Temp Accommodation	80,000
Vehicles parks	164,461
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>2,245,694</b>
Data Transfer (Building Control)	38,753
Cleansing	80,393
Ulster Orchestra	100,000
SP&R Approved Funding Requests	153,500
Pensions	238,181
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>610,827</b>
Condition surveys and remedial works	9,000
Removal costs from Bedford House	38,720
Fit out costs of new building	50,000
Connection costs to new building	8,000
<b>Total Transfer of Functions</b>	<b>105,720</b>
<b>Total 2014/15</b>	<b>2,962,241</b>

## 2.2 Non – Recurrent Expenditure 2015/16

Table Two below outlines the non-recurrent expenditure requirements for 2015/16. The key drivers of these costs are the delivery of Investment Programme projects and transitional arrangements associated with local government reform.

Table Two: Non-Recurrent Expenditure 2015/16

Employees	1,694,736
Assets	573,052
Other	720,023
Transfer of Functions	323,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,310,811</b>

## 2.3 Employees

For the past three years temporary staff employed to support the delivery of Investment Programme projects and local government reform have been financed through the Waste Plan and the Local Government Reform Fund. These funds will come to an end on 31 March 2015. Table Three provides a summary of the temporary employee funding requirements by department. A detailed breakdown by post is provided at Appendix One.

**Table Three: Temporary Employees 2015/16**

Chief Executive's	408,458
Finance & Resources	126,718
Property & Projects	635,953
Health & Env. Services	133,385
Development	305,854
Car Parks	33,776
Planning	50,592
<b>Total Temp Employees</b>	<b>1,694,736</b>

## 2.4 Assets

Table Four details the one-off costs associated with the assets transferring from Lisburn and Castlereagh. Detailed surveys of the assets have been carried out and maintenance costings have been prepared. Appendix Two provides a summary of the proposed work by asset transferring.

**Table Four: One – Off Asset Costs 2015/16**

Property Maintenance - Assets transferring	393,235
Parks & Open Spaces/Tree & Path Works	127,307
Pitches Improvement	10,510
Street Signs	12,000
Building Signage	30,000
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>573,052</b>

## 2.5 Other

These costs include £429k to support the alignment of the Council's grant aid programmes for areas transferring from Lisburn and Castlereagh. A separate report on the Decade of Centenaries will be considered by the Committee at this meeting.

**Table Five: Other Costs 2015/16**

Licences	105,000
Community Planning & City Competitiveness	100,000
Grant & Community Support	429,023
Decade of Centenaries	86,000
<b>Total Other</b>	<b>720,023</b>



## 2.6 Transfer of Functions

Corporate signage on car parks must comply with legislative requirements and an additional £30k will be required to ensure compliance. Additional printers and computers will be required for the planning staff (45 staff) at a cost of £43k. The major additional expenditure requirement is £250k for advertising costs associated with planning applications. These are advertised in four local newspapers to ensure planning equality and legislative requirements are met.

Table Six: Transfer of Functions 2015/16

Corporate Signage to car parks	30,000
IT Hardware	43,000
Planning Advertising	250,000
<b>Total Transfer of Functions</b>	<b>323,000</b>

### Sources of Funding

- 2.7 Table Seven shows that through a combination of sources £4.3m of finance is available. It is recommended that a transition fund of £3.31m is established to cover the one-off costs for 2015/16.

Table Seven: Sources of Funding 2015/16

2014/15 Year end balance	1,344,759	
LGR Fund	331,511	
LTP Fund	420,000	
Capital under spend	<u>2,219,843</u>	
<b>Total funding available</b>		<b>4,316,113</b>
<b>Funding required</b>		<b><u>3,310,811</u></b>
<b>Balance remaining</b>		<b>1,005,302</b>

- 2.8 In terms of the remaining balance of £1m Members have a choice of transferring this to reserves or using it to support other priorities. At the Budget Panel it was agreed that further detailed discussion is required about the future of the Local Investment Fund, Belfast Investment Fund and the potential establishment of a Support Fund. A detailed report on this matter will be brought to Committee in February and it is therefore recommended that the allocation of the £1m balance should be considered as part of this future report.

### **3.0 Recommendations**

**Members are requested to agree to:**

- **The non-recurrent expenditure outlined in tables 3 to 6 for 2015/16.**
- **The establishment of a transition fund of £3.13m to finance this expenditure.”**

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

### **Capital Programme Update**

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the Capital Programme 2014/15, the Capital Financing for 2015/16, the implications of the Leisure Transformation Programme and specific project updates, namely, the Innovation Centre, the North Foreshore, the Waterfront Hall, the Creative Hub and future Council accommodation which would require decisions at a future meeting.

The Chief Executive reviewed the projects which were currently on the ground and those which were at tender stage. She highlighted the impact which Members' decisions would have on the Capital Programme and the Capital Financing and how those decisions to progress a Project or to provide additional funding had a consequential impact on the overall level of financing available for other Projects.

The Chief Executive outlined in detail the specific Projects which would require additional monies as a result of the impact in the delay in the receipt of Letters of Offer and the reductions in those amounts. She explained that the Committee was not being asked to make any decisions in relation to those projects at this meeting but that a further report would be submitted to the Committee on 30th January.

After discussion, the Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### **Asset Management**

#### **Belfast City Hall Big Screen**

The Committee considered a report in relation to the City Hall Big Screen which was located in the City Hall grounds and, after discussion, agreed:

- (1) to grant approval for officers to issue a new Expression of Interest tender for a content management provider (inclusive of five minutes of advertising every thirty minutes) for the City Hall Big Screen at zero cost to the Council and that authority be delegated to the Director of Development to appoint an appropriate provider;
- (2) that the appointment would be reviewed after twelve months and a report submitted to the Committee for consideration; and

- (3) that, until a new screen content provider was appointed, officers be permitted to restrict content to details generated by the Council.

### **Good Relations and Equality**

#### **Stained Glass Window - Spanish Civil War**

The Committee was reminded that, in March, 2014, the Council had considered the following Motion which had been proposed by Councillor McCarthy and seconded by Councillor Webb:

“This Council agrees to the installation of a stained glass window in the City Hall to commemorate the Sons of our City who fought in support of the democratically elected Government of Spain against the forces of Fascism”.

The Motion had been referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee which, at its meeting on 21st March, had agreed that the matter should be referred to the Joint Group of Party Leaders Forum and Historic Centenaries Working Group (now known as the Diversity Working Group) for its consideration and comment. Thereafter, it would be a matter for the Committee to determine. That course of action had been in keeping with the methodology which had been used by the Council in 2011, prior to the installation in the City Hall of the “Celtic Myths and Legends” window.

The Committee was advised that consideration of the stained glass window was not included within the current review of memorabilia in the City Hall which was being undertaken and, therefore, would require a separate budget to be set aside.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed that the sum of up to £25,000 from general reserves be provided to support the erection of a stained glass window in the City Hall commemorating those from Belfast who had fought in support of the democratically elected Government of Spain against the forces of fascism.

#### **Decade of Centenaries**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

##### **“1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 Members may be aware of the Council’s decision at its meeting on the 1st November 2011 to a three stranded approach to marking the Historic Centenaries covering the period 1912 – 1922. Strand Two is currently in operation which covers the period 1914-1918. Council agreed that Strand Two would cover the period incorporating World War I, including the Somme, and the Easter Rising. Major exhibitions would be commissioned covering these two events as well as civic and other activities to mark both commemorations.**

- 1.2 In addition, at its meeting on the 29th November 2013, the Joint Party Group Leaders Forum and the Historic Centenaries Working Group agreed in principle to hosting the outdoor exhibition 'Fields of Battle – Lands of Peace'. The group agreed to grant approval in principle to the exhibition being displayed in Belfast during 2016, subject to the costs being reasonable and appropriate funding being made available and subject to the agreement of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
- 1.3 The Good Relations Manager was delegated to work up costings and specifications for an exhibition for 2016, and additional outreach and engagement programmes and costs associated with the staging of the Fields of Battle – Lands of Peace exhibition. These issues were discussed by the Council's Diversity Working Group at its meeting on the 5th December 2014.
- 1.4 Following agreement on the way forward at the Diversity Working Group, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the Diversity Working group at its meeting on the 12th December 2014.
- 1.5 These recommendations are now being brought before the Shadow Policy and Resources Committee for noting and approval since the events and exhibitions will take place in the new Council arrangements.

## **2 Key Issues**

- 2.1 As has already been agreed through the Diversity Working Group, officers have met with a number of organisations to discuss the potential for collaboration and additional funding. OFMDFM and DCAL will be involved in planning and delivery in addition to the Irish Government's Department of Foreign Affairs regarding the forthcoming Decade of Centenaries.
- 2.2 Members will also be aware that the Irish government have officially launched Ireland 2016, an initiative which is led by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to reflect on the legacy of the period – this will include capital projects, state events, and various programmes relating to culture, young people and education etc. The five intersecting themes are: Remember, Reconcile, Imagine, Present and Celebrate.
- 2.3 Members may wish to also note that for Strand One covering 1912-1914, a budget of £99,000 was set aside by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for a large programme of events with OFMDFM contributing an additional £47,000. This

amount of £146,000 covered the exhibition, a civic dinner and a series of events and activities around several other themes and publicity and educational activities.

- 2.4 In accordance with the desire of Members to deliver one exhibition covering the period of 1916 incorporating a number of themes as well as the key events, Officers are drawing up a specification for this. As previously reported, the cost for the Shared History - Different Allegiance exhibition was approximately £70,000 and it is estimated that a similar exhibition for 2016 could cost in the region of £80,000. Expenditure on additional elements such as civic events, artwork, drama, lectures, community outreach programme and hospitality based on the previous strand was approximately £94,000. This would bring the total amount required to undertake the work for 2016 to £174,000. These costs have been noted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on the 12th December.
- 2.5 As to some of the events around the period, Officers would hope to include part of the activity within the Good Relations Programme for 2016/2017 but would also look to the potential of collaborating with other agencies/bodies where appropriate. Officers will also continue conversations to seek external funding where appropriate.
- 2.6 In relation to the Fields of Battle – Lands of Peace exhibition which is a separate exhibition, Officers have spoken to the exhibition Director and have been advised that further details would be available in the New Year. Costings for this project have been previously been estimated at £40,000.00. Officers would emphasise that the organisers would have to seek funds centrally in the first instance for such an exhibition as this amount is not included in the costings outlined above.

### **3 Resource Implications**

#### **3.1 Financial**

In relation to what has been noted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in section 2.4 above, the following costs are now requested to the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee:

**April 2015 – March 2016**

**Decade of Centenaries- cost of the exhibition, Civic Events and additional activities £86,000 (plus additional £45,000 from OFMDFM to be secured as match funding)**

The Director of Finance and Resources has included £86k of non-recurrent funding as part of the non-recurrent expenditure report which is included on today's committee agenda.

### 3.2 April 2016 – March 2017

Decade of Centenaries £47,000  
Funding for the Fields of Battle- Lands of Peace £40,000.

The costs for 2016/17 will be considered as part of the 2015/16 half year financial re-allocations.

## 4 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 The Working Group agreed in October 2011 that events marking the Decade of Centenaries would operate under a set of agreed principles and also provides an opportunity for the Council to contribute to a better understanding of the past and to promote respect for the complexity of our shared history. These are attached for Members information.

## 5 Call In

5.1 This decision is subject to call in.

## 6 Recommendations

6.1 To note the information in the above report in relation to the preparations currently underway for the Decade of Centenaries events in 2016 and the Fields of Battle Exhibition.

6.2 To approve the costs for the Decade of Centenaries exhibition, civic events and additional activities at a total sum of £133,000 over 2 years, with authority given to officers to seek external funding towards the exhibition of £45,000 from OFMDFM.

6.3 To agree to proceed with planning for the fields of battle exhibition at a cost of £40,000 to be incurred in 2016-17.

6.4 Note that the Director of Finance and Resources has included £86k of non-recurrent funding as part of the non-recurrent expenditure report which is included on today's committee agenda to cover costs for 2015-16 and note that the financing of the proposed expenditure for 2016/17 will be considered as part of the 2015/16 half year financial re-allocations."

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Cross-Cutting Issues**

**Notice of Motion re Use of Bus Lanes at times of Emergency –  
Response from the Minister**

The Committee was advised that the Shadow Council, at its meeting on 8th December, had passed the undernoted Motion, which had been moved by Councillor Boyle and seconded by Councillor Mullan:

“Belfast District Council urges the Department for Regional Development to implement measures permitting the use of bus lanes by all vehicles at times of emergency or chronic congestion, thereby saving thousands of lost working hours to the economy of our City.”

The Committee was advised that a letter had been forwarded to the Department outlining the Council’s decision and a response from the Minister’s secretary had been received on 8th January. The letter pointed out that, whilst the current legislation did not empower the Department to suspend bus lanes, a constable in uniform could exercise his or her discretion to permit all vehicles to use bus lanes in times of emergency. Such a decision, it was pointed out, should be taken only with a view to ensuring that the travelling public would be informed in a timely manner in order to avoid confusion.

The Committee noted the receipt of the response from the Minister and agreed that a letter be forwarded to the Police Service of Northern Ireland seeking its views on when they would exercise their discretion to permit all vehicles to use bus lanes in times of emergency.

**Notice of Motion: Use of Bus Lanes by Registered Taxis –  
Response from the Minister**

The Committee was reminded that the Shadow Council, at its meeting on 8th December, had passed unanimously the following Motion, which had been moved by Councillor R. Brown and seconded by Councillor Robinson:

“Belfast District Council expresses concern at the proposal to permit all registered taxis to use the City’s bus lanes, notes that this proposal will allow for an 8 fold increase in the number of taxis permitted to use these lanes from 500 to approximately 4000 vehicles, believes that this proposal will have a detrimental impact on the levels of cycling and the efficiency of public transport, considers this proposal incompatible with the Council’s vision of Belfast as a sustainable City and calls on the Government to limit the use of the City’s bus lanes by taxis which are wheelchair accessible only.”

A letter outlining the Council’s decision had been forwarded to the Department for Regional Development on 9th December and a response had been received from the Minister’s secretary. The response indicated that the Minister (Mr. Danny Kennedy) would take the final decision on the use of bus lanes by taxis only when he had seen the Department of the Environment’s revised regulations. The Minister would base his

decision on the responses which had been received during the 2012 consultation process on the proposed regulations, notably, he pointed out that the Council's viewpoint would be taken on board by the Minister in making a final decision.

Noted.

### **Creative and Cultural Belfast Fund**

(The Deputy Chairman, Councillor McAteer, left the meeting while this item was under discussion.)

In the absence of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, it was agreed that Councillor Boyle take the Chair.

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**"1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 As Members will recall, in August 2013 the Development Committee agreed to open the Creative and Cultural Belfast Fund.**
- 1.2 The purpose of the fund is to deliver large-scale, ambitious arts and heritage projects that challenge social exclusion. Proposals must demonstrate how they support the Cultural Framework's Distinctly Belfast and Inspiring Communities themes and will be:**
  - cross-community**
  - cross-city**
  - delivered in partnership between cultural and community organisations**
  - of benefit to hard-to-reach areas and communities.**
- 1.3 £150,000 per annum was ring-fenced in the 2013/14 and 2014/15 budgets, with the same level of support projected for 2015/16 subject to approval of draft budget estimates. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) agreed to provide match funding of £450,000, bringing the programme budget to £900,000. £10,000 per year is ring-fenced for administrative costs. This means the total funding budget is £870,000 to be awarded in two tranches.**
- 1.4 Tranche 1 of Creative and Cultural Belfast opened in September 2013, and in February 2014, Members agreed to award a total of £585,000, comprising one exceptional grant of £300,000 and three standard grants of £95,000.**



**1.5 In August 2014 the Development Committee agreed to open Tranche 2 of Creative and Cultural Belfast to support three projects at a maximum grant of £90,000 per project.**

**1.6 Criteria for decision-making**

**Interested organisations were required to submit an expression of interest to the Tourism, Culture and Arts (TCA) Unit. TCA officers determined whether the project proposal was likely to meet basic eligibility criteria and be a good fit with the objectives of the funding scheme. Applicants were then issued with an application form.**

**1.7 Completed application forms were then assessed in three stages.**

- 1. Eligibility check. Applications were checked against the basic eligibility criteria.**
- 2. Risk assessment. Officers carried out a risk assessment to determine whether the proposal was realistic and achievable.**
- 3. Scoring criteria. Officers then scored applications against the following criteria:**
  - 1. Fit with the objectives of the fund**
  - 2. Effective project management**
  - 3. Value for money**

**2 Key Issues**

**2.1 Applications received**

**Tranche 2 of the CCB fund opened on 2 September 2014. It was widely advertised in local newspapers, via the Central Grants Unit mailing list, on the Council website and on partner websites, such as ACNI and Community Arts Partnership (CAP). Officers from the TCA unit also provided one-to-one advice sessions to organisations seeking further guidance and support.**

**2.2 Forty-three expressions of interest were received, of which 28 organisations were invited to make an application. Proposals that were unsuccessful were offered a debrief and signposted to alternative sources of funding where appropriate.**

2.3 The closing date for receipt of completed applications was 31 October 2014. A total of 26 applications were received. One application was deemed ineligible.

2.4 Principles of the assessment process

Applications are received and eligibility checked by the Central Grants Unit before being passed to TCA officers for scoring. Officers undertook thorough assessments of the applications, which were then agreed by a panel of officers and a representative from ACNI.

2.5 An independent moderation panel made up of a Head of Service, Unit managers and a second representative from ACNI was established. This moderation panel sampled applications and verified and validated scores.

2.6 Recommendations

The three highest scoring applications are Terra Nova Productions, Beat Carnival and Belfast Buildings Trust. These applications are recommended for funding.

2.7 Terra Nova Productions

In partnership with the African and Caribbean Support Organisation for NI, T13, Libraries NI and the Crescent Arts Centre, Terra Nova will produce a new Belfast and intercultural version of The Tempest. It will be a high quality theatre production featuring original music and pyrotechnics. A professional cast will work with community participants from across the city.

2.8 Beat Carnival

Beat will work with its community partners and other participants to design and build a carnival village and festival programme, including a new Belfast drum, to be showcased in Ormeau Park in June 2016. Partners include Ballynafeigh Community Development Association and Denmark Street Residents Association with further groups engaged throughout the project.

2.9 Belfast Buildings Trust

Linenopolis: The Opera will create a unique chamber opera that tells the story of Belfast's industrial past. It will be created with and performed by local community groups working with professional performers. Partners include

**NI Opera, 174 Trust, East Belfast Community Development Association, Morton Community Centre, Cavehill Community Choir.**

**2.10 A summary of scores and recommendations are included at appendix 2. A summary of each assessment is included at appendix 3. Members are requested to note the contents of this report and agree the recommendations for CCB funding.**

**2.11 Next steps**

**As the CCB fund is match funded by ACNI, these recommendations are also subject to the approval of the ACNI board on 21 January 2015.**

**3 Resource Implications**

**Financial**

**Funding of £150,000 is included in the TCA Unit's budget for 2014–2015 and a further £150,000 in draft budgets for 2015-2016. ACNI has provided match funding of £450,000.**

**4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

**4.1 The Cultural Framework was subject to a full Equality Impact Assessment and relevant equality and good relations implications have been taken in to consideration.**

**5 Recommendations**

**5.1 It is recommended that Members:  
1. note the contents of this report and agree the recommendations for Creative and Cultural Belfast funding as set out in appendix 2."**

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and approved the recommendations for funding as set out in the report.

Chairman