

Development Committee

Wednesday, 10th February, 2010

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Humphrey (Chairman); and
Councillors Browne, Campbell, Convery, Ekin,
N. Kelly, Kirkpatrick, Kyle, C. Maskey,
Mac Giolla Mhín, Mhic Giolla Mhín, Mullaghan,
O'Reilly, Rodgers and Rodway.
- In attendance: Ms. S. McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives and
Acting Director of Development;
Mr. T. Husbands, Head of City Events and Venues and
Acting Director of Development;
Ms. C. Taggart, Community Development Manager;
Mr. S. McCrory, Principal Committee Administrator; and
Mr. N. Malcolm, Committee Administrator.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Lavery) and Councillor Stoker.

Councillor Stoker

Having been advised that Councillor Stoker's mother had been admitted to hospital earlier in the day, the Committee agreed that its best wishes for her speedy recovery be conveyed to Councillor Stoker.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 13th and 25th January 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 February.

Deputation re Olympia After-Schools Club

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"Relevant Background Information

In response to a request from parents of children attending the Olympia after-schools project to meet with the Development Committee to outline their opposition to the withdrawal of the dedicated play staff service at Olympia Community Centre, Members approved the group's request to address the Committee in February, and that in the interim period officers should meet the group again, together with the Chairman of the Development Committee (or nominee), in an effort to resolve the issues prior to the February meeting.

The meeting with parents took place on 27 January with Councillor Stoker in attendance as the Chairman's nominee, together with the Community Services Area Manager (South) and the Children and Young People's Manager.

Councillor Stoker set out the context for the changes to the after-schools provision as follows:

1. The context for the proposed changes to the Play Service related to a lengthy process of review which commenced in 2005 and involved Members, senior managers, operational staff and parents, children and volunteers associated with each of the six Play Centres.
2. The process led to the formulation of a robust, detailed and comprehensive review report and action plan which was endorsed initially by the Members in June 2008.
3. Since then, necessary preliminary work has been undertaken in mapping work in regard to play and related provision, identifying a range of need across the City and building the capacity of the Play Team to ensure that staff members have the knowledge and skills necessary to implement best practice as recommended within the Play Review. More recently, in March 2009, Members considered the findings of the mapping exercise and formally reaffirmed the recommendations and action plan as set out in the Play Review.
4. The review process concluded that Belfast City Council should continue to invest in play and the provision of a play service. However, in order to ensure that this investment has maximum impact, especially in terms of outcomes for children and young people, it is important that:
 - The service is needs-led with provision directed by regular (5 year) mapping and needs analysis processes
 - Service delivery should not be dictated over the medium to long term by the location of the six existing Play Centres. In response to needs analysis Council should examine the potential for flexible and outreach delivery of the play service, making it available in communities where there is limited existing provision for children and young people up to age 16 and where there are concentrations of children and young people

- Council should focus its play service on the 4 - 11 year age group and explore options for provision for the 12-16 age group.
 - Council should recognise the fact that demand for its pre-school provision (3-4 year age group) has been reducing consistently over the last number of years. In addition, there are other providers for children in the community sector. It should aim to promote good play practice with existing providers for pre-school but to withdraw from direct provision.
5. Recommendations were developed across the short, medium and long term and the changes thus represented an important but planned operational shift towards a different model of service delivery.
 6. It was also stressed that, in order to better manage the transition, support would be provided on a time bound basis to provide training, advice and capacity building to enable the continuation of the after-schools project on the same basis as in other Council Community Centres, namely, on a volunteer basis in conjunction with community development staff.
 7. In turn, parents sought clarification on the practical operation of the changed services, the distribution of community and voluntary sector provision in the general area and the nature and extent of support available in the short and medium terms.
 8. The meeting concluded with the parents agreeing to discuss the matters further before confirming their request to meet with Committee. At the time of writing of this report there is as yet no confirmation of the request.

In a related development, Members should also be aware that a letter has been received from parents of the Whiterock after-schools project seeking clarification of several specific issues, many of which relate to the basis upon which the decision to make similar changes in regard to Whiterock has been taken. An acknowledgement letter has been issued, alerting parents to the forthcoming consideration of the changes by Committee and an undertaking to communicate the outcome of Members' decisions in that regard following the meeting.

Key Issues

The current discontent expressed by parents in each of the above Centres in relation to the implementation of the recommendations of the Play Review is understandable, given the perceived loss of direct service provision. It should also be acknowledged that such feelings have been heightened by weaknesses in the way in which the practical consequences arising from the proposed changes were communicated to parents by Council officers. While remedial action has been taken by holding a series of meetings and offering a managed transition in the form of support, training and capacity building, the failure to communicate in a more timely and direct manner clearly has undoubtedly made the process of change more contentious.

Nevertheless, in the overall context, three salient issues should be recognised. Firstly, in attempting to meet the demands of an increasing range of potential user groups on a wider geographic basis there remains a fixed number of 16 directly employed Council operational staff. Their deployment on a more flexible basis inevitably means that new provision in one area will result in the redeployment of play staff from an existing facility.

Secondly, for those Centres directly affected by the proposed changes, direct provision is not being withdrawn in its entirety. The play facilities and equipment are retained at the Centres; play workers are continuing to be based in-centre for two afternoons per week; and as part of a managed transition, play workers will work with parents, volunteers and community development staff to build capacity, knowledge and skills thereby enabling the facility to be operated on a volunteer basis on those afternoons when play workers are deployed elsewhere.

Thirdly, in all other Community Centres, afternoon clubs are organised on a volunteer basis in conjunction with community development staff. The proposed changes in the Centres above thus make consistent the Council's approach in regard to wider community services provision.

While the immediate impact upon parents of the agreed changes should not be under-estimated, it is also a logistical reality that with a staff team of 16, it is impossible for the Council to meet the demands for play provision across the City. Significant preliminary effort has been undertaken, with the involvement with Members over a period of years, to establish a framework for a more equitable, innovative and flexible response to demand across the City. Notably, some 'early wins' have been achieved, with provision being extended for the first time to the Chinese and Polish communities for example.

It is considered that to reverse the process of change, previously adopted by the Development Committee, at this point would thus appear premature and inappropriate. In seeking to address any concerns, officers will redouble their efforts to meet again with parents, volunteers and others to identify and implement tailored projects and programmes which maximise the resources available, meet demonstrable need and promote best practice.

Resource Implications

The retention of a Play Team operated service at one Centre will result in staffing implications for other projects and the effective and efficient delivery of a citywide service.

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider the following options with a view to agreeing to either:

Option 1 Reaffirm the recommendations of the Play Review, as previously endorsed by Committee in March 2009, and proceed with a managed transition to a more flexible, needs-led service.

or

Option 2 Reverse the decision taken at the meeting of Committee in March 2009 and return to a static facility-based form of provision.

Decision Tracking

Further to agreement the preferred option will be implemented (option 2) or continued (option 1)

Time line: March 2010 Reporting Officer: Catherine Taggart"

The Head of City Events and Venues informed the Committee that the parents whose children attended the Olympia After Schools Project had, following the meeting on 27th January, which Councillor Stoker had attended on behalf of the Chairman, indicated that they no longer wished to address the Committee.

Following discussion, the Committee noted the information which had been provided and re-affirmed its decision of 11th March, 2009 that the Council's Play Service operate on a more flexible needs-led basis.

Presentation from the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group

The Head of Economic Initiatives informed the Committee that, in accordance with its decision of 11th November, 2009, a deputation from the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group was in attendance to make a presentation. She indicated that the organisation was in the process of implementing a five year plan for the area and was keen for the Council to engage more closely with it. The Committee agreed to receive the deputation. Accordingly, Mr. Paul McErlean, Chairman of the Steering Group, Ms. Patricia Freedman, Cathedral Quarter Development Manager, together with Mr. Will Chamberlain, Belfast Community Circus School, were admitted to the meeting and welcomed by the Chairman.

With the assistance of visual aids, the deputation explained that:

- (i) the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group consisted of a diverse range of people from the public, private and arts sectors who worked for the organisation in a voluntary capacity and it was grateful to the Council for the support which it had provided to the Group;
- (ii) it had held discussions with the developers of the Royal Exchange Scheme as this represented one of the largest, potential projects in the area;
- (iii) Cathedral Quarter was a thriving, historic and mixed-use area of approximately 35,000 square metres which the organisation wished to see developing into the dynamic, sustainable, artistic and cultural core for the City;
- (iv) the ideas which the Group had would result in the area becoming a model of conservation and urban regeneration;
- (v) the Steering Group's vision was that the Cathedral Quarter would be recognised as an outstanding European Cultural Quarter and a premier arts and culture destination which would become a trading destination for local and international visitors and continue to provide a shared space for all the people of Belfast;
- (vi) the Group had set itself the undernoted goals:
 - a dynamic synergy amongst arts, business, education, community and government
 - a concentration of creative and cultural activity
 - high levels of public participation
 - supportive infrastructure
- (vii) the organisation wanted the Quarter to be managed in a strategic, accountable and effective manner by the stakeholders and through long-term commitments from the Council and Government;

- (viii) it was anticipated that, when the new University of Ulster Campus was operational in three years time, it would attract 12,000 students to the area; and
- (ix) it was important that the infrastructure within the Quarter be reconfigured in order to give priority to pedestrians and to remove as much vehicular traffic as possible. To this end RPS Consultants had been employed to examine public transport, traffic access and pedestrian flow issues within the area to include the possibility of a new train station being developed to facilitate the students who would be attending the new university campus and to encourage people to visit the Quarter.

Ms. Freedman concluded the presentation by indicating that the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group was keen to have political representation and requested that the Committee appoint its Chairman and Deputy Chairman to the Group.

In answer to a Member's question, the deputation indicated that it was unable to quantify the number of people who worked within the Cathedral Quarter, although it had requested funding from the Department for Social Development to enable such research to be undertaken.

The deputation then retired from the meeting.

During a lengthy discussion, several Members expressed the view that it would not be necessary at this time for the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman of the Committee to become members of the Steering Group and that the Council officers could continue to keep the Committee informed of the Group's progress.

Other Members made the point that the organisation had undertaken considerable work within the Cathedral Quarter and that the Council should consider becoming more involved with the organisation and accept the invitation.

The Chairman expressed the view that the Committee would need to be careful how it managed expectations which the Steering Group might have, pointing out that considerable demands were made on Councillors' time.

Following further discussion, the Committee agreed that it would keep under review the request from the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group for the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman to be appointed by the Committee to the organisation.

The Black Box

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware that at a meeting of the Development Committee on the 7 March 2008, Committee agreed to offer a two year funding package comprising £25,000 in each of the 2008/9 and 2009/10 financial years to the Black Box. Committee also agreed that it would not provide any further financial assistance to the Black Box in those or any further year.

Support was approved as the Committee recognised there was a major gap in the physical infrastructure pending the completion of a major capital development, the Metropolitan Arts Centre (MAC). This was on the basis that, on opening, the MAC development would fulfil the cultural infrastructural needs in the Cathedral Quarter. Since the opening of the MAC has now been delayed until 2012, the need for a temporary venue remains as there is still no mid-scale home for festivals and events in the City centre and the Black Box has become a crucial focus for cultural and tourism activity. BCC has received a request from the Black Box to review its decision of March 2008 and to consider financial support for a further 2 years to enable the Black Box to become wholly self-financing. Presently the Black Box is 82% self financing.

Key Issues

Since the Black Box opened in April 2006, it has become an essential part of Belfast's cultural infrastructure with over 55,000 people attending events in 2009. It has received many awards and was most recently described by the Irish News as 'Belfast's Premier Arts Venue'. It is the hub of cultural tourism activity in Belfast since its programming, which includes live music, theatre, literature, comedy, film, visual art, live art, circus, and cabaret, is indigenous and authentic. It has provided the focus for Belfast City Council's Sunday's Programme, Late Night Art, Music Tourism and Culture Night. It also plays a vital role for Creative Industries with most local unsigned musicians choosing it as the venue to launch and profile new albums.

More critically the Black Box is now home to most Belfast Festivals, including The Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival, The Belfast Film Festival, The Open House Festival, Out to Lunch, Belfast Children's Festival, Belfast Nashville Songwriters' Festival, The Sonorities Festival, Oscillations, Belfast Pride Week, Moving on Music, Outburst and Trans Urban Arts Academy.

It has succeeded in meeting each of these seven objectives:

1. to meet an urgent need in the local arts infrastructure, specifically in the Cathedral Quarter, with the opening of a temporary venue by January 2006;
2. to contribute to the regeneration of Belfast's North City centre through the arts and cultural sectors;
3. to assist in the promotion of Belfast as an attractive cultural tourist destination, with 180 events during a twelve month period;

4. to provide a showcase for the best of local talent;
5. to highlight the social, celebratory and enjoyable aspects of engagement with the arts;
6. to appeal to less mainstream, less traditional and younger audiences;
7. to create employment for eight people

At a meeting held on 16th December 2009 with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI), the Department for Social Development (DSD), Belfast City Council and the Black Box, it was evident that the future of the Black Box will be secured only if public sector support is continued. ACNI agreed to commit a two year funding package of £25,000 in each of the 2010/11 and 2011/2012 years, and will not commit any further assistance once the MAC opens in 2012. ACNI have made this conditional offer on the basis of match funding from Belfast City Council. The Black Box will also source funding from the DSD's Laganside grant scheme. ACNI has commissioned an independent review to determine the future of the Black Box with the aim of the organisation becoming self-sustainable by 2012.

The Black Box state they can only continue if public support is made available for the next two years. Closure would result in a major gap in Belfast's cultural infrastructure. The amount requested is a low percentage of public sector funding and has offered a very good return on investment for Belfast City Council. It underlines the high level of earned income as it is 82% self funding, a figure unparalleled in the Arts Sector. The Black Box will play a key role in profiling the opening of the MAC and further enhance the development of Cathedral Quarter as the cultural hub of the City – ensuring that arts is placed at the centre of this area's regeneration.

Resource Implications

A two year funding package comprising £25,000 in each of the 2010/11 and 2011/12 years to come from within the Tourism, Culture and Arts budget.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Committee agree to offer a two year funding package comprising £25,000 in 2010/11 and 2011/12 to come from within the Tourism, Culture and Arts budget.

Decision Tracking

Further to ratification that the funding payments be allocated to the Black Box

Timeframe: April 2011 Reporting Officer: Kerrie Sweeney

Abbreviations

ACNI – Arts Council of Northern Ireland
DSD – Department for Social Development.”

During discussion in the matter, the Head of Economic Initiatives indicated that she was confident that the Metropolitan Arts Centre would be operational in early 2012 and that, since the Department had been in discussions with the Black Box regarding this funding request for a considerable period of time, money had been included within the 2010/11 budget in order to meet this request if agreed to by the Committee.

Following further discussion, the Committee agreed:

- (i) in view of the delay in the Metropolitan Arts Centre opening, to rescind its decision of 7th March, 2008, not to provide any further funding to the Black Box;
- (ii) to provide funding of £25,000 in each of the 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 years to the Black Box;
- (iii) to provide no further funding to the Black Box even if the Metropolitan Arts Centre was not operational in 2012.

Sir James Galway O.B.E.

The Head of Economic Initiatives advised the Committee that it had been suggested that, during his 70th birthday year, the Council should acknowledge the contribution which Sir James Galway had made to the City. She pointed out that Sir James had been born in Belfast and had studied in London and Paris before embarking on his career with various Opera Companies and Orchestras, following which he had been appointed to the coveted position of solo flautist with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Since 1975, when he launched his solo career, Sir James had performed continuously with the world's leading orchestras and conductors, participated in chamber music engagements and popular music concerts and given masterclasses.

She reminded the Committee that a number of new music tourism products and initiatives were being developed in order to promote Belfast's rich musical heritage and musicians and to profile the City as a music destination. Accordingly, she recommended that the Committee host a reception for Sir James Galway at which he would be presented with a locally-produced piece of art to recognise the contribution he had made to Belfast, at a total cost not to exceed £1,500.

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendation and agreed further that the reception be held in the City Hall.

City of Quarters Conference

(Councillor Ekin declared an interest in this matter in that he was one of the speakers at the Conference and took no part in the debate.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

Belfast City Council has received an invitation from the Belfast Media Group to participate in two conferences in Belfast and New York aimed at showcasing the new Belfast through its Quarters and an application to host a dinner for conference delegates. The first conference takes place in Belfast on 24 and 25 March and the second in New York on 9 and 10 June 2010.

The aim is to create landmark events involving the burgeoning neighbourhoods of the City which are leading regeneration. The conference will explore flagship Quarters, asking how they can be linked to each other to create more than the sum of their parts and what is required to ensure that their economic benefits are felt in disadvantaged areas.

Speakers include senior representatives from Barcelona and New York as well as local political, business and community sectors. Howard Hastings, Chair of NI Tourist Board, Terence Brannigan, Chair of Chartered Business Institute NI, John McVicar, Managing Editor of Shankill Mirror, Geraldine McAteer, Chief Executive of West Belfast Partnership Board and Professor Richard Barnett, Vice-Chancellor of Ulster University, are some of the leading figures addressing the conference. Among the venues used will be the Cultúrlann in the Gaeltacht Quarter, the Presidents' Club in the Cathedral Quarter, the Harbour Commission Offices, the Ulster University campus in the Library Quarter and Titanic House in the Titanic Quarter.

Key Issues

Members will be aware that the Cultural Tourism Strategy, 'Developing Belfast's Opportunity', details the aim to develop clusters of tourism activity in Quarters. The draft Integrated Strategic Framework for Belfast Tourism emphasises that there is much scope to continue with the development approach that is based on the concept of Quarters in order to achieve a much stronger range of attractions, activities, services and facilities. The draft framework for the future of the Belfast's tourism identifies a spatial plan that deals with such issues as connecting different

parts, encouraging movement, providing orientation, and creating quality places and lasting and positive images. A planned approach to the Quarters is crucial to achieving overall attractiveness of Belfast and spreading the benefits of tourism. They have potential to be attractions in their own right, building up the range of places to visit and experience in the City. They are also important for distinctive festivals and events.

For these reasons, it is recommended that it is appropriate for Belfast City Council to participate in the City of Quarters Conference by attending and by hosting a dinner for conference delegates.

Members will also be aware that, in 2005, Belfast City Council undertook a trade mission and showcase event in New York and Boston involving 10 creative businesses from Belfast. The programme was developed in conjunction with a number of key individuals within the Friends of Belfast network including Bob Johnson, John Connorton (Chair of the group in New York) and Mike Flannery. The Friends of Belfast's contacts with our City remain strong and many of the "friends" have developed their own direct working relationships with other organisations in the city e.g. Queen's University, the President's Club. These linkages have been facilitated by Belfast City Council.

A delegation from Derry City Council accompanied private businesses on a recent promotional visit to Boston. This was similar to the proposed New York event and was organised by the Council, the local Chamber of Commerce and individual businesses keen to develop further linkages with the city. In addition to individual business meetings, the group undertook a promotional event to which key business figures were invited.

The key Friends of Belfast contacts in each of the cities (New York, Boston, Denver and Pittsburgh) maintain good linkages with Belfast City Council while pursuing their own areas of interest in Belfast. As has been the case in the past, there is an opportunity to tap into the network and to access the expertise and contacts that they have. There is an opportunity, through the City of Quarters Conference to showcase the changing Belfast to an audience of key influencers. The Friends of Belfast contacts could be utilised to ensure that the event is promoted to the appropriate target audience and to ensure that key individuals and organisations are present to hear about a changing Belfast. If this is the case, consideration should be given to appropriate economic development and tourism promotion in order to ensure that the opportunity is not missed to promote the message to the key target audiences. It is therefore recommended that Members agree in principle to participation in the New York conference pending further investigation of costs in relation to sponsorship of a reception and the holding of an exhibition to promote Belfast as a tourism destination.

Resource Implications

A total of £3,360 to come from within the Tourism, Culture and Arts budget:

- £360 to enable two Members and two Officers to attend the conference
- £3,000 to sponsor a dinner for conference delegates.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members agree to;

1. The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Development Committee, or their nominees, plus two officers, attend the conference at a cost of £90 each.
2. Sponsor a dinner for conference delegates at a cost of no more than £3,000.
3. It is further recommended that Members agree in principle to participation in the New York conference pending further investigation of costs in relation to sponsorship of a reception and the holding of an exhibition to promote Belfast as a tourism destination.

Decision Tracking

Further to approval, an update report with budget in relation to New York will be brought to Committee.

Timeframe: March 2010 Reporting Officer: Shirley McCay.”

The Committee agreed to adopt the foregoing recommendations.

British Urban Regeneration Association's Awards Ceremony

The Head of Economic Initiatives reminded the Committee that the Renewing the Routes Programme had attained the regional award from the British Urban Regeneration Association under the Best Practice in Regeneration category. Through these awards the Association sought to identify and promote projects which were making a positive contribution to economic regeneration, acting as catalysts for wider regeneration and creating a self-sustaining momentum with long-term benefits for local communities.

She explained that the Awards Ceremony would be held at lunchtime in Central London on 5th March and that the cost of attendance would be in the region of £250 per person.

The Committee agreed that it be represented at the British Urban Regeneration Association's Awards Ceremony by the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman (or their nominees), together with two officers.

Transport Policy - Cycling Issues

The Head of Economic Initiatives reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 14th October, 2009, it had received from Friends of the Earth a presentation regarding its Belfast Cycle City Vision for 2020 and had also considered a Notice of Motion concerning the introduction in Belfast of a cycle rental scheme similar to Dublinbikes, which had been referred to the Committee by the Council at its meeting on 1st October, 2009. The Committee had noted the contents of the presentation and had agreed that officers discuss the possible introduction of the cycle rental scheme with Belfast City Centre Management and the Department for Regional Development.

She informed the Members that, at a recent meeting between Council staff and representatives of the Department Regional Development's Transportation Unit, the latter had indicated that it intended to establish an Active Travel Forum. The Forum, which would comprise representatives from the public, private and voluntary sectors and from community groups, would examine opportunities to improve walking and cycling in the City and contribute to the proposed Active Travel Strategy which the Department was committed to developing. In addition, in connection with the introduction of a bicycle hire scheme in Belfast, the Department had indicated that it was awaiting the outcome of research being carried out by the British Council on bike hire schemes across Europe. The Department intended to use this research as a baseline study from which to explore the possibility of introducing such a scheme in Belfast.

She pointed out that participation in the Forum would provide the Council with an excellent opportunity to influence the development of policy and facilities in relation to cycling and that the Department had indicated that it wished Council officers to sit on the Forum.

The Committee noted the information provided.

Completion of the Departmental Restructuring – Tourism, Cultural and Arts Unit and Central Grants Team

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

On 13th June, 2007, the Development Committee considered and gave approval for the change management process for the Development Department, which included support from Business Improvement, for Departmental restructuring activities. This followed the Council's approval on 1st November, 2006, for interim restructuring across the Council ahead of the Review of Public Administration and the associated organisational impact of the transfer of functions on the Development Department.

Following this BIS were commissioned to undertake specific structural reviews of the following Units: Policy and Research; Events; the Waterfront and Ulster Halls; Community Services; Markets; Culture and Arts; and Business Support. In October 2008 the Development Committee considered and gave approval to the restructuring recommendations provided by BIS and implementation has been ongoing.

All structural change proposed by BIS resulted in a reduction in the Department's salaries and wages budget of £76,311.

Following the 2008 Unit reviews, two operational matters remained to be addressed:

Operational tier of Tourism, Culture and Arts

Centralisation of grants – the final outcome and specific implications of the independent review of the Department's grant process were pending and an appropriate structure was to be established.

The purpose of this report is to provide recommendations in order to address these matters and draw the Departmental restructuring to a close, and also to supplement the £76,311 savings to date.

Key Issues

Departmental Issues

Substantial progress has been made in implementing the Department's re-structuring.

In addition to the £76,311 savings attained through the overall Departmental restructuring, further savings can now be achieved through the deletion of the vacant Head of Urban Development post, with a proportion of these finances being used to create posts to address the issues outlined below:

Tourism, Culture and Arts

Tourism, culture and art makes a very valuable contribution to the economic competitiveness and quality of life of Belfast. The whole of the Unit supports both the tourism sector and the culture/arts sector through distinctive strategies and direct interventions in generating employment, increasing skills, creating better products and delivering greater economic impact for the City and its ratepayers. It also encourages the ever growing numbers of tourists to visit Belfast. A record 7.1 million people visited Belfast in 2008, generating almost £437 million for the Belfast Tourism economy.

The operational strand of the Tourism, Culture and Arts Section is currently populated with six posts divided equally into three permanent and three fixed term contract posts. However, there is no long term budget provision in the Section's estimates for these posts once they end. At this time, the operational tier would be, in effect, reduced by half its number. This, of course, would offer significant challenges in the delivery of the Tourism, Culture & Arts service.

Evidence gained through the consultation process and provided by management indicates that the current permanent officers are working to full capacity and in conjunction with the FTC posts to deliver the objectives of the service. Frequently, there are compromises made on the level of support given to the respective sectors in order to fulfil the most pressing duties.

Additional permanent support at officer level would ensure the continuation of this high profile service. A new generic post that spans all 3 disciplines would be vital to the intergratation of the new merged Unit and the delivery of the future strategy. The activities undertaken by this post would be prioitised through the Unit's Annual Business Plan. This would enable the post to be flexible across the Unit and target and support specfic areas as demand needed.

The Unit has 2 student posts, one allocated to Tourism and one to Arts.

However, any expertise and training gained by the student is lost to the Section when the student leaves and is replaced on an annual basis. It would, therefore, be more beneficial to the Section if there were a permanent project/programme type post that would support the professional officers in delivering their key objectives and programmes. This post would give stability and flexibility to the Unit while retaining the knowledge, skills and expertise gained in house. The activities undertaken by this post would be prioitised through the Unit's Annual Business Plan. This would enable the post to be flexible across the officer level and support specfic projects as needed.

Central Grants Team

The independent review of grants highlighted a number of issues with the current grant process and its management:

- poor customer service;
- inefficiency and risks to the Council through lack of sharing of information;
- inefficiency of human resources;
- lack of robust monitoring and accountability.

To address these issues the establishment of a Central Grants Team was identified which would aim to:

- improve governance and accountability;
- provide greater consistency in systems, processes and decision making;
- ensure separation between application, assessment and award, and monitoring and evaluation;
- enhance the coordination, management and ongoing review of the grant-making process to in turn minimise grants processing timescales and make the process more customer focused.

As a result, the Department developed a proposed implementation plan to split the Department's grants into three tranches (Community Access Fund, Annual and Multi-Annual) and develop and implement new grant processes which would be co-ordinated by a newly established Central Grants Team. Members will recall that these plans were presented to Committee in June 2009 and at subsequent Party Briefings, and Members approved the proposals at Committee in October 2009.

It is proposed that the Central Grants Team will consist of 1 permanent post which will ensure ongoing compliance with audit, legal and best practice requirements and 2 fixed term contract posts to aid the establishment of the grants processes and systems which will take place in a phased approach, culminating in a unified Departmental grant system in 2011.

Currently there is 1 FTC Project Assistant post within Culture and Arts and 1 FTC Monitoring Officer post within the Economic Development Unit which are both solely focused on grant administration and monitoring related duties. The Culture and Arts Unit review undertaken by BIS which was approved by Committee in October 2008 recommended that the FTC Project Assistant post should transfer to a Central Grants Team upon its establishment due to the similarity of the work undertaken by it.

Both FTC posts are coming to an end. However, due to: 1) their functionality, 2) the need to better coordinate grants administration and 3) finances for both posts being provided for in the Department's short/ medium term budget, it is proposed that these finances are used to create two fixed term contract posts to assist in the establishment of the Central Grants Team, processes and systems.

Future Considerations

Tourism, Culture and Arts

The proposed new strategy for this Unit recognises 'the Unit taking on a range of styles and approaches such as influencing, facilitating, advocating, co-ordinating, funding, partnering, brokering and where necessary, delivering'.

However, if operational pressures and the loss of posts at operational level are not addressed then this would represent a risk to the delivery of services for the culture and arts sector and the tourism sector.

Central Grants

If the operational pressures are unaddressed, there are potential risks as outlined:

- effectiveness and efficiency will not be realised;
- there will be a reduction in the quality and value of service provision;
- the reputation of the Council could be compromised;
- the Department may face business continuity and sustainability pressures;
- employee relations issues are likely to increase; and
- there will be lack of compliance with audit and legislative requirements.

Going forward the CGT will be used as a corporate pilot with the aim to inform and provide a solution for the distribution of grants on a Council-wide basis. Work is currently underway in regard to this through the Strategic Finance Groups Agenda.

Conclusions

The proposals have been developed to ensure the Department has a sound organisational base to deliver against the Corporate and Departmental strategic direction.

In developing the recommendations BIS has taken account of the continuing need to comply with the corporate improvement and efficiency agenda, particularly in relation to the limited creation of additional posts and maximising the current resource base. Where possible, opportunities to re-configure or re-align posts have been identified to limit the creation of new posts.

The creation of the new posts is offset by the deletion of the post of Head of Urban Development.

The proposed new structures are set out in Appendix 1.

Resource Implications

Financial Implications

The overall costing for the recommendations are based on the current approved Departmental salaries and wages budget, taking into consideration the recent deletion of the former Head of Urban Development post from the Development Department structure.

Additional savings to the already achieved £76,311 reduction in the approved salaries and wages budget for the Department are shown in the table below:

<u>Creation of Permanent Posts:</u>	<u>Notional Grade</u>	<u>First Year Cost (£)</u>
Tourism, Culture & Arts		
1 x Project Assistant	Sc 6	22,221
1 x Tourism, Culture & Arts Officer	PO 1	27,849
Central Grants Team		
1 x Grants Officer	SO 2	27,052
	Total	77,122

<u>Deletion of Posts:</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Saving (£)</u>
Tourism, Culture & Arts		
1 x Student (Tourism)	Sc 1b	12,312
1 x Student (Culture & Arts)	Sc 1b	12,312
1 x Head of Urban Development	Head of Service	72,030
	Total	96,654
	Total Saving	19,532

<u>Creation of FTC Posts:</u>	<u>Notional Grade</u>	<u>Cost (£)</u>
Central Grants Team		
1 x Grants Assistant (Systems and Administration) (2 year FTC)	Sc 6	No additional cost*
1 x Grants Assistant (Monitoring) (2 year FTC)	Sc 6	No additional cost*

*Monies already budgeted for by Department on a short/medium term basis

Human Resources

There is no change to the Department's establishment figure.

Normal HR processes and procedures will apply in the implementation of the recommendations.

Detailed consultation will take place as applicable with all relevant stakeholders including HR, Trade Unions and staff to develop an implementation plan which is fully in accordance with all relevant HR policies and procedures.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to agree the following recommendations outlined below to address the issues and considerations identified:

Tourism, Culture and Arts

- delete 2 x Students posts Scale 1b
- create 1 x Project Support Assistant (Notional salary Scale 6)
- create 1 x Tourism, Culture & Arts Officer (Notional salary PO1)

Central Grants

- cessation of the fixed term contract posts of Project Assistant and Monitoring Officer, both salary scale 6.
- create 1 x 2 year fixed term contract post of Grants Assistant (Systems and Administration), notional salary scale 6
- create 1 x 2 year fixed term contract post of Grants Assistant (Monitoring), notional salary scale 6
- create 1 x Grants Officer, notional salary scale SO 2

Decision Tracking

Following approval and subsequent ratification, the proposed Departmental structural changes are implemented and the posts recruited through the corporate recruitment and selection process.

Timeline: August 2010

Reporting Officer: David Orr

Key Abbreviations

BIS – Business Improvement
HR – Human Resource
FTC – Fixed Term Contract

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: Proposed Structures.

Appendix 1

Pages 1355 and 1356 can be viewed on Mod.gov – Item 3 Appendix 1.

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1356

Development Committee,
Wednesday, 10th February, 2010

The Committee adopted the recommendations contained within the report.

Draft Extended Community Support Plan 2010-2011

The Head of City Events and Venues informed the Committee that the Department for Social Development, through its Community Support Programme, provided financial assistance to all local authorities within Northern Ireland which undertook work with local communities and supported community groups and local advice services. This required each authority to prepare a Community Support Plan. He pointed out that the Council's current Plan operated from 2008 to 2010, whereas the Plans for the remaining Northern Ireland authorities ran from 2009 to 2011. Following discussions with the Department for Social Development, the Council had agreed to extend its existing Community Support Plan by one year in order to bring it into line with the other authorities. This would also enable the Council to prepare for the transfer of community development functions following the Review of Public Administration.

He reminded the Members that the Council had undertaken a significant research and consultation exercise when it had been preparing the existing Plan. As the extension was not a substantial revision of the Plan, he believed that it would not be appropriate to carry out a new research consultation exercise. However, details of the proposed extension would be provided to stakeholders and the contents of the extended Plan would be made available on the Council's website. The Head of City Events and Venues pointed out that the Community Support Plan for 2010-2011, which was estimated to cost £8.1 million, of which £6.6 million would be provided by the Council, would focus on:

- (i) implementing the Community Services structural review;
- (ii) improving the public's access to Council services;
- (iii) improving grass roots participation;
- (iv) preparing for the transfer of functions following the Review of Public Administration by working in partnership with other agencies to develop a Community Development Strategy for Belfast; and
- (v) business improvement.

After discussion, the Committee agreed the contents of the 2010-2011 Community Support Plan and that it be submitted to the Department for Social Development.

**Area Advice Consortia –
Funding Arrangements 2010-2011**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Key Issues

Belfast City Council is a major funder of Advice & Information Services via a consortia model based on geographical providers. This approach to funding and advice delivery was established in 2005/06 and involves over 20 organisations and includes both the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Independent Advice providers.

Essential criteria for receiving BCC Advice funding are that organisations need to give generalist advice and be associated to Citizens Advice or Advice N.I. Any requests for BCC funding from specialist advice providers are signposted to the relevant Government Department.

BCC funding is allocated on a pro-rata basis based on a deprivation-weighted population. While bodies receive funding from other sources, BCC & DSD are the core funders of advice in the City. An independent review of the Belfast model was completed by Deloitte in 2008. The review, which was positive, recommended that future provision should build on the significant investment in development of capacity and relationships to date (consortia).

In light of the DSD preparations to move to a proposed new Model for Advice Services in NI (Opening Doors Strategy 2007), our recent review of the consortia model and to inform advice provision post 2011, the Community Services Business Plan notes the intention to review and refine the BCC Support Strategy for Advice Services post 2011 and a related action plan. This work is pending and will be developed closely with Members and key stakeholders.

During a recent round of Party Briefings in relation to the number and location of area advice centres, Members agreed in principle that the 2010/11 period should be considered as an interim year during which :

- the current funding model would be extended
- the current 5 consortia would be challenged to address various best practice and possible convergence issues.
- preparations would be made to agree and implement a new BCC strategy

The purpose of this report is to outline proposals for the administration of funding support to the Five Area Advice consortia for the interim period 2010/11. The report comprises three updates:

1. BCC Core Advice Grant
2. DSD Supplementary Advice Grant
3. DSD proposal that BCC administer BRO advice funding.

1. BCC Core Advice Grant for 2010/11

The current level of BCC Advice funding for 2009/10 is £355,729.00 and is allocated to the consortia as follows:

North Belfast:	27.33%
South Belfast:	13.51%
East Belfast:	16.82%
West Belfast:	32.34%
City centre:	10.00%

Within each area consortium the allocation of funding per organisation is determined by the number of enquires that each organisation receives.

DSD intends to implement its new regional advice strategy in partnership with local Councils in 2011/12. This currently proposes changes to the BCC model: 4 consortia with area advice centres and a network/programme of outreach.

Given the potential for significant change modelling for the advice sector with the formulation of the BCC Advice Strategy, which in turn will help prepare for the possible introduction of the DSD Opening Doors Strategy in 2011, the Committee is invited to consider a number of options for interim funding arrangements.

Option 1:

Funding arrangements to stay the same as previous years, that is, split across the 5 consortia. Given there would be no substantial reassessment of need, we do not recommend any change in the percentage funding allocation to each consortia. However, each of the consortia should actively seek to include any new advice organisations operating in Belfast and that also meet the current BCC funding criteria.

This option would enable the retention of current practice, capacity and successful working relationships while also making provision, if required, for any new organisations to be included in relevant consortia.

Any assessment would be dependent upon the submission of a business plan outlining aims, objectives, associated actions, target beneficiaries, detailed budget information and related performance framework.

Bids would be expected to demonstrate improved consortia working, ensuring improved access to advice services in each area and addressing noted monitoring/evaluation issues.

Option 2:

Retain the present consortia arrangements but recalculate the allocation within each area dependent upon the most recent advice enquiry figures.

This option seeks to retain the present area allocation but would facilitate the recalculation of the deprivation weighted allocation across the City. This has the potential to be a lengthy and possibly divisive process which will again require substantial resource allocation.

Any assessment would again be dependent upon the submission of a business plan outlining aims, objectives, associated actions, target beneficiaries, detailed budget information and related performance framework. Bids would be expected to demonstrate improved consortia working, ensuring improved access to advice services in each area and addressing noted monitoring/evaluation issues.

Option 3:

Re-open for new area applications with a resultant recalculation of allocation across all 5 consortia. This option would require a new open call for application which would be time consuming and resource intensive.

In preparation for Council consideration of Departmental budget estimates, the Committee is invited to agree the most appropriate arrangements for the BCC core advice grant in the 2010/11 interim funding year.

Recommendation

It is recommended that Option 1 be agreed as this allows the general continuity of the consortia arrangements whilst still allowing any other potential Generalist Advice Organisations to be included in the relevant area consortium.

Resources

Option 1 requires no additional resources. Options 2 and 3 would require substantial officer time and or the use of a consultant.

Decision Tracking

Further to agreement, the options have varied decision tracking:

- Option 1 – to initiate grant payments in April pending submission of all the required information
- Option 2 – recalculate the area allocation in April and initiate grant payments in May and June
- Option 3 - Open for application in April, assessment and allocation in May/June and initiate grant payments in July and August.

Time line: April 2010 Reporting Officer: Catherine Taggart

2. DSD Supplementary Advice Grant

In addition to the BCC Advice Grant, DSD and BCC have for the last 4 years also provided funding to enable the consortia to provide outreach advice services in areas of little or no provision.

The historical level of funding provided has been:

	<i>2005/2006</i>	<i>2006/2007</i>	<i>2007/2008</i>	<i>2008/09</i>
DSD match	£152,725	£152,725	£309,725	£309,725
BCC match	£0	£152,725	£152,725	£152,725
Total	£152,725	£305,450	£462,450	£462,450

However, the level of DSD grant in 2009/10 is £469,902.00 with this linked to the BCC Advice budget. This reflects an additional commitment of funds due to the increased pressure on advice services resulting from the economic downturn. These DSD funds are conditional on a set level of advice support from BCC of £355,729.00 in 2009/10.

This DSD/BCC funding has historically been allocated to the consortia against the same deprivation-weighted population index as the BCC grant: this translates to the same geographical percentages as the core BCC grant.

Resources

Financial:

It is anticipated that the DSD/BCC advice arrangement and current level of funding will be maintained in the future although this will not be confirmed until DSD issues a letter of offer early in the new financial year 2010/11.

Upon receipt of the letter of offer, a report will be prepared outlining the DSD funding offer and any related conditions including the level of BCC leverage required.

Recommendation

It is recommended that, upon confirmation of the available DSD supplementary funding for Advice Services, this is allocated across the consortia on the same basis as that agreed for the BCC core funding for the year.

Decision tracking

DSD will issue the letter to Council in April/May 2010 and grant payments will be initiated in June, pending submission of all required information.

3. DSD proposal that BCC Administers BRO Advice Funding

At the April 2009 Development Committee it was agreed that BCC would take over the funding of 5 to 7 advice worker posts which had previously been funded by the Belfast Regeneration Office as a result of applications from advice delivery organisations. The Committee report included information received from DSD on the breakdown of funds to recipient groups and the nature of related expenditure. This was restricted to salary costs with a total value of £113,434.57.

We have now received revised information from DSD which significantly differs from the April 2009 proposal.

The number of posts has now been increased to 11, 8 starting in April 2010 with the possibility of a further 3 at a later date. In addition, the Council is being asked to provide and administer revenue funding costs associated with 5 of the projects, 4 to start in April with the final one associated with one of the possible future posts. The total value of the programme for the 8 posts and 4 revenue costs in 2010/11 has risen to £165,140.00 and if all 11 posts and 5 revenue costs are put in place, it will rise to £245,000.00

Advice services are under pressure given the increase in demand for their services; to lose these posts would severely impact upon the level and quality of advice services provided.

Resources

Funding for the advice posts and associated revenue costs would be received from VCU and ring-fenced within the BCC Community Support Plan.

The posts would only be funded for as long as funding (for these posts and costs) was received from DSD. At present this is for the period April 2010 to March 2011 but it is anticipated that this may be extended. Should DSD funding however not continue post 2011, recipient groups may look to BCC to ensure service sustainability.

There are no direct financial implications for BCC, however, substantial officer time will be required to manage, administer and monitor these posts. Business Support (finance) has raised concerns over the management, processes involved and the associate time/costs.

Recommendation

Advice services are experiencing an increased demand for services therefore it is recommended that Members agree to the proposals from the DSD Voluntary and Community Unit but that further funds be sought from DSD to cover the BCC administration costs.

Decision Tracking

The Community Services Manager will inform DSD of the Committee's decision and BCC will begin administration of these posts in April.

Time line: April 2010 Reporting Officer: Catherine Taggart

Key to Abbreviations

NI – Northern Ireland
BCC – Belfast City Council
BRO – Belfast Regeneration Office
VCU – Voluntary Community Unit
CSP – Community Support Plan
DSD – Department of Social Development”

Several Members expressed concern at the considerable differences in the amounts of Core Advice Grant provided to the five areas within the City and, in particular, the amounts paid to organisations in south and east Belfast compared to those in north and west and asked if an Equality Impact Assessment had been undertaken when the funding model had been established in 2005/2006.

In response, the Community Development Manager informed the Members that the figures were based on research which had been undertaken four years previously which had ascertained the quantity of work which was being undertaken by advice giving organisations in the five areas across the City. She indicated that so far as she was aware, an Equality Impact Assessment had not been undertaken at that time. She assured the Committee that the review which would be undertaken in connection with the allocation of advice grants in the 2011/12 financial year would re-examine the amounts which were paid to the five areas and would be subjected to an Equality Impact Assessment.

Following discussion in the matter, the Head of City Events and Venues informed the Committee that he would, prior to the Council meeting on 1st March, obtain advice from the Director of Legal Services regarding the awarding of the Core Advice Grant to ensure that the Council was acting in a proper manner.

Following further discussion, the Committee agreed:

- (i) that the funding arrangements for the advice consortia remain the same as in previous years;
- (ii) that, following confirmation of the amount of supplementary funding which would be provided by the Department for Social Development for advice services, this would be allocated across the consortia on the same basis as that agreed for the Council's core funding for the year; and
- (iii) to the proposals from the Department of Social Development's Voluntary and Community Unit but that further funding be sought from the Department to cover the Council's costs of administering the scheme.

Arising from discussion in this matter, the Chairman pointed out that the EPIC Programme which was listed in the appendix to the report as being located in West Belfast was, in fact, located in North Belfast and he requested that the information contained within the appendix be amended to reflect this.

Amendments to Community Development Project Grants

The Head of City Events and Venues reminded the Committee that, at its meeting on 9th December, 2009, a report had been submitted in relation to the award of Community Development Project Grants. The Committee had agreed to award Grants as outlined in the report and the amounts to be received by the various organisations had been listed in the minutes. These minutes were subsequently ratified by the Council at its meeting on 5th January. Unfortunately, due to an administrative error, the report contained inaccuracies in relation to the names of those groups under application numbers 1374, 1363 and 1372.

The information in relation to these errors is as follows:

<u>Incorrect Group Name</u>	<u>Correct Group Name</u>	<u>Application Number</u>	<u>Amount Requested</u> £	<u>Amount Recommended</u> £
Shore Crescent Football Club	Shore Crescent Friendship Club	1374	500	500
Ravenhill Women's Group	Ravenlink Women's Group	1363	504	500
Glencolin Residents' Group	Glencairn Resident's Group	1372	500	500

He indicated that, due to the inaccuracies being recorded in the minutes of the December Development Committee, it would be necessary for the above amendments to be approved by the Committee in order that the Community Development Project Grants could be awarded to the correct organisations.

The Committee approved the above amendments.

Community Revenue Grants

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

At the meeting on 14th October, 2009, Members considered a report on the Departmental Grants Review. This report noted that there would now be three strands of funding - the Community Access Fund, the Annual Fund and the Multi-Annual Fund. These strands were determined by the average level of funding currently allocated to successful organisations, under £10,000, between £10,000 and £25,000 and over £25,000.

At this meeting, Members agreed, based on its size, on the re-categorisation of the Community Services Revenue Grant as an annual fund. Previously it had been distributed as a multi-annual grant.

The Revenue Grant is available to eligible organisations delivering wide ranging community development programmes at neighbourhood and area level. While assessment focuses on the range and content of the local service, this Grant specifically assists groups with general building costs, e.g. utilities, insurance, administration and equipment.

Key Issues

Given the necessary time required to complete the collective Departmental organisational review, it has not been possible to set up the new Central Grants Unit within the original timescale. A paper confirming the structure of the new Unit is being presented to Committee today.

This timetable has had knock-on effects for the timely delivery of the Revenue Grant Fund for 2010/11.

Had the originally anticipated progress been made there would have been an open call for the Revenue Grant as an annual fund, as per the October 2009 Committee decision. Following the October report, all other Community Services grant streams have opened as per the Committee's decision.

However given these circumstances, this will now allow for synchronization between all three Community Services larger grant streams. Groups will receive funding for a one year interim period under the Capacity-Building Grant and the Advice Grant as part of the transition to the final multi-annual programme. Opening the Revenue Grant for one year (2010/11) would enable it to be synchronized with these two other funds. Therefore, in 2010/11 these three funds would run concurrently.

In these circumstances Community Services now needs approval to extend the Revenue Grant stream for one year.

The recommendation to Members is that the Community Services Revenue Grant is extended for one year, with no less than 90% of the budget being allocated to the groups which are currently funded and up to 10% being held for new groups who wish to access the fund.

It should be noted that feedback has been received from a number of Elected Members, Community Groups affected and Community Services' Area Managers in relation to the appropriateness of the grant being created as an annual fund programme. In relation to this aspect, it is therefore also recommended that an options paper be prepared for a future Committee after a period of engagement with the sector in relation to the issue.

The intention is for the options paper to be brought to the Development Committee in the context of the final stages of implementation of the Central Grants Unit, with all confirmed streams of funding opening in autumn 2010 for the financial year 2011/12.

Resource Implications

Financial – The Revenue Grant Fund for 2010/11 is £ 818,577, currently supporting around 79 organisations. In order to accommodate new applications, this fund would need to be uplifted by up to £81,858 (up to 10%).

Human Resources – the Revenue Grant programme has traditionally attracted a large volume of applicants with an intensive staff resource input to assess applications make site visits, digital mapping of applicants, and prepare recommendations for Committee approval.

Recommendations

Committee are asked to approve:

- 1) An extension of the Community Services Revenue Grant Fund for a period of one year (2010/11), with no less than 90% of the budget being allocated to the groups which are currently funded and up to 10% being held for new groups who wish to access the fund.

- 2) That an options paper be prepared for a future Development Committee in relation to the issue of the appropriateness of the Revenue Grant Fund being provided as an Annual Fund or a Multi-Annual Fund, after further engagement with the sector.

Decision Tracking

An options paper will be prepared for a future Development Committee outlining final proposals with regard to the long-term future of the Community Services revenue grant.

Time line: June 2010 Reporting Officer: Catherine Taggart

Following discussion, the Committee agreed:

- (i) to extend the Community Services Revenue Grant scheme for a period of one year, with no less than 90% of the budget being allocated to the groups which were currently being funded, with the remaining 10% being retained to enable new groups to access the Fund; and
- (ii) that an options paper be submitted to the Committee within two months in relation to the appropriateness of the Community Revenue Grant being provided on an annual or multi-annual basis.

Multi-Annual and Annual Funding for Culture and the Arts

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

Annual Funding for Culture and the Arts was established by Council to assist arts and heritage organisations by providing financial support on an annual basis. Multi-Annual Funding was established by Council to introduce longer-term sustainability to some of the City’s flagship arts organisations.

This report provides the Development Committee with recommendations on applications made to Annual Funding for Culture and the Arts 2010-11. The closing date for applications under both schemes was Friday 11 December 2009. Assessments of the applications can be found on Modern.gov.

Multi-Annual Funding for Culture and Arts

At the Development Committee meeting of 14 November 2007, Members agreed the selection of 14 Multi-Annual Funding clients. These clients entered in to a three-year funding agreement at a minimum annual level of £30,000. On 11 February 2009, the Development Committee agreed the selection of two additional Multi-Annual Funding clients. These clients entered in to a two-year funding agreement.

Annual Funding for Culture and Arts

The deadline for applications to the 2010-11 Annual Funding was 12 noon on 11 December 2009. A total of sixty applications were received, compared to fifty-three in 2009-10.

Scores and recommendations for Annual Funding can be found in Appendix 2.

Criteria for Annual Funding for Culture and Arts 2010-11

The Culture and Arts Eligibility Criteria, approved by the former Development (Arts) Sub-Committee on 20th September, 2004, were devised in order to assist the Council to work in partnership with arts and heritage organisations in achieving its objectives. They reflect the themes of the Development Department and the Integrated Cultural Strategy.

Level of Applications

The applications for Annual Funding requested a total of £833,675. In 2009-10 the total requested by organisations (excluding those organisations who are now multi-annually funded) was £733,489.

Requests for grants this year far outstripped available resources. The total request is equivalent to 276.2% of the total projected budget of £301,835.

With a few exceptions, the level of applications has been strong and Annual Funding applicants have put considerable effort into demonstrating how they meet the criteria.

Members are requested to note that income and expenditure is presented in this report as a summary of the information submitted. As agreed previously by the former Development (Arts) Sub-Committee, officers have not returned to applicants to request any additional details in relation to their applications. This includes clarification of budgets and in some cases the budgets submitted contain minor discrepancies.

Principles of the Reporting Process

Organisations submit an application including supporting documentation, such as business plans, annual reports, financial statements and policy documents. Officers undertake a lengthy assessment of all applications, scoring them against each of the criteria identified for the scheme.

A summary of this information has been compiled by officers in order to:

- highlight the main strengths and weaknesses in the application;
- ensure optimum transparency as to how decisions on applications have been reached; and
- familiarise Members with the nature and variety of arts and heritage programmes in which the Council invests.

The comments in the summary of assessments aim to outline for Members areas where applicants performed particularly well against specific criteria or where there were weaknesses in the application. The comments relate to both the strengths of the proposed programme and the evidence supplied within the application. It should be noted that where there is limited information supplied to address a specific criterion, this is highlighted as a weakness.

Members are requested to use these assessments in tandem with the scores provided in Appendix 2.

Grant Histories

For ease of reference full grant histories for Culture and Arts funding programmes for the last 3 years is available on Modern.gov.

Minimum Grant

The minimum Annual Funding grant offered is £3,000.

Rationale for Funding Decisions

The following rationale for awarding funding is based on the following factors, previously agreed by the former Development (Arts) Sub-Committee:

- previous levels of funding
- strength of the proposed programme as assessed against agreed funding criteria

- impact of the project including anticipated audiences and participants; impact in the Belfast area; range and scope of the proposed programme
- level of Council funding when compared to the overall costs of the programme
- viability of the proposed programme within the funding offered

Key Issues

Multi-Annual Funding

The total level of funding recommended for sixteen Multi-Annual Funding clients is £697,264. Details of individual awards are provided in Appendix 1.

Belfast City Council funding represents 5.8% of the collective turnover for Multi-Annual Funding clients. This equates to a direct return for investment of 1:17. It is felt that this underlines the value for money that these flagship organisations represent and supports the impact of increased investment in these organisations.

Whilst MAF clients have received a 3% annual increase previously, due to current budget constraints only a 1% increase has been included in the budget estimates for both MAF and AF programmes.

Annual Funding

The total level of funding recommended for Annual Funding is £301,835. Details of individual awards are provided in Appendix 2.

Resource Implications

Financial

Funding for MAF and AF is included in the draft budget estimates for 2010-2011 of the Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit.

Human Resources

This will be covered within the work programme of the Tourism, Culture and Arts Unit.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Members agree the recommendations in:

- Appendix 1: Recommendations for Multi-Annual Funding**
- Appendix 2: Scores and Recommendations for Annual Funding**

Decision Tracking

Further to agreement and ratification, organisations will be informed by letter whether or not they have been recommended for, and awarded funding.

Timeframe: March 2010 Reporting Officer: Kerrie Sweeney

Documents Attached

- Appendix 1: Recommendations for Multi-Annual Funding**
- Appendix 2: Scores and Recommendations for Annual Funding.”**

A Member drew the Committee's attention to the size of the award which was being recommended for the Ulster Orchestra, compared to other events and organisations. He suggested that the number of people who attended Ulster Orchestra events, as opposed to those organised by the other organisations, might not warrant the amount of funding which the Orchestra received from the Council and requested that he receive information regarding this matter. He suggested also that the Council might not be in a position to award this level of funding to the Orchestra in future years.

In reply, the Head of Economic Initiatives undertook to provide the information requested to the Member. She informed the Committee that the Ulster Orchestra was in the process of undertaking an internal review of its costs and that, if required, she could submit a report on the benefits which the Ulster Orchestra provided to Belfast's ratepayers. She pointed out that this was the final year of the multi-annual funding agreement with the Orchestra and that the Members would be able to comment on the Integrated Arts and Cultural Strategy which was being reviewed currently.

The Chairman reminded the Committee that the Council was represented on the Board of the Ulster Orchestra and that the Member should forward his views to the Council's representative so that he could convey them to a future meeting of the Board.

During discussion, a Member suggested that, in future years, it would be beneficial for the report to number sequentially those organisations being recommended for Annual Funding in order to make it easier for Members to follow the flow of information throughout the report.

Following further discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations to award the funding set out below:

Appendix 1

Recommendations for Multi-Annual Funding

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>2009–10 Award</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Beat Initiative	£33,990	£34,330
Belfast Community Circus	£33,990	£34,330
Belfast Exposed	£30,900	£31,209
Belfast Festival at Queen's	£68,237.50	£68,920
Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival	£30,000	£30,300
Cinemagic	£30,900	£31,209
Crescent Arts Centre	£33,990	£34,330
Féile an Phobail	£30,000	£30,300
Grand Opera House	£33,990	£34,330
Linen Hall Library	£42,487.50	£42,912
Lyric Theatre	£37,595	£37,971
New Belfast Community Arts Initiative	£33,732.50	£34,070
Northern Visions	£30,900	£31,209
Old Museum Arts Centre	£40,942.50	£41,352
Ulster Orchestra	£147,805	£149,283
Young at Art	£30,900	£31,209

Appendix 2

Scores and Recommendations for Annual Funding

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Amount Requested for 2010/11</u>	<u>Total Score</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Aisling Ghéar Theatre Company	£7,000	61.4%	£3,000
Andersonstown Traditional and Contemporary Music School	£16,508	62.4%	£3,750
Arts and Disability Forum	£8,000	60.4%	£3,250
Arts Care Ltd	£5,000	59.8%	£0
ArtsEkta	£30,000	66.4%	£5,303
Belfast Film Festival	£30,000	68.8%	£28,351
Belfast Philharmonic Society	£26,712	60.6%	£3,000
Belfast Platform for the Arts	£8,542	54.2%	£0

Organisation	Amount Requested for 2010/11	Total Score	Recommendation
Belfast Pride	£8,000	53.6%	£0
Belfast Print Workshop	£10,000	63.0%	£6,250
Beyond Skin	£4,926	49.6%	£0
Blackstaff Community Development Association	£850	INELIGIBLE	£0
Bruiser Theatre Company	£10,650	69.4%	£8,323
Cahoots NI	£12,000	69.6%	£4,728
Catalyst Arts Ltd	£10,900	61.2%	£3,000
Community Arts Forum	£35,000	67.6%	£20,604
Craft and Design Collective	£30,000	61.4%	£3,000
Creative Exchange	£7,500	61.2%	£3,000
Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich	£12,300	65.8%	£8,242
Dance Resource Base	£5,000	59.8%	£0
Dance United NI	£6,500	69.0%	£3,198
Digital Arts Studios	£9,200	59.0%	£0
East Belfast Arts Collective	£18,000	60.2%	£3,000
Festival of Fools	£25,000	68.4%	£10,664
Flax Art Studios	£5,000	57.4%	£0
Golden Thread Gallery	£18,673	68.8%	£7,543
Greater Shankill Partnership	£22,040	48.2%	£0
Greenshoot Productions	£10,000	62.0%	£3,000
Headliners (UK)	£17,904	57.6%	£0
Irish Pages	£4,000	55.2%	£0
Kabosh Productions	£20,000	69.0%	£13,785
Kids in Control	£20,000	63.8%	£13,005
Literary Miscellany Ltd	£15,150	48.2%	£0
Live Music Now Ireland	£5,755	59.4%	£0
Maiden Voyage (NI) Ltd	£6,000	64.2%	£3,500
Moving on Music	£20,000	66.6%	£18,286
Music Theatre 4 Youth	£13,320	63.8%	£3,060
Naughton Gallery at Queen's	£3,000	57.8%	£0
New Lodge Arts	£5,000	65.0%	£3,030
Oh Yeah Music Centre	£10,000	63.6%	£3,000
Open Arts	£6,000	59.2%	£0
Open House Traditional Arts Festival Ltd	£25,000	70.4%	£10,079
Ormeau Baths Gallery Ltd	£25,000	63.4%	£16,320
Place Architecture and Built Environment Centre	£7,000	INELIGIBLE	£0

Organisation	Amount Requested for 2010/11	Total Score	Recommendation
Play Resource Warehouse	£3,500	59.6%	£0
Prime Cut Productions	£15,000	68.6%	£11,557
Queen Street Studios	£18,250	62.8%	£5,250
Queen's Film Theatre	£14,000	71.6%	£12,200
Ransom Productions	£11,400	66.6%	£3,523
Reconstructing the Future Ltd	£30,000	INELIGIBLE	£0
Red Barn Gallery	£15,400	52.2%	£0
Replay Productions	£14,125	65.6%	£11,332
Smashing Times Theatre Company	£10,666	INELIGIBLE	£0
Source Magazine/Photo Works North	£5,000	61.4%	£3,060
Streetwise Community Circus Workshops	£13,740	66.6%	£5,666
Tinderbox Theatre Company	£22,614	68.0%	£17,072
Ulster Architectural Heritage Society	£18,000	59.0%	£0
War Years Remembered	£10,000	INELIGIBLE	£0
WheelWorks	£12,500	65.8%	£8,499
YouthAction Northern Ireland's Rainbow	£25,000	69.6%	£8,405

**Renewing Communities Local
Concept Masterplans**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Background Information

The draft Concept Masterplans for Inner East, Lower Shankill, Crumlin Road (including Lower Oldpark), Shore Road/York Road and Lower Falls were circulated to Members prior to the January Committee.

The Consultants in previous presentations highlighted that one of the key objectives identified for the Masterplans was to ensure that their work kickstarted the numerous proposals and schemes which had been identified over previous years in the five areas.

Since the previous consultations, the local Masterplans have been further revised by the Consultants and re-titled by the Department for Social Development (DSD) as ‘Physical Regeneration Concept Masterplans’. The consultation documents comprising the Overarching Document and individual Concept Masterplans were sent out separately due to their size and format. The period of consultation closes on 17 February 2010.

Key Issues

The Masterplans are being developed by DSD as part of the Renewing Communities Agenda and were intended to identify strategic action required to address areas of major dereliction. The documents were intended to 'provide a vehicle to coordinate and orchestrate public sector investment and leverage in private sector investment'. The Consultants since their appointment in 2007 have been engaged in consultations and data identification, across all of the areas, to inform their work and provide a context to any future recommendations. As part of this process they met with representatives from a range of organisations including Council Officers and Members.

The consultancy team in the period since the previous consideration by the Committee were working to capture the economic opportunities identified. This work was understood to have been addressing the development of investment options, proposed street environmental works, proposed site acquisitions, early wins and longer-term aspirations.

The early wins aspect of the plans appears to have been removed with the only indication of project potential being provided in the Delivery Table sections of the individual plans. The delivery also includes a notional prioritisation alongside the expected timescales, although there is no indication of the viability in terms of resources or organisational commitment.

The approach has shifted away from the facilitated delivery suggested by the previous discussion of early wins to the revised role whereby the 'outline proposals set out in each of the Masterplans may be expanded and taken forward by individual organisations or agencies and the Masterplans themselves may be used by statutory bodies in support of bids for funding'. This change in the emphasis and failure to develop a defined implementation plan or programme are significant weaknesses. The processes around the formalisation of the proposals and resources were critical elements in ensuring the expectations, raised through the long development process and consultation, were not met with under-delivery.

These concerns alongside the need for clarity around the inclusion of property within the control of the Council and the initial issues highlighted by the Committee at the January meeting are detailed in a draft response appended for the consideration of Committee (see Appendix 1).

The response considers the general approach of the Concept Masterplans and provides detailed commentary to supplement those provided in the form of informal comments and responses to individual consultations.

The main issues relate to the:

- shift in approach, away from the facilitated delivery suggested by the previous discussion of early wins undermines the value of the Masterplans and the consultations;
- the inconsistent coverage of the plans in terms of the areas of the City targeted;
- lack of clarity around the viability in terms of resources or organisational commitment;
- absence of detailed resource consideration and the concern that raised expectations will be met with under-delivery;
- failure address the commercially viability of proposals; and
- Review of Public Administration and the potential change in responsibilities for the various key partners identified in the document.

The Committee is requested to consider the appended draft as a basis for the agreement of a Council response to the Department for Social Development's consultation documents.

Recommendation

Members are requested to consider the content of the proposed draft response to the Concept Masterplans, as set out in Appendix 1, and if appropriate endorse this as the formal response to the Department for Social Development.

Decision Tracking

Following Committee approval:

The finalised response to the Concept Masterplans is collated and submitted to the Department for Social Development.

Timeframe: February 2010 Reporting Officer: Shirley Mc Cay.

Key to Abbreviations

DSD - Department for Social Development
RPA - Review of Public Administration

Documents Attached

Appendix 1 - Draft response to Concept Masterplans and Overarching Document.

APPENDIX ONE

Belfast City Council

Response to Physical Regeneration Concept Masterplans

Overarching Document

The Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the consultation documents both in light of existing work and the potential enhanced range of post RPA functions in the areas of Community Planning, Planning and Regeneration.

As previously highlighted through informal comments the crystallisation of the proposals into a defined implementation plan or programme are critical aspects of the plan development process. The processes around the formalisation of the proposals and resources are critical elements in ensuring the raised expectations are not met with under-delivery.

The early wins concept that formed part of the previous consultations on the plans appears to have been removed with the only indication of project potential being provided in the Delivery Table sections of the individual plans. The delivery section also includes a notional prioritisation alongside the expected timescales, although there is no indication of the viability in terms of resources or organisational commitment.

The shift in approach, away from the facilitated delivery suggested by the previous discussion of early wins undermines the value of the Masterplans and the consultations. The revised role for the Masterplans whereby they outline proposals for each of the areas that 'may be expanded and taken forward by individual organisations or agencies, and the Masterplans themselves may be used by statutory bodies in support of bids for funding' would not appear to meet the expectations fostered by the consultations.

The issue of the implementation or delivery is of direct relevance to the Council in the context of the Review of Public Administration and the potential change in responsibilities for the various key drivers identified in the document. Early engagement with the Council in terms of the detailed processes of resource allocation and the potential transitional arrangements will be required to ensure the potential for 'early wins' that may remain and longer terms proposals can be realistically assessed or realised.

Therefore, the Council would seek early and constructive discussions with the Department around the clarification of any short term or high priority proposals and, in particular, the short/medium term funding process to be taken forward as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review to ensure future project implementation resources.

General Comments

The Council would re-iterate the concerns regarding the original selection of the areas targeted for coverage under the 'Concept Masterplans' proposals. The selection of the five plan boundaries whilst covering large parts of the inner city has excluded a number of significant potential inner city regeneration areas particularly across the south of Belfast.

There remains a clear deficiency in terms of any resource commitments associated with the proposals or an indication of the proposed process for securing funding through the comprehensive spending review or equivalent processes. The implementation or delivery section suggests delivery timescales of two to ten years (short to long) from agreement of the plans which would extend beyond the proposed trigger date for the Review of Public Administration changes. This heightens the necessity for the inclusion of a clearer implementation element to the plans that highlights the projects and areas of activity that could benefit from being developed on a shared basis.

In the absence of the detailed consideration of the implementation or the potential of the catalyst projects it would be difficult to comment on the overall viability of the proposals or the suggested prioritisation as outlined in the summary tables for the five Concept Masterplans.

The overall viability of the proposals appear to be restricted by the failure of the information within the document to adequately address the commercial viability of proposals or their ability to provide the levels of social and physical infrastructure to which the visions for the different areas aspire. The narrative does not appear to provide details on funding agreed or assessment of the public or private sector capacity to deliver the proposed schemes identified in partnership or on their own.

The Council is required to be conscious of any potential legacy that may arise from a transfer of functions such as established by these proposed Concept Masterplans. Exploration will be required into how these conceptual Masterplans could dovetail with the Council's intentions for the continued consideration of ongoing initiatives across the city and the refreshing its own citywide Masterplan.

Whilst it is noted that the concept of Short Term projects could be those expected to be targeted for completion within two years of inception this appears unrealistic in respect of the scale of some of the projects included within this designation. The Grove Leisure Centre landmark development has no planning consent nor has the Council initiated the formal development of proposals that could form the basis of a partnership or engagement in relation to the potential expansion of the site area to incorporate additional land. Similarly the development of the Giants Park aspect of the North Foreshore with the associated physical connection to the adjacent areas are an element of a larger development linked to the potential for external grant support and income streams which may make the Medium Term designation optimistic.

The opportunity for fuller consideration of the documents through the Council Committee processes would have been useful to facilitate a more detailed response that could have sought to maximise the opportunities for the exploration of strategy alignment with Council initiatives. Whilst the document makes reference to complementarity between the plans and the parallel process for the development of the Strategic Regeneration Frameworks a more detailed comparison should be included to demonstrate this integration. It would also be useful for the document to provide clarity in respect of the role of the Concept Masterplans vis-à-vis the Strategic Regeneration Frameworks and other documents in terms of delivery.

There are some clear synergies between what is being proposed in the document and the aspirations/ priorities emerging from the continuing internal Council considerations in respect of Place Shaping Projects across the city. This work is being taken forward as part of the Council's City Investment Fund proposals. The implications in terms of land ownership and potential requests to Council to release land for redevelopment need to be set in the context of operational delivery and these citywide processes.

It should, however, be recognised that prioritisation will be a critical issue as the Key Partners such as the Council have responsibilities beyond the target areas covered by the Concept Masterplans. In terms of detailed comments a number of the earlier informal comments provided by the Council remain to be addressed. There needs to be clear recognition of examples where proposals either involve or are likely to impact upon Council facilities or land. This recognition should then translate into the articulation of the role of the Council within the 'Key Partner' designation to indicate whether or not a proposal has been subject to Council consideration.

This 'Key Partner' aspect of the documents needs to take cognisance of the potential impact of the RPA and clarification of the potential roles ascribed to the Council and other bodies. This clarification could usefully be introduced in the Statutory Approval and key Stakeholder section of the overarching document.

There are areas of the plan where it may be appropriate to highlight the necessity for shorter term environmental enhancements in advance of the longer term aspirations such as the Agnes St/Crumlin Rd junction where landscaping schemes have been developed to provide a shorter terms enhancement to the locality pending longer term developments.

In principle the urban design standards are welcomed and provide an opportunity for parallel processes to be integrated, however there is no evidence of social development being captured alongside the physical development and limited definition of the formal leisure opportunities outlined in the master plans. Greater detail would be useful in relation to the public realm initiatives which are generally welcomed.

In the overarching plan there is a reference to quality walking networks which are subsequently referred to in the individual plans as quality walking corridors. It is unclear whether or not the corridors are a recognised term and whether or not it relates only to its physical nature or whether other elements, for example, physical activity requirements; effective signposting; ecology/ pollution levels are considered for the term to be applied. It would be useful to define routes and stepping stones within them along the corridors.

Specific Comments

The issues and observations detailed below should be taken in the context of previous comments provided by the Council as part of the formal and internal consultations over the past three years.

Lower Shankill

- There are ongoing discussions on the land around the Hammer site and surrounding open space. The Council, as one of the landowners, welcomes an integrated approach in the development of this area in the context that the subject is currently under consideration by the Assets Management Group
- The concept of leisure facilities (p13) requires clarification or definition especially in relation to recent developments with the developer's plans and ongoing proposals for the adjacent Gaol.

- The use/ maintenance of trees (p14) 'to define parking bays and reduce prominence of vehicles' may conflict with general crime prevention guidance to preserve clear and visible sightlines.
- The development of increased provision of tree coverage in this area and throughout the city is welcomed.

Crumlin Road (including Lower Oldpark)

- It should be noted that there is a council playground at Clifton Park Avenue and it may also include playing fields at Marrowbone.
- The lack of public space in this area and the need for greater provision could have implications for the form of development proposed.
- There is in principle support from the Parks and Leisure Department for the green link referenced in item 4.6
- The Crumlin Community Hub (p 13 & 18) provides little articulation of the proposals for the facility or the basis for the Council role as a potential Key Partner. The concept should include a reference to the library authority and include consider the implications for other Council or sector provider assets in the area.

Shore Road/ York Road concept master plan

- The introduction of signage (p4) to improve links to key sites is welcomed.
- Greenway (p16) – it may be useful to suggest green linkages through existing greenway including Alexandra Park and Northwood Linear Park.
- The potential development at Loughside would provide a new replacement recreational facility in the Mount Vernon area (e.g. play area/ kickabout/ MUGA)
- Stepping stones (p 8 &18) - the ongoing development of the Seaview allotments site has realised renewed archaeological interest in the old fort and may be another potential stepping stone in the area.
- A plan has been developed for Grove playing fields (p 9) although no specific resources have been assigned.
- The disposal of the Skegoneill site as suggested was also the subject of previous comment that highlighted the complications in relation to the basis for the transfer and the link to the development of the new facility.
- The Grove Leisure Centre proposals should have a clearer recognition of the role for DRD and the potential for the incorporation of current road space into a development proposal.

Lower Falls concept master plan

- Falls Leisure centre could be identified as one of the developed assets on the stepping stone map (p 8).
- Reinforce the need for complementary cluster of functions alongside in each development (p15)
- The viability of the physical relocation of the Grosvenor playing field to enhance the new Gateway proposal would be questionable in the context of public resource constraints and it may be difficult to secure support for the concept. The issues in relation to Grosvenor Playing Fields were highlighted in previous submissions in relation to ownership and the necessity for replacement facilities and open space. The Council ownership and responsibility is suggested in Key Partners table but not in the main narrative.
- The local concerns that the Lower Falls in becoming a 'Gateway' to another quarter should be addressed through clear articulation of the area as existing community and destination.

Inner East concept master plan

- The cycle way forms part of the Connswater greenway
- The apex site (p 14) forms part of the Connswater pathway however the suitability of the present physical landscape to fulfil the plans detailed in the report may need further consideration.
- The need for improved Access and Movement also extends to creating improved links both with the Titanic quarter and between Short Strand and the surrounding residential areas.
- The Connswater Greenway is a major development and has the potential for transform the local environments and feeder routes alongside the appropriate redevelopment of derelict ground and/or buildings could further enhance outputs.
- In February 2009 the Parks and Leisure committee agreed the ongoing Facilities management Agreement for the Templemore Baths for a further 5 years."

A Member requested that the pedestrian bridge over the M2 Motorway be included within the Shore Road/York Road Concept Masterplan and several Members requested that the Inner East Concept Masterplan be amended to name all of the residential areas which were referred to within the third bullet point.

The Head of Economic Initiatives undertook to amend the response as requested.

Arising from discussion in the matter, a Member pointed out that the Department for Social Development did not have access to adequate funding to undertake the regeneration works listed within the Concept Masterplans and he suggested that it would be beneficial for representatives from the Department to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss the Masterplans in detail.

Following further discussion, the Committee agreed to submit the response as amended and requested that officials from the Department for Social Development attend a future Committee meeting to discuss the Renewing Communities Local Concept Masterplans.

**Department for Social Development Additional
Community Support Plan Funding**

The Head of City Events and Venues informed the Committee that the Voluntary Activity Unit within the Department for Social Development had confirmed earlier in the day that it had identified an additional sum of £177,000 which might be available to the Council for use within its current Community Support Plan 2009-2010. He pointed out that, although the monies were conditional on the utilisation of the total amount by 31st March, there was no requirement on the Council to provide match funding. He pointed out further that, under the Community Support Plan, the Council provided Revenue Grants to 72 community organisations throughout the City. This funding was used towards the running costs associated with operating a community building, although Council officers were aware that the funding awards did not meet currently the full costs of operating such a facility and there was evidence that, within the current funding environment, a significant number of community organisations were struggling to meet these costs.

He indicated that the limited timeframe attached to the additional funding would not allow for the monies to be administered competitively so it was crucial to find a speedy but robust way in which to allocate the funds to service providers. Accordingly, he suggested that the funds be allocated to those 72 organisations currently in receipt of a Revenue Grant and that this funding be used in support of programmes in community buildings and could be spent on small-scale building repairs and maintenance or equipment. He pointed out that the Council would invite organisations to submit proposals on how they proposed to utilise the potential funding and to indicate a budget. Subject to approval, a letter of variation on the existing contract would be issued and, as per the current arrangements, all successful groups would submit monitoring returns to report progress against targets.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to accept the funding from the Department for Social Development and that each of the organisations currently in receipt of a Revenue Grant be offered the sum of £2,458.

Annual Events Programme for 2010-2011

(Mr. G. Copeland, City Events Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“Relevant Background Information

Over the last decade and half Belfast City Council has developed an Annual Programme of Events. The Programme spans the calendar year from the annual St Patrick’s Day Concert and Parade in the spring, to the Christmas Lights concert in winter, and includes major sporting events. The events in 2009 attracted nearly over 1 million people (1,346,227) generating just under £18million additional economic activity for Belfast.

The annual budget to provide for and deliver these events is just below £1.5 million for the 2010/11 year (in 2009/10 this figure was £2.6 million). In 2009/10 the return on the Council’s investment was just under £6.90 of every £1 of the City’s finances. The events have also attracted on average 7% of out-of-state visitors to the City, adding to the economic benefit of the vibrancy and cultural activity of Belfast. The programme also operates as an attraction to local citizens and ratepayers, providing large-scale free public events to the Province’s capital, with extensive positive media coverage, while receiving a public approval rating of nearly 90% for the entire year’s programme of activities.

Key Issues

Breakdown of Events

Details of the Events Programme, which is primarily based around key public and celebratory holidays and incorporates major sporting events, including the Belfast Marathon, is indicated in the table below. This table shows a breakdown of all Council expenditure related to each event and its associated funding streams, including provision for the Support for Sport programme and a level of contingency.

Members are asked to note that the Events budget, as part of the Development Department revenue estimates, was approved by both the Strategic Policy and Resources and Development Committees and the Council.

<u>Event & Date(s)</u>	<u>Additional Details</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Titanic Made in Belfast 12 March - 11 April	This event involves a four week exhibition in W5 as well as exhibitions in the City Hall, with free entry to talks and tours. Approval for this event was given by the Committee in December 2009	£100,000
Deep River Rock Belfast City Marathon 3 May	This would be the 29 th year of Ireland's biggest mass participation event, which attracts over 17,000 competitors. At the time of writing this report some 1,100 marathon entries have been received, an increase year on year on the same period.	£40,000
Belfast Titanic Maritime Festival, 4,5 & 6 June	Over the last four years BCC has developed a free to access maritime event that celebrates Belfast's historical connections to the sea. The three day event brings together the modern and historical aspects of sailing – from high tech vessels to heritage class sailing vessels of the 19 th century. Up to 20 vessels including Galway Hookers, modern tall ships and operational naval craft will be moored on the quayside close to Belfast City centre. Land based activities will include continental markets, live music, a family fun zone and a range of maritime exhibits and stalls. Approval for this event was given by the Committee in December 2009.	£300,000
UK and Ireland Cycling Tour Series, 16 June	In October 2009, Committee agreed to stage this event subject to additional funders being brought on board. BCC officers have now obtained, subject to contracts, an additional £20,000 to help stage this event from DRD Travelwise NI as part of National Cycling Week. The planned event will also include a series of school based cycling events in parks across the City culminating with a family cycling day in Ormeau Park, with input to Cycle to Work Day and Cycle to School Day.	£85,000 inclusive of DRD £20,000 input

<u>Event & Date(s)</u>	<u>Additional Details</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Lord Mayor's Belfast City Carnival 19 June	This event introduces the new Lord Mayor to the citizens of Belfast and is operated in conjunction with the Belfast Carnival Forum and the Beat Initiative.	£28,500.00
European Scottish Pipe Band Championships, 31 July	Committee approved the bidding for this event in 2009 and Belfast was successful in securing this prestigious event for a three year period (2010-2012). This one day event is anticipated to attract in the region of 25,000 spectators, however, the Championships will also be complemented with a new three to four day music festival under the title of 'Pipe Up', financial provision for which is included in the above costs and run in conjunction with the Royal Pipe Band Association. These associated events would significantly boost the attendance figures further.	£155,000
Major Large-Scale Live music event, Date TBC	Currently the Council's City Events Unit is in negotiation with both domestic and European broadcast organisations with regard to potentially promoting a large-scale music event in the City. The Council's maximum commitment would be limited to the available a budget of £83,778.00, previously used for the Opera in the Park event. Further reports will be brought to Committee in relation to this opportunity but Members agreement in principle is requested.	£83,778
Garden Gourmet, 18 & 19 Sept	This event is run in cooperation with BCC Parks & Leisure incorporating the Autumn Flower Show which will be in its 8 th year in 2010. The event normally attracts an audience of 12,000 people. BCC Officers have been able to obtain provisional approval from a major retailer to support this event, further details of which will be provided at Committee.	£83,400

<u>Event & Date(s)</u>	<u>Additional Details</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Hallowe'en Metro Monster Mash, Sunday 31 October	This annual event attracts an audience in excess of 25,000 and would be staged in Belfast Harbour. The Hallowe'en Metro Monster Mash is the single biggest one night event in Belfast.	£163,000
NI Horse Show, Date Oct TBC	This is the final year of BCC's pre-agreed commitment to this three year event, staged at the Odyssey which was ratified in November 2008.	£10,000
Christmas Switch-on and Programme, from 23 November	Acknowledged as the official start of the City's festive season this programme will be launched with the annual switch-on concert, which, in 2009, was successfully orientated towards the family audience. This programme includes costs for a schools carol service at the Belfast Waterfront (organised with the Belfast School of Music), live music in Belfast City centre and festive lighting at City Hall.	£155,000
St Patrick's Day, 17 March 2011	This planned event encompasses a carnival parade and live concert to mark St Patrick's Day. Parade participants come from across the city with the event attracting out-of-city & out-of-state visitors.	£160,000
Support for Sport funding	This is an annual programme of funding that sports clubs and sports event organisers can access. The programme is issued in a minimum of two tranches via public notices and is accessible via the Council's webpage.	£97,500

<u>Event & Date(s)</u>	<u>Additional Details</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Sail Training Funding	As in previous years it is proposed that this funding will be used in connection with Ocean Youth Trust to continue the work of enhancing young people's personal skills base via sailing activities. This process also allows BCC to start the bidding process for bringing the Tall Ships back to Belfast (possible return date for this event would 2015).	£20,000
Event Economic Impact Surveys & Contingency arrangements	This proposed finance comprises the economic surveys undertaken for each event and additionally provides for an additional level contingency for the Annual Events Programme	£40,000
		£1, 500, 000

Committee Approval Process

Members are requested to note that historically Council approval process for the Programme of Events is obtained in the Autumn. However, due to a delay in the Council confirming Departmental budgetary levels, this report has been held until this month's Committee meeting.

Resource Implications

Financial

The table above indicates the Annual Civic and Sports Events Programme with each individual associated events budget. The total overall budget for this programme is £1.5 million. This is the annual budget for events run by the Council and part of the overall Departmental revenue estimates, which were agreed by the Council on 1 February 2010.

Members are asked to note that the 2009/10 return on this investment was just under £18 million, which represents a £6.90 for every £1 of Council monies.

Human Resources

There are currently no additional staff requirements.

Asset and Other Implications

None.

Recommendation

- **Members are requested to approve the Annual Civic and Sports Events Programme as outlined in the report and its associated funding, with the exception of the Titanic Made in Belfast Event and the Belfast Titanic Maritime Festival which were approved by the Committee at its meeting in December, 2009.**

Decision Tracking

Further to approval, officers will monitor funding and evaluate the outcomes of all events and provide post-project details as part of the Department's annual review. These outcomes will be presented to Members as part of the City Events Unit key performance indicators.

Timeline: March 2011 Reporting Officer: Gerry Copeland"

During discussion in the matter, a Member expressed concern that by holding the Lord Mayor's Belfast City Carnival only two weeks after the election of the new Lord Mayor he or she was unable to have any significant input into the event and its theme. He suggested therefore that the Carnival might better be held in May which would be at the end of the Lord Mayor's term of office.

The City Events Manager pointed out that this would be the third year in which the Council had worked with the Carnival Forum and the Beat Initiative on this event, which had resulted from the merging of two former events, the Lord Mayor's Show and the City Carnival, and had produced considerable savings to the Council.

Following further discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendation contained within the report.

Support for Sport - Event Funding

The Committee considered the following requests for assistance which had been received under the Support for Sport Scheme in relation to events and promotions:

<u>Organisation/Event</u>	<u>Summary of Event and Amount Requested</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Northern Ireland Cycling Federation/P&O Tour of the North Cycle Race	Funding in the sum of £2,500 in relation to the holding on 2nd April of the launch of the event at Stormont	£1,500

<u>Organisation/Event</u>	<u>Summary of Event and Amount Requested</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>
Youth Soccer Tournaments Northern Ireland/Belfast Invitational Cup	Funding in the sum of £7,790 in relation to the holding between 6th and 8th April of a football competition at Queen's Playing Fields involving 48 teams from England, Wales, the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland	£5,453
Malone Mini Rugby/Malone Under 13 International Festival of Rugby	Funding in the sum of £5,000 in relation to the holding on 10th and 11th April of a rugby competition involving 16 teams from England, Scotland, Wales, the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland	£2,265

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Pricing Policy

The Committee considered a report in respect of the prices which were to be charged for the hire of the facilities within the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Halls and the various community centres for the year commencing 1st April, 2010. The new charges would represent a 2% increase compared to those charged currently, with the exception of charges to multi-event and commercial promoters hiring the Studio at the Waterfront, which would be increased by between 5% and 7.5% in order to recoup a greater share of associated operational costs, and a £350 reduction for hiring the Ulster Hall for the purpose of holding a gala dinner in order to make it a more competitive option for potential clients.

The Committee agreed to the changes in the prices to be charged as outlined in the report, a copy of which was available on Modern.gov.

Acting Directors of Development

The Chairman informed the Committee that, since the new Director of Development, Mr. John McGrillen, would be in post from 1st March, this would be the last Committee meeting at which Ms. Shirley McCay and Mr. T. Husbands would be present in their capacities as joint Acting Directors of Development. On behalf of the Committee, he thanked the two officers for the manner in which they had led the Department in recent months.

Chairman