

Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 20th February, 2015

MEETING OF SHADOW STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Stalford (Chairman);
Councillors Attwood, Beattie, Carson, B. Groves,
Hargey, Hutchinson, Jones, Kingston,
McAteer, McCabe, McNamee, McVeigh,
Robinson, Rodgers and Spence.
- In attendance: Mrs. S. Wylie, Chief Executive;
Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources/
Deputy Chief Executive;
Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;
Mr. G. Millar, Director of Property and Projects;
Mrs. J. Minne, Director of Organisational Development;
Mr. S. McCrory, Democratic Services Manager; and
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies for inability to attend were reported from Councillors Boyle, D. Browne, Haire and Long.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor B. Groves declared an interest in respect of Item 5d "Transfer of Assets and Liabilities from Castlereagh Borough Council and Lisburn City Council in so far as she was on the Management Committee of the Sally Gardens Project; and Councillor Carson declared an interest in respect of item 4a "Request for Financial Assistance/Approved Funds" in so far as he was employed by one of the organisations which had submitted an application; and 5d in so far as he was on the Management Committee of the Sally Gardens Project.

Notice of Motion: Elder Abuse Awareness Day

The Committee was reminded that the Shadow Council, at its meeting on 9th February, had considered the following Motion which had been moved by Councillor Convery and seconded by Councillor Jones:

"Belfast District Council believes that Belfast's senior citizens are valued members of society and that it is our collective responsibility to ensure they live safely and with dignity.

Abuse of older people is a tragedy inflicted on vulnerable seniors and an ever-increasing problem in today's society that crosses all socio-economic boundaries. Combating abuse of older people will help improve the quality of life for all seniors and will allow them to continue to live as independently as possible and contribute to the life and vibrancy of Belfast. Belfast's seniors are guaranteed that they will be treated with respect and dignity to enable them to continue to serve as leaders, mentors, volunteers and important and active members of this community.

We are all responsible for building safer communities for Belfast's seniors. The well-being of Belfast's seniors is in the interest of all and further adds to the well-being of Belfast's communities. Accordingly, this Council requests that the Lord Mayor proclaims Monday, 15th June, 2015 as 'Elder Abuse Awareness Day' and encourages all Belfast's residents to recognise and celebrate the accomplishments of our seniors."

The Committee was advised that, in accordance with Standing Order 16.1 of the Local Government (Standing Orders) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014, the matter had been referred to the Committee for consideration.

The Committee agreed that a report in the matter be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

Notice of Motion: City Growth

The Committee was advised that, in accordance with Standing Order 16.1, the undernoted Motion which had been moved by Councillor Attwood and seconded by Councillor Kingston, had been referred to the Committee for consideration:

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

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

The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee and that officers investigate the possibility of the Council being admitted to the Core Cities Group.

Notice of Motion: Second World War Veterans

The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting in relation to the undernoted Motion which had been moved by Councillor Spence and seconded by Councillor Convery at the Shadow Council meeting on 9th February and referred to the Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1 for consideration:

“Belfast District Council recognises that 2015 marks the 70th Anniversary of the ending of the Second World War and notes the sacrifice made by many citizens of Belfast and beyond as part of the Army, the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force and the Merchant Navy. Accordingly, the District Council agrees to host a civic event in honour of the remaining veterans who live in Belfast.”

Notice of Motion: Real Cloth Nappies

The Committee was reminded that the Shadow Council, at its meeting on 9th February, had referred the following Notice of Motion, in accordance with Standing Order 16.1 to the Committee for consideration. The Motion had been moved by Councillor R. Brown and seconded by Councillor Hanna:

“Belfast District Council notes that nappy waste is the largest identifiable category of waste, accounting for 3-4% of total household waste, resulting in the disposal of 8 million nappies per day in the UK. It recognises the enormous environmental impact and cost to the Council associated with disposable nappies and further notes that making use of real cloth nappies rather than disposable nappies can save parents around £600 by the time a child is 2 years old.

The District Council therefore requests that a report be submitted to the appropriate Committee which would outline the feasibility of the Council introducing a ‘Real Nappy Voucher Scheme’ which could offer parents a one-off payment towards the cost of purchasing real cloth nappies or a trial from a cloth nappy library.

In addition, the District Council calls on the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to take action to ensure that real cloth nappies are promoted in maternity wards.”

The Committee agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

Notice of Motion: Co-operative Development Hub

The Committee was advised that the Shadow Council, at its meeting on 9th February, had considered the following Notice of Motion, which had been moved by Councillor McVeigh and seconded by Councillor Beattie:

“Belfast District Council recognises the significant potential to grow the co-operative sector across Belfast and will consider establishing a ‘Co-operative Development Hub’ that would encourage and support the development of new co-operative enterprises and would support cross community participation in them. It recognises that this would provide practical support, such as co-operative business planning and development, mentoring and coaching for start-up co-operative enterprises, training, information events and seminars, financial management and advice and democratic governance.

It is accepted that this initiative should be led by the Council and will involve establishing and securing of finance for the Hub, initially for a fixed period of three-years, which would enable the employment of two co-operative development officers; the total cost is likely to be in the region of £300,000. Accordingly, the Council will explore with the Department of Enterprise, Trade, and Investment, as well as Europe, the potential for joint funding for this initiative.”

In accordance with Standing Order 16.1, the Motion had been referred without discussion to the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for consideration.

The Committee agreed that a report in the matter be submitted in due course.

Notice of Motion: Super Connected Scheme

The Committee agreed that a report in relation to the following Notice of Motion, which had been moved by Councillor Carson and seconded by Councillor Hutchinson at the meeting of the Shadow Council on 9th February and referred to the Committee in accordance with Standing Order 16.1, be submitted to a future meeting:

“Belfast District Council agrees to establish a pilot programme to extend the super-connected scheme to include domestic-use properties, so as to address issues associated with pensioner poverty.

The Council, during this pilot programme, will engage with our community, statutory and corporate partners to maximise the potential advantages of the extension of the super-connected scheme and thereby reduce social isolation and improve the economic situation of our most vulnerable older people across the City.”

Modernisation and Improvement

Taking forward the Belfast Agenda

The Chief Executive submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 This paper outlines for Members the programme of work for establishing the city's first community plan, the 'Belfast Agenda' including the proposed approach to strategic design and stakeholder inclusion. The paper outlines the likely engagement processes and interim governance structures that are required to meet the legislative requirements and to ensure formal endorsement of the Agenda by Members and our community planning partners by the end of 2015. (The Council's response to the Department's statutory guidance on community planning is also being presented to this Committee.)**
- 1.2 The Belfast Agenda will set out the vision for our city in 2030 while also establishing a number of associated 'quality of life outcomes' for our citizens. The Agenda will identify medium term priorities for achieving these outcomes and set out a series of agreed actions for both the Council and our partners that will address these priorities over the next four years.**
- 1.3 There already is a substantial body of evidence, including the feedback from Members and partner workshops, about what such outcomes and priorities might be. For example, initial work is beginning to identify areas of importance around the city's role as the regional magnet for inward investment; the need to secure long term economic growth; the importance of our city centre not only for the city but for the entire region; the issue of skills and employability; the need to continue to build on the potential of tourism; and the need to build a shared community.**
- 1.4 A key aim of the strategic design process will be to turn such emerging consensus into a series of firm commitments by government departments, agencies, and other relevant stakeholders as a basis for ongoing accountability.**
- 1.5 As Members will be aware during 2015 the NI Executive and its departments will be working to establish the next Programme for Government. This is an important time for the**

Council to make the case for Belfast and to ensure that there is closer alignment between neighbourhood, city and regional priorities. The Belfast Agenda needs to articulate the challenges and opportunities facing the city and demonstrate the consensus amongst the city's stakeholders about what Belfast's priorities should be.

2 **Key Issues**

2.1 In order to quickly initiate the strategic planning process for the Agenda, Bernard Marr of Advanced Performance Institute was commissioned to create a Belfast 'Plan on a Page'. This work was undertaken based on the recognition that, as a city, we are not starting our planning process from a 'blank page'. A number of our partners, including the Council itself, have already undertaken (or are in the process of developing) significant strategic planning work that can inform the Belfast Agenda and give direction to its outcomes, priorities and actions.

2.2 Bernard Marr carried out a series of in-depth meetings with Members and a broad range of partners in the city. His emerging findings were re-drafted following workshops with Members and senior partners. The emerging focus on the economy, educational attainment, skills and employability were particularly welcomed by Members who also highlighted the need for the plan to emphasise further wellbeing outcomes associated with health, reducing inequality, poverty, sustainable development and creating shared space.

2.3 The final draft of the 'plan on a page' (see Appendix 1) attempts to bring clarity and focus around those outcomes, priorities and enablers for which there appears to be broad consensus amongst partners. Members should note that this plan on a page at this stage does not represent a draft Belfast Agenda. Instead it forms an initiation document for a further process of co-design and engagement with our stakeholders that will ultimately lead to a shared, agreed Belfast Agenda.

2.4 In January Transformation Committee agreed that our approach to this engagement and co-design process should be structured around two main components:

(A) A long term city vision and a series of outcomes for residents (to 2030). This will set the ambitious long term strategic direction for Belfast. Ideally, any future strategic planning process in the city will be

able to use these broad outcomes as a reference point. (For example, it will help set the strategic context for the city's Local Development Plan.) As part of this process we would also agree a basket of 'population' indicators for these outcomes that would help all of partners measure the impact of their combined work over the longer term.

2.5

(B) Our priorities, actions and commitments (to 2020). The second component of the Agenda is about identifying the city's priorities over the next four year. What are the things that we and our partners need to focus on in our first four year plan in order to make the most impact on the longer term outcomes? What are the commitments that partners need to make in order to address these priorities? These commitments will include programmes, strategies and individual interventions. Alongside these commitments would be a basket of performance measures that would include targets.

2.6 In order to develop part (A) the Council will lead a 'Belfast Conversation' – a broad citywide Member-led engagement programme with our residents and stakeholders. The engagement will be based around questions such as:

- ✓ What's your vision for Belfast in 2030?
- ✓ What outcomes do you want for the residents of our city (and your area) by 2030?
- ✓ What do you think we need to do now to start achieving these outcomes?

2.7 The main Belfast conversation will commence, following the establishment of the new Belfast City Council, in April and will include:

- Facilitated Member-led public events (including a City Hall launch in April and local area events). Details of these will be shared with Members once arrangements have been confirmed over the next few weeks.
- A social media campaign using Twitter and Facebook
- Use of the Council website – including online engagement

- Online support for organisations that wish to stage their own 'Belfast Conversation' events
- 2.8 The data gathered from all of these engagement strands will be analysed and continually inform the development of both outcomes and priorities in the Agenda.
- 2.9 For part (B) Transformation Committee has agreed to use an Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) approach to determine priorities and actions over the medium term (to 2020). This work has already been initiated by the Bernard Marr piece; however, it is also begin informed by the findings of our residents' survey and an analysis of the city evidence base. Crucially, for this strand of work to be effective we need to work closely with planners and senior managers across relevant partner organisations to develop the ideas behind the plan on a page and turn these into practical, deliverable actions to which partners can be held to account.
- 2.10 Members have already been introduced to the work of Mark Friedman and his OBA model. It provides a simple approach that any organisation can use to determine what it wants to achieve and how well it has gone about achieving it. It asks three simple questions: *How much have we done? How well have we done it? And, Is anyone better off?* It is this last question that public organisations often find very difficult to answer collectively.
- 2.11 OBA encourages organisations to think much more clearly about the ultimate impact of their work on people and how it can be measured using proper data – which can then be used as the basis for ongoing planning, decision-making and evaluation. It's an approach that's already been successfully adopted by a number of cities including Cardiff and Leeds. It is also the approach that the Department of the Environment are encouraging all Councils to adopt in the development of their community plans.
- 2.12 Working with OBA training expert, David Burnby, we will deliver a number of workshops over the next few weeks which will not only build the capacity of Members and partners in the OBA techniques but will also examine specific priorities in more detail. We will use the OBA approach to clarify the links between the outcomes we want for our residents and the actions that, collectively as organisations, we need to deliver on the ground. A specific OBA workshop is being arranged for Members at the end of March.

2.13 During April and May partners will come together to ‘unpack’ emerging priority or clusters of priorities. These workshops will use OBA to ‘turn talk into action’ by answering the following questions:

1. What are our priorities for 2020?
2. What are the characteristics of each priority?
3. What data indicator(s) would help us measure success?
4. What’s the current story in Belfast? Are there trend curves that we need to turn? (ie, are things getting worse over time)
5. Which partners could help in turning the curve?
6. What works well now in turning the curve?
7. What actions/programmes/strategies could deliver on these priorities that we’re not currently doing?

2.14 Timeline

The target date for a first fully endorsed Belfast Agenda is December 2015. With this date in mind the following high level stages for the delivery of the programme as proposed:

Stages	Key dates
Train Members, officers and partners in the Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA)	Feb to Mar 15
Develop draft vision and city outcomes	Feb to Apr 15
The ‘Belfast conversation’ engagement programme	Feb to Apr 15
Train Members, officers and partners in the Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA)	Feb to Mar 15
Co-design process on city priorities and commitments with our partners	April to May 15
Partners agree a draft Belfast Agenda for consultation	From June 2015
Formal consultation and further refinement	June to Dec 15
Endorsement process	Jan to Mar 16
Publish the Belfast Agenda	Apr 2016

2.15 Governance and support structures

The DoE statutory guidance calls for some form of governance structure for the community planning process. Thinking on governance structures is at a very early stage and will be guided by Members using a ‘form follows function’ approach. The most effective and efficient governance

arrangements will need to be influenced by the outcomes, priorities and commitments within the Belfast Agenda.

- 2.16 A pragmatic governance arrangement will also need to balance a need for inclusivity with effective and timely decision-making. Over time there may be the need for a number of 'thematic' sub-groups aligned to individual priorities (for example, around economic growth).
- 2.17 The final agreed governance structure will need to be agreed by Members and the city's partners over the next year. Work has now begun to determine the logistical requirements of a community planning structure; accountability and decision-making mechanisms; roles and responsibilities; etc. A further paper will be brought to Committee for discussion in the coming months.
- 2.18 **Building the Belfast Agenda evidence base**
- One of the statutory requirements of the community planning process is for the council to set up and manage a shared 'evidence base' which would be available to community planning partners to inform ongoing decision-making on priorities, actions and as a basis for impact measurements. This evidence base would develop over time into a managed resource of 'smart' urban data that would be contributed to by different partners.
- 2.19 Officers are working to create the initial city baseline (which includes the results of our residents survey and strategic planning audit) and are also pursuing a number of possible routes with European and local 'smart city' partners towards developing such a source.
- 2.20 The Council has been approached by the Ulster University's Economic Policy Centre which is currently working with the Department of Finance and Personnel on the development of regional measures of wellbeing. The Centre also produces bi-annual economic outlook reports; manages an economic forecasting database and dashboard; and undertakes bespoke research (for example, Annual Skills reports, Annual Export Reports, Local Government Economic Forecast).
- 2.21 There is an opportunity for the Council to become a sponsor of the Centre which would entitle the Council to sit on its Advisory Board and secure and influence research support. The work has the potential to contribute significantly to the Council's ongoing analysis and monitoring of the city

economy and to support the underpinning evidence base for the Belfast Agenda. Members are asked to consider the proposal for Council to contribute to the work of the Centre at a cost of £25,000 per annum for two years.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 This development phase of the Belfast Agenda is included within current Council resources. The OBA capacity building programme is being supported from the Department of the Environment's LGR capacity fund.

The £25,000 per annum contribution to the UU Economic Policy Centre has been included in budget estimates from the Development Departments for next year.

4 Equality and Good Relations Implications

- 4.1 Equality and good relations implications, in relation to this policy, are still under consideration. Further updates will be sent to the Equality and Diversity Officer in due course. However, it is likely an EQIA will be carried out as part of the formal consultation process on the Belfast Agenda.

5 Call In

- 5.1 This decision is subject to call-in.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are asked to:

1. Note the latest version of the 'Plan on a Page'
2. Note the proposal for a 'Belfast Conversation' that includes five Member-led public events (details of which will be forwarded to Members once they are confirmed)
3. Note the proposed OBA training programme, including a proposed Member workshop, details of which will be forwarded to Members once confirmed.
4. Note the proposal from the Ulster University's Economic Policy Centre and agree to the Council contributing £25,000 per annum for a two year period to support their work."

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

**DoE Consultation – Draft Statutory Guidance for the
Operation of Community Planning**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The Local Government Act (NI) 2014 requires councils to make arrangements for community planning in their areas with effect from 1st April 2015. The Act introduces the new duty of community planning and sets out a high level framework for its operation within Northern Ireland. It defines community planning as ‘a process by which the council and its community planning partners identify long-term objectives [and agreed actions] for improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of the district’.
- 1.2 The Act makes provision for the Department to publish guidance for community planning following a formal consultation process and requires Councils and their community partners to have regard for any guidance issued by the Department. DoE is now consulting on this draft guidance. This report presents an outline of the DoE consultation and seeks endorsement of a draft Council response.
- 1.3 Members will recall that Council recently responded to a separate DoE consultation on the draft Community Planning Partners Order (specifies the bodies or persons which are to be community planning partners) with suggested additions to the list of organisations to be designated as community planning partners and comments as to how the Order could be improved. The final Order which will designate the Community Planning Partners is expected in March 2015.
- 1.4 Members should note that this paper has been prepared while taking into account the Council’s previous response to the consultation on the Community Planning partners legislation, and the fact that the final Community Planning Partners Order has not yet been published.
- 1.5 The draft guidance provides information on the following:
 - Roles and responsibilities (Duties of Councils, Community planning partners and Gov Departments, role of the community and support partners)
 - Partnership structures and governance

- The Partnership Panel
- The Community Planning process (including community involvement, identifying vision, outcomes and actions, evidence base
- Key issues to be addressed (including equality, good relations and social inclusion)
- Sustainable Development
- Links to Spatial Planning
- Collaborative working across boundaries
- Production and Publication; and
- Monitoring Review and Reporting (including performance improvement)

1.6 Specifically, the DoE have asked the following questions about their draft guidance:

1. Is the Guidance clear, specific and proportionate?
2. Do you feel the guidance will help you implement community planning?
3. Do you feel one year is a sufficient time frame to develop a community plan and if not what alternative format would you suggest?
4. What would you define as a reasonable degree of consensus reached to enable decision making?
5. Is the guidance clear in respect of equality and good relations duties?
6. Does the guidance sufficiently define partner roles and responsibilities?

1.7 DoE is also hosting four public consultation events to discuss the draft guidance on the following dates:

Monday 23rd February 2015, 9.30am Craigavon Civic and Conference Centre

Monday 23rd February 2015, 4.00pm The Mill, Newtownabbey Council Offices

Tuesday 24th February 2015, 10.00am, Strule Arts Centre, Omagh

Tuesday 3rd March 2015, 10.00am, Roe Valley Arts and Cultural Centre, Limavady

2 Key Issues

2.1 A draft Council response to the consultation has been prepared with input from across Council Departments

(attached in Appendix I). Key issues addressed in the Councils response are summarised below.

2.2 Roles and responsibilities of Departments and community planning partners

Whilst the guidance is reasonably clear and directive in relation to the roles of Councils, the language used in relation to other partners, particularly in relation to government departments, is much weaker. Concerns regarding how key departments (particular those that directly provide local services) can be compelled to participate effectively in the community planning process were highlighted in the Council's response to the draft legislation on statutory community planning partners. Comments in the attached draft response continue to reflect these concerns, highlighting the need for a stronger mechanism to ensure effective levels of participation in the process, in order to deliver the envisaged joined-up collaborative working approaches envisaged from community planning.

2.2 The Partnership panel

The draft guidance describes a 'partnership panel', outlining its role to provide a link between central and local government. The Council response highlights the opportunity such a Panel could bring to help ensure alignment between community planning outcomes and the plans and strategies of Government Departments. The Partnership Panel's role in facilitating effective community planning arrangements between Councils and Government Departments is key to ensuring that the NI Executive's vision for local government of *'a strong, dynamic local government creating communities that are vibrant, healthy, prosperous, safe, sustainable and have the needs of all citizens at their core'* is delivered.

2.4 Support Partners

The draft guidance identifies the need for the community, voluntary and business sectors to be given opportunity to input their views to the community planning process. In ensuring effective engagement with the community and voluntary sectors, the guidance suggests that organisations representing their sectors should be accountable and have a mandate to do so. This is a key issue for the operation of community planning. The draft Council response highlights the need for consideration of how sectoral representation might be addressed to ensure the effective participation of sectors such as the CVS and businesses in development and delivery of the community plan.

- 2.5** The draft guidance suggests that such organisations, where they have a key role in delivering outcomes of the community plan, may be invited to participate as support partners, and that a criterion-based assessment should be applied when deciding which organisations should be invited. It would be useful for the guidance to clarify this approach. The overriding principle must be that partnerships need to be aligned to the delivery of outcomes identified in the plan and that partnership structures need to reflect local circumstances and be focused on effective delivery.
- 2.6** **Resources**
While the community planning process is to be initiated and led by Councils, the draft guidance confirms that, development and delivery is a shared task between the partners. Given that the new duty is not accompanied by any additional resources, the guidance needs to reflect the resources partners will need to commit to the process, including practical arrangements for developing the plan and managing the process (eg data/evidence base, research, engagement, performance monitoring/reporting). However, the likelihood of this happening would be strengthened by the development of a shared accountability framework and strengthening the duty of Departments to whom many organisations are responsible for strategy delivery.
- 2.7** In relation to delivery of community planning outcomes, the draft guidance also makes clear that all partners should embed the community planning approach into their management cultures, corporate, business and budgetary planning processes. This will require significant work and capacity building, and time will be required for this to happen.
- 2.8** **Partnership Structures and Governance**
Section 4 of the DoE draft guidance document recognises that it is for each Council to decide upon an appropriate governance structure for its area, and that there are a variety of possible models. The Council response welcomes this approach, and highlights the importance of ensuring partnership working arrangements are designed around achieving the outcomes identified in the plan. Therefore, it is important that the guidance does not impose a 'one-size-fits-all' approach.
- 2.9** **Reaching Consensus**
The draft guidance makes clear that it will be a Council's responsibility to make a judgement as to when 'a degree of consensus has been reached' – Councils will need to agree

how this is done with its partners and there should be flexibility to reflect local circumstances in governance arrangements and structures established in a particular Council area. It would be useful for the guidance to explore this further. Belfast City Council would welcome a pragmatic approach that ensures a focus on building momentum and progress on delivery of outcomes.

2.10 Monitoring and Performance Improvement

To ensure that there is a focus on the outcomes identified in the plan, an effective performance management and shared accountability framework will be required for all partners. The draft guidance indicates that community planning should be firmly embedded in the corporate business and resource planning of all partners, and that effective performance management and scrutiny arrangements will be required. This is a key success factor for community planning and it will be important that departments and other partners can be held to account if they do not deliver on their commitments. The guidance should also reflect/align with the performance improvement duties of Councils in Part 12 of the Local Government Act (NI) 2014.

2.11 Timescale for Production of 1st community plan

A timeframe of one year from implementation of the new duty is suggested for production of a first community plan (by 1st April 2016). Given the limited timeframe the draft guidance recognises that the first plan is likely to be an interim plan. This is in line with the proposed timeframes previously agreed by Members for development of the Belfast Agenda. Preparation of an initial plan within this timeframe will be important to seize the opportunity during 2015 to influence the next Programme for Government in line with emerging priorities of the Belfast Agenda, to benefit economic growth of the city.

2.12 Other issues:

Sustainable development - The community planning duty includes a requirement to identify objectives that contribute to sustainable development in a community plan. The guidance advises that regard will need to be given to the NI Executive's sustainable development strategy when developing the community plan.

2.13 Spatial planning – the draft guidance outlines the legislative link between community planning and the Local Development Plan, highlighting synergies between the processes including community engagement and data/evidence gathering. Belfast

City Council intends to work to consider where these two processes can be aligned as far as possible.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 There are no resource implications associated with this report.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 There are no equality implications for the Council.

4.2 Under the terms of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the DoE has carried out screening of the proposed guidance which has identified that the proposals will not lead to discriminatory or negative differential impact on any of the section 75 groups.

4.3 The Council's Equality and Diversity Officer, and Good Relations Officer have reviewed the draft guidance consultation document and have contributed comments which have been incorporated in the draft consultation response in Appendix I.

5 Call In

5.1 This decision is subject to Call In.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Members are asked to:

1. Approve the release of the draft Council response (appendix 1) to the DoE, subject to ratification by Shadow Council.

Belfast City Council

**Response to the Department of the Environment Consultation Paper: Draft
Statutory Guidance for the operation of Community Planning**

DRAFT

1.0 Introduction

The consultation issued by the Department of the Environment (the Department) on the draft guidance for operation of community planning is a welcome step in the ongoing development of community planning within Northern Ireland. Belfast City Council believes that over time community planning will demonstrate that collaboration and joined-up working is the best way to make a positive difference to the lives of local people. Whilst the successful implementation of community planning will rely on strong relationships, commitment and leadership of those leading and participating in the process, a strong legislative basis along with clear statutory guidance will provide an important foundation upon which to build relationships and practice, particularly in the early stages of implementing the new duty. Belfast City Council believes community planning is key to delivery of the Executive's vision for local government of *'a strong, dynamic local government creating communities that are vibrant, healthy, prosperous, safe, sustainable and have the needs of all citizens at their core'* and that the statutory guidance needs to reflect this throughout.

Belfast City Council welcomes this important opportunity to comment on this consultation with a view to helping ensure the goals of community planning are met and that a fit for purpose and effective process is implemented.

Belfast City Council welcomes that the guidance provides Councils and other organisations a helpful outline of the community planning process. The main elements of the community planning process are covered and the document is helpful in identifying key principles in relation to partnership/governance structures and community involvement.

There are however some areas of the draft consultation document that the Council wishes to make comment on and it

is hoped the comments provided below will assist the Department in finalising the guidance. Key areas covered in our response include:

- Clarification and strengthening the role of government departments and other key partners, and the important role of the partnership panel
- The need for suitable accountability frameworks for all partners
- The role of support partners and sectoral representation, including the community and voluntary sectors needs to be considered further in implementing the community planning process.
- Need for partnership and governance structures to reflect local circumstances
- The guidance could reflect on good practice for application of community planning at a local area level.

2.0 General Comments

2.1 Identification of Community Planning Partners

As highlighted in Belfast City Council's previous response to the DoE consultation on a draft Local Government (Statutory Partners) Order (NI) 2015, it is important that the appropriate organisations with key contributions to the community planning process are designated as statutory partners from the outset to send out a clear message and requirement for full and active involvement. This will also help establish the shared ownership and responsibility which will be necessary for effective community planning. Belfast City Council's response to the previous consultation highlighted a number of additional organisations, including elements of a number of key government Departments that should be included within the list of designated statutory partners.

We are aware that the final Order has not yet been published, and that the final list will impact on the final version of the statutory guidance. Accordingly this response is written in the context of this uncertainty, particularly when addressing issues surrounding the roles and responsibilities of key organisations that may or may not be designated as statutory partners in the final enacted legislation.

2.2 Government departments

The draft guidance explains the roles and responsibilities of Councils, Statutory Community Planning Partners, Departments, support partners and the wider community.

It is noted however that the duties of Council's are framed in strong language, clearly reflecting the legal duties involved, while for other participants (partners and Departments) the wording is noticeably weaker. In particular the mandate provided within the guidance for active participation by Government Departments (para. 3.17 – 3.21) is of particular concern. The guidance suggests departments, when invited to participate, should *'make every effort to respond positively to such requests'* while at the same time pointing out that Councils should *'recognise that departments have responsibilities to their ministers and that is their first priority'*.

Whilst in many cases, strong relationships between Belfast City Council and departments would hopefully result in positive responses to such invitations. Whilst we would agree that those attending CP Partnership meetings to have an 'influential senior role, be able to agree to targets and actions and ensure they are implemented' (p. 12) we recognise the resource impact that this may have on the respective participants and their organisations. It will be important to take this into consideration when creating governance arrangements, scheduling meetings etc. to ensure that this is balanced to maximise the benefit to the process for all partners.

Government departments play a key role in supporting delivery at local level and helping to align priorities and strategic policy setting at the regional level. This is particularly important for community planning in Northern Ireland where the government departments actually deliver a range of local services that in other jurisdictions would be delivered by local councils or other statutory partners. There are clear gaps between the range of functions covered by councils and the proposed statutory community planning partners outlined in the draft legislation; for example, roads and transport, skills and employment. This therefore requires a different approach to be taken to the involvement of departments, or parts of departments; and must be focused and driven by the need to involve the services and functions required to achieve better outcomes. Commitment, ownership and buy in from government departments will be required for the community planning process to succeed. This

issue also formed a basis of concerns raised in the Councils response to consultation on the Statutory partners order.

Should departments not be designated in the final Statutory Partners Order, the Department should consider other mechanisms to address this issue and/or to demonstrate how the duty on Departments is operating in practice (e.g. Memorandums of Understanding), to ensure that departments can be drawn into the community planning process in a more cohesive manner (rather than relying on good will alone). We therefore request that further consideration is given to how the role of departments can be reflected in both legislation and guidance and would welcome further engagement on this issue.

The Council also recommends that Community Planning should be a key consideration in any future changes to departmental structures.

We would also suggest that the guidance is an opportunity to help ensure the community planning process realises opportunities for all partners in aligning outcomes to better co-ordinate emerging initiatives/plans/proposals of direct relevance to other partners. The guidance could highlight the benefits of using this process as an opportunity for organisations to discuss emerging policy initiatives that impact on other partners at an early stage to maximise the benefits of collaborative approaches.

2.3 Role of the partnership panel

The description of the Partnership panel (P8, paragraph 3.21, and P13, section 5) and the role of members requires clarity. It is not clear who will participate in this and if there is an onus to do so.

Belfast City Council notes that the Partnership panel will be expected to have a key role in building strong links between local and central government. This is referred to within the background section (section 2) of the draft guidance document. Belfast City Council believes the Partnership Panel will have a key role in facilitating effective community planning arrangements between Councils and Government Departments to ensure that the NI Executives vision for local government of '*a strong, dynamic local government creating communities that are vibrant, healthy, prosperous, safe, sustainable and have the needs of all citizens at their core*' is delivered. This should be clearly reflected within the guidance, to highlight the key requirement for effective engagement between local

government and departments, to provide opportunities to create better alignment of the programme for government and regional strategies with local plans and priorities. Belfast City Council considers this of particular importance, and potentially mutually beneficial to central and local government, and essential to maximise the city's role as an economic driver for the NI region.

We would suggest that the information contained within section 5 on the partnership panel appears slightly isolated between the latter sections of the document and may be more effectively located in this earlier background section to highlight the links between the partnership panel and the community planning process. It would be helpful for the guidance to provide more information on operation of the Partnership panel and how the panel will interface with Councils on community planning issues.

The Council also recommends that consideration also be given as to how a mechanism to enable senior officer level dialogue and collaboration between central and local government officials in addition to the Minister / Member led Partnership Panel might work.

2.4 Roles of support partners and sectoral representation

Belfast City Council recognises the key role that many organisations across the business, voluntary and community sector can play in the community planning process and has been working to ensure participation of such groups in the community planning process.

The guidance makes clear that these sectors have important roles in engagement in the community planning process.

Para 3.27 refers to 'hard to reach' groups. We would recommend that this wording be changed to 'seldom heard groups' as many such groups would not consider themselves 'hard to reach'.

The guidance goes on to prescribe how organisations within these sectors might be invited to be 'support partners'. The guidance is clear in determining the role of organisational representation. However, while the draft guidance touches on sectoral representation (e.g. para 3.28 in relation to the community and voluntary sectors, and para 3.30 in relation to the business sector) Belfast City Council notes that appropriate structures may not currently be in place to adequately facilitate this at present. It must also be recognised that there is no one

size fits all approach to such representation structures. Arrangements for sectoral representation that reflects local circumstances will take time to develop.

In relation to the role of support partners we would suggest that para 3.34 could be modified for clarity – on the one hand it describes support partners' role as similar to the statutory community planning partners role, on the other explains that their role is completely voluntary. On one hand it suggests they may be invited onto the strategic community planning partnership (possibly raising expectations), on the other suggests that their involvement may be in subgroups or to input at certain stages (limiting expectations). It is not clear how such support partners can be held to account for delivery of actions for which they are responsible.

We would agree that the participation of support partners must be determined in the context of delivery of outcomes. The guidance suggests drawing up an assessment tool to facilitate assessment against clear criterion that reflects the organisation's role in the delivery of community planning outcomes. Belfast City Council is supportive of this approach and further clarity on this approach would be welcomed. However it is essential that any further guidelines recognise the overriding principle that partnerships need to be aligned to delivery of outcomes of the community plan and that partnership structures need to reflect local circumstances and needs to ensure focus on delivery.

2.5 Resources

The guidance makes clear that duties of Councils, as lead partner, include making arrangements for Community planning, facilitating and managing the process. At the same time, it is made clear that development of and delivery on the community plan is a shared task. The guidance needs to make clear that community planning arrangements will require support and shared resourcing between partners, particularly as the new duties are not accompanied by any new funding for implementation. For example, Section 4 highlights key work activities that will be requirement including engagement, maintaining the partnership, shared data/evidence bases, and performance management and scrutiny.

Para 4.5 suggests that community planning should become '*firmly embedded into partners managerial cultures, corporate resource and business planning, and budgetary decisions*'. The Department should note that limited availability of resources

will constrain the effectiveness and ability of the process to deliver this ambition. The guidance could encourage use of other funding streams/opportunities to support community planning arrangements, however the guidance should make clear that all partners need to help resource this work.

More significantly, the delivery of actions and functions identified in a community plan, in ways that demonstrate collaborative gain, will require more efficient and effective use of resources in ways that tailor services to the needs of communities (Para 2.9 highlights the role of community planning as a 'bridge' to link regional and local resources more effectively). Para 4.5 (referred to above) indicates that all partners should embed community planning into managerial cultures, business planning etc and budgetary decisions. Whilst this is the desired goal for ensuring community planning processes successfully deliver the potential benefits, there will need to be commitment from all partners to this approach. It should also be noted that implementing changes to corporate and budgetary planning approaches (and changing cultures) are likely to take some time. We would suggest that the guidance should be strengthened to provide a clear steer for all partners, including Government Departments to commit to such an approach.

2.6 Partnership structures/governance

The community planning partners together must be able to ensure that:

- a) each district community plan is accountable and influential and carries with it sufficient authority to enable successful implementation; and
- b) that decisions and actions are managed on an ongoing basis so that each district community plan can be effectively delivered and implemented.

However, there is a risk that naming a large number of organisations as statutory partners in the Order will make community planning partnership arrangements unwieldy and unproductive. To ensure a focus on what is needed to make community planning work locally, flexibility is required for each council area to identify optimum partnership structures and levels of involvement. For community planning to be effective, partnerships will need to fulfil two distinct roles – setting the policy direction and managing local delivery. This may mean that different organisations will be involved at different stages or in different ways. However, it is essential that the right

people who can make key decisions, in line with the local community planning priorities, are engaged and included within an accountability framework.

Belfast City Council welcomes that the draft guidance does not prescribe a definitive partnership structure for all Council areas, and instead acknowledges that there are a range of operating models/arrangements for strategic partnerships. At the same time however, we note that the language used in the remaining paragraphs of this section (para.s 4.2 – 4.5) is written in the context of a strategic community planning partnership being established. We would recommend these paragraphs be reviewed to convey how such principles should be applied in the context of establishing appropriate structures that are fit for purpose and lend themselves to delivery – form should follow function, rather than applying a prescriptive one size fits all approach.

2.7 Monitoring and Performance Improvement

We would recommend that para. 4.5 when referring to ‘other supporting structures’, should include reference to the need for a co-ordinated approach among partners to ongoing performance management. This is a vital consideration as it will be a challenging task for any Partnership to *‘ensure that the development and implementation of community plans becomes firmly embedded into partners’ managerial cultures, corporate, resource and business planning, and budgetary decisions.’* This is an important outcome, however it is challenging in the absence of a clear accountability framework. It may therefore be appropriate for the Department to consider the role of the Partnership Panel in this context and whether there is a need for a regional (outcomes based) accountability framework for community planning, for example, similar to the Single Outcome Agreements arrangements in Scotland.

Paragraph 4.5 – *‘A co-ordinated process for evidence collection should be established to underpin the development of plans and that analysis of this evidence is shared across and between organisations....Effective performance management arrangements should be put in place, including arrangements for scrutiny’.* It is important that the guidance makes the link between the evidence base and performance management. It would be helpful if the links and alignment between the community planning and performance improvement duties were referenced much more explicitly here to avoid a possible disconnect. In terms of scrutiny it is assumed that the LGA, as the body responsible for monitoring the performance

management arrangements of Councils will perform this function.

The guidance clearly outlines the requirement to publish a statement of progress within 2 years of publishing the community plan and a review of the community plan every 4 years. Paragraph 12.1 – *‘The council must publish a statement once every two years on outcomes achieved and actions taken and community planning partners must provide the council with relevant information’*. This clearly highlights the requirement for partners to contribute to this review. The guidance also refers to the ongoing *‘process of monitoring implementation’* (para 12.5) – this ongoing process of performance monitoring between partners will be important to ensure that identification of issues can be addressed in a way that allows early intervention. The requirement for partners to provide information and support these processes should be more explicit. However, we would again highlight the need for any such processes supporting partnership working arrangements to reflect local circumstances and ensure a focus on delivery of outcomes.

It is also important that reporting mechanisms outlined in the Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (NI) 2015 align with community planning requirements. Without clear indication of how these reporting frameworks will align, it would be our assumption that Councils themselves will need to take action to align the two reporting frameworks to best meet organisation needs and to fit within existing performance frameworks.

Paragraph 12.3 & 12.4 – How partnerships agree indicators and targets and in particular how partners are accountable for delivery against targets for improvement is critically important. How improvement in respect of strategic objectives in a community plan that fall outside a Councils remit will be monitored and reported, and how partners will be accountable needs to be addressed.

2.8 Sustainable development

Belfast City Council recognises the key potential for economic social and environmental objectives identified through the community planning process to contribute to sustainable development. This link is identified in the draft guidance. Belfast City Council would welcome further engagement with the Department in relation to how the existing sustainable development duties and reporting requirements will align with the community planning process.

2.9 Spatial Planning

The guidance references the legislative links between the community plan and the Local Development plan, highlighting key synergies in relation to community engagement and the data/evidence base. Belfast City Council intends to work to ensure the 2 processes are aligned as far as possible.

Consultation Questions

1. *Is the Guidance clear, specific and proportionate?*

The Guidance is clear in terms of the duty it ascribes to councils as leading on community planning. Where it is considerably weaker throughout is in terms of ascribing similar duties to partner organisations. In this regard, the wording is not directive enough e.g. the word 'should' is used too many times, for example 'departments should engage with councils' or 'Departments *should seek* to integrate community planning outcomes...' (p 8) This is weak and would enable departments to avoid engagement and integration with councils when preparing community plans, if they chose to do so because of competing priorities. The draft guidance states that Departments need to 'have regard to community plans' (p 8) but again this is not strong enough and could result in the current status quo and silo working.

The guidance needs to make clear that there must be a focus throughout the process on outcomes for communities, and that strong representation and leadership from all partners is required for the process to work. Structures that are fit for purpose to meet the needs of local areas are required rather than a one size fits all approach.

Generally, the guidance is clear in some areas, explaining what is required in aspects of the community planning process, while in other areas simply states broad requirements without additional detail to guide Councils and others participating in the process of how these requirements should be implemented.

Specific aspects where the guidance can be improved relate to the roles and responsibilities of other partners, particularly Departments, role of community, voluntary and business sectors, the partnership panel, resourcing issues and monitoring and performance improvement. We would refer to our general comments outlined above for further detail on areas where the guidance should be improved.

2 Do you feel the guidance will help you implement community planning?

Ultimately for the guidance to be helpful it needs to be set in the context of duties laid down in the Act, while explaining how the various participants must contribute and how the process should operate. In its current form, the guidance heavily focuses on the role of Councils, and needs to be more directive in relation to the roles of other partners, particularly Government Departments identifying how they must engage, and how the Partnership Panel will work. In particular the guidance needs to give clear direction on how partners need to work together within the community planning process, in terms of arrangements for community planning are resources, partnership arrangements, sharing evidence and data, joint engagement, aligning organisations' corporate, business and budgetary planning to community planning outcomes, and how accountability for performance of partners will work.

The guidance highlights in paragraph 2.7 and Figure 1 the role of community planning in linking regional priorities to community planning partnership priorities, to localised/neighbourhood priorities. Whilst we recognise that the focus of the guidance is on the statutory duty to produce a community plan for a whole Council area, guidelines on approaches to local areas/neighbourhoods are not referenced in the document (Local area partnerships are mentioned in relation to structures in para 4.3). Belfast City Council is aware that community planning approaches and best practice elsewhere in the UK often includes application of community planning processes at more local levels. It may be helpful for the Department to consider addressing this issue by referring to best practice examples from elsewhere in the UK.

The draft guidance contains no detailed information on how sustainable development principles should be implemented/applied within the community planning process.

Additional suggestions in respect of how the guidance can be improved to help implement community planning are provided in our general comments in section 2 above.

3. Do you feel one year is a sufficient time frame to develop a community plan and if not what alternative format would you suggest?

Belfast City Council acknowledges that while a one year timeframe is challenging this will be a sufficient time frame to develop an initial community plan (bearing in mind the draft

guidance states that the first plan is an interim plan). It will be important that each Council and their partners recognise that the interim plan in its first iteration will not be 100% perfect but will reflect the current situation priorities and relationships. It will take a considerably longer timeframe (as well as significant capacity building work and resources) to achieve the aspiration identified in the draft guidance for all partners to *'ensure that the development and implementation of community plans becomes firmly embedded into partners' managerial cultures, corporate, resource and business planning, and budgetary decisions*. Monitoring, review and reporting of the plan will help ensure that it achieves its outcomes and targets as well as refining collaborative working among partners.

Belfast City Council also recognise key drivers for producing an initial plan within this 1 year time frame include the potential to influence the emerging new Programme for Government and other emerging strategic plans of our partners. Whilst recognising a longer timeframe would allow additional time for engagement and building the evidence base, it would be preferable to have an initial plan that links with key regional strategies to build on over the coming years. To this end, Belfast CC is aiming to produce its 1st community plan by April 2016. We would also suggest that a 1 year time frame will help to build early momentum amongst partners.

It would be helpful if the guidance could clearly identify what is required within the 1st year timeframe (i.e. what is to be included within an interim community plan).

4. What would you define as a reasonable degree of consensus reached to enable decision making?

While the guidance sets out some basic objectives for considering how consensus might be reached, the draft guidance places the onus on Councils to make their judgement as to when this point has been reached. Given the difficulty in defining this, we would suggest it should be for Councils to determine this when agreeing partnership and decision making arrangements at the outset of the process. How consensus is to be reached will depend on the partnership structures that are established and local circumstances and priorities. Whilst we would welcome additional guidance in respect of reaching consensus, some flexibility for Councils to reflect local structures, governance arrangements and circumstances will be required. There needs to be a pragmatic approach to ensure a focus on building momentum and progress on delivery of outcomes.

Many different forms and models for consensus based decision making exist within governments and large organisations across the world, some based on full or partial consent and/or agreement, others on majority voting thresholds. The emphasis of consensus building approaches is on participation and involvement to enable partners to consent (or lack of dissent) to the proposals under consideration. Para 11.4 in its current form would indicate that consensus would be reached once all community planning partners agree to the content of the plan. It may be helpful to explore examples of approaches to reaching consensus in community planning processes elsewhere in the UK.

We would also point out that the guidelines provided in paragraphs 11.2 – 11.4 could be amended to convey more consistent messages. On one hand the guidance implies that full agreement of all partners is not required to reach the point where consensus has been reached, stating Councils will be required to *'make a judgement as to when a degree of consensus has been reached among partners'* and that *'it may not be possible or expected that complete consensus between all partners will be possible on every aspect'*. Para 11.3 also suggests that *'where agreement is not reached initially, then there is an opportunity to revisit an issue later when the community plan is reviewed.'* On the other hand, it suggests that full agreement from partners is required before publishing the plan. Para 11.4 seemingly contradicts the earlier statements by stating that Council should ensure that the *community planning partners agree to the content and format of the plan'*.

5. Is the guidance clear in respect of equality and good relations duties?

Belfast City Council recognises that equality of opportunity and good relations are central to the community planning process, and welcomes that these duties are clearly referenced throughout the document. Belfast City Council also welcomes that the guidance includes clear reference to the OFMDFM Together Building United Communities strategy, and recognises the important link to the community planning process.

We would suggest that the guidance should highlight that advice should be sought at an early stage in the process, from the Equality Commission NI and the Community Relations Council on how good relations and equality can be embedded into the community planning process. This would assist the

development of the community plan and future reporting requirements, particularly in relation to S75 duties.

The guidance should include specific reference to the Racial Equality Strategy.

6. Does the guidance sufficiently define partner roles and responsibilities?

As highlighted with our general comments in section 2 of this response above, we are concerned that the partner roles and responsibilities are not sufficiently defined in relation to:

- Roles and responsibilities of government departments
- Roles of community and voluntary sectors
- Role of the private sector

This is particularly the case in relation to how partners can be compelled to participate (especially government Departments), resourcing of community planning arrangements, monitoring and accountability for performance improvement etc.”

The Committee approved the draft Council response.

Consultation Response to the DOE Draft Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

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

“1.0 Purpose of Paper – Consultation Response

1.1 This paper provides an overview of the Council’s response (attached at Appendix A) to the DoE’s consultation on the *draft Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015*. In order to meet the response deadline of March 2nd the attached response will be forwarded to the DoE, following approval by this Committee, with an understanding that full Council ratification is pending.

1.0 Background

1.1 Part 12 of the Local Government Act 2014, to take effect from the 1st April, imposes a new duty on the Council to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the exercise of its functions and to set improvement objectives for each financial year.

- 1.2 As a Council we will be required to gather information to assess service improvements and to produce an annual report on performance. This is not a new concept for Belfast as we have had a performance management framework in operation for a number of years. This has involved developing a range of performance indicators to help services see how they are performing over time and in comparison to other places. It is our intention to continue with this process and to incorporate the new duty within our framework.
- 1.3 However the Act also includes a provision (paragraph 89) for the DoE to specify additional *statutory* performance indicators and to set targets for Councils. Councils have now been invited to consider an initial suite of seven performance indicators, with targets, proposed by the Department for the 2015-16 period in the - *draft Local Government (Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015*. The restriction to one year will allow for new indicators to be developed in line with any new Programme for Government that might emerge. The first year will also allow services to establish some baseline information from which to agree future targets.
- 1.4 The indicators proposed for the 2015-16 financial year cover the functions of: one economic development indicator; three planning indicators; and three waste management indicators. The attached response combines the feedback received from the services that will be responsible for carrying out these functions.

2.0 Content of the draft Order

2.1 The proposed indicators for 2015-16 are:

- (i) Number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity
- (ii) Number of major planning applications processed
- (iii) Number of local planning applications processed
- (iv) Progress of enforcement cases
- (v) % of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for re-use)
- (vi) Amount (tonnage) of biodegradable Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste that is landfilled
- (viii) Amount (tonnage) of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste arisings

The Committee should note that in addition to the three Planning PIs above the Council is engaging with the DoE over a

number of additional indicators of a more operational nature. Members will of course be notified about these, and indeed any other PIs that may emerge, as and when necessary.

The attached response contains feedback for the DoE on each of the above Indicators individually. However having reviewed the indicators and standards outlined in the consultation paper we are largely satisfied that these can be collected and reported as required.

In general terms it is the Council's view that the proposed indicators remain operational and output focused which does not appear to reflect the intent of Parts 10 and 12 of the Act to encourage more *outcome* based performance indicators. Although this is useful information there will of course be other measures that would provide a better picture of how well we are performing against each of the three areas covered; economic development, waste and planning. We recognise, however, that this Order has been designed only to last for the 2015-16 period and a new Order will therefore be created in 2016 and we have requested that the Council is fully engaged in the development of any future indicators.

3.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

- Considers and approves that the response attached at Appendix A be forwarded to the DoE with an understanding that it remains subject to ratification by full Council.

4.0 Resource Implications

4.1 There are no additional resource requirements associated with this Order.

5.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

5.1 There are no equality or good relations implications associated with this Order.

6.0 Call in

6.1 This report is subject to call in.

7.0 Documents attached

7.1 Appendix 1 Letter and Response.

**Belfast City Council Response to the draft Local Government
(Performance Indicators and Standards) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015**

Q1: Do you agree with the proposed performance indicators and standards for Councils from April 2015?

The Council has reviewed the indicators and standards outlined in the consultation paper and is largely satisfied that these can be collected and reported as required. The Council notes that this Order has been designed to last only for the 2015-16 period and a new Order will therefore be created in 2016.

In general terms, however, it is the Council's view that the proposed indicators remain operational and output focused which does not appear to reflect the intent of Parts 10 and 12 of the Act to encourage more *outcome* based performance indicators. Although this is useful information there will of course be other measures that would provide a better picture of how well we are performing against each of the three areas covered; economic development, waste and planning.

Part 12 paragraph 89(2) requires the Department to consult councils before specifying performance indicators and standards. In future years it would be preferable if such consultation could take place in advance of a draft Order being produced rather than the Order itself being used as the opportunity to consult.

The Council also would like to make the following comments in relation to each suggested indicator.

ED 1 – The number of jobs promoted through business start-up activity.

This PI was formerly the responsibility of Invest NI in conjunction with DETI and it represents one of the functions transferring to local government.

The Council understands that this PI is a measure of the number of new business plans completed and is used as a proxy for the number of jobs promoted. This has been proposed, in the first instance, for one year. Further clarification as to how this PI will be monitored, together with a fuller breakdown of a *business plan* definition, would be useful to ensure that it is counted in a consistent way across all eleven Councils. It is not immediately clear how the target of 325 for Belfast was reached but we understand that it relates to the April 2015 to March 2016 period and are confident that it is realistic and achievable.

The Council would like to take this opportunity to request early involvement in preparation of the content of PIs for the new 2016-17 Order

in light of the ongoing work across the 11 Councils to create a new indicator around business start ups.

P1 – The number of major planning applications processed (Standard for BCC, 30 weeks)

The Council believes that the above could be more accurately described as a PI by re-wording it to state:

‘% major applications processed within 30 weeks’

and that a ‘standard’ should be applied representing a target % which would be more capable of demonstrating improvement over time and comparison across Councils.

P2 – The number of local planning applications processed (Standard for BCC, 15 weeks)

The Council believes that the above could be more accurately described as a PI by re-wording it to state:

‘% local applications processed within 15 weeks’

and that a ‘standard’ should be applied representing a target % which would be more capable of demonstrating improvement over time and comparison across Councils.

P3 – The progress of enforcement cases (Standard for BCC 70% in 39 weeks)

The Council believes that the above could be more accurately described as a PI by re-wording it to state:

‘% enforcement cases completed within 39 weeks’

and that the ‘standard’ or target be set at 70%.

In addition to the above comments the Council would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the need for greater clarity around ownership of the planning data particularly in respect of reporting and publication. It is also assumed that the above indicators are all capable of being collected using the existing resources i.e. the Planning Portal and will not therefore necessitate an additional resource for the Council.

W1 – The % of household waste collected by district councils that is sent for recycling (including waste prepared for re-use)

This PI has been collected by the Council for a number of years. The Council is satisfied that it should continue to be collected and subsequently reported through the WasteDataFlow system.

W2 – The amount of (tonnage) of biodegradable local authority collected municipal waste that is landfilled

This PI has been collected by the Council for a number of years. The Council is satisfied that it should continue to be collected and subsequently reported through the WasteDataFlow system.

W3 – The amount of (tonnage) of local authority collected municipal waste arisings

This data has been collected by the Council for a number of years and we are content that this information is made publically available. However, we would query the appropriateness of this measure being prescribed as a performance indicator. The waste arisings are influenced primarily by; economic conditions, seasonality, socio-economics and demographics and the level of direct influence the Council has on the level of arisings is somewhat marginal. We will of course work with the Department to deliver on its Waste Prevention Programme, in line with the requirements of the Waste Framework Directive, seeking to reduce overall waste arisings and increase recycling by 2020.

For clarification purposes we note that in Annex B paragraphs 26 & 27 of the consultation document, that reference is made to waste collected by District Councils. We assume this should also include waste collected by third parties working on behalf of the District Council.

Q2: Do you think the proposed performance indicators and standards will contribute to the improvement of Council service provision for economic development, planning and waste management?

The Council already collects a number of the waste management indicators and has done for some years. We agree that collection of the remaining indicators associated with the transferring functions (planning and the Regional Start Initiative or its successor programme) would be a useful starting point from which more relevant indicators may subsequently emerge.

However in general terms the Council would be keen to encourage the creation of more outcome focused indicators as these tend to better reflect the real impact on people's lives. Indicators associated with processes and operations are indicative only of how well those processes are carried out which may not, of themselves, make any real difference to the longer term aspirations of the organisation.

Furthermore BCC believes that Councils should continue to have control over the development of its own PIs and included in the development of any future sector wide performance framework (incorporating data collection and reporting) that may emerge..

The Department must work together with Councils, as the primary statutory service provider and democratically elected body, to agree useful and relevant performance indicators and to ensure that costly or over-burdensome indicators are avoided.”

The Committee approved the submission of the draft response to the Department of the Environment.

Active Belfast Limited - Resourcing and Governance

(Mr. A. Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1.0 Relevant background information

1.1 At its meeting in January, the Committee agreed the resourcing and proposed composition of the Active Belfast Limited board of Directors. Committee requested a further paper for its consideration on the recruitment criteria for the board of Directors, as well as ongoing community engagement mechanisms.

2.0 Key issues

2.1 Criteria for recruitment

There are 5 places to be filled via public advertisement and interview, not including the independent chairperson. Volunteer Now recommend that for an open recruitment exercise, organisations should consider inviting individuals to submit their CV, to be measured against pre-defined criteria. Applicants would demonstrate how their skills and qualities meet the demands of the role. The suggested criteria are:

Essential

- 1. Knowledge and experience of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector**
- 2. In a position to make a voluntary time commitment of up to 10 days per annum**

Desirable

- 3. Knowledge and experience of strategy development and implementation**
- 4. Applied knowledge of leisure, health and well-being current practice, challenges and opportunities**
- 5. Previous experience of working as a Director at a board level of a voluntary, community or social enterprise organisation**
- 6. Specialist expertise in legal/accounting/governance issues.**

The Board will reserve two of the publicly advertised places: one, for an education stakeholder; and two, from a stakeholder from the disability sector.

According to the registered Articles of Association, applicants cannot be regarded as having an interest or a conflict of loyalties as an officer, employee or elected member of the Council.

The term of office is for up to 3 years. A Director can be re-appointed to the Board for one term only. While not applicable in this inaugural year, previous committee members cannot be reappointed within 3 years.

During the first year of operation, the Board will need to agree a succession plan to enable it to anticipate and manage turnover when members resign or reach the end of their term of office. This will include rotation of political Members, to be agreed by SP&R Committee. This will help to ensure openness and accountability, underpinned by effective planning to secure sufficient continuity.

Commitment expected

On average the time commitment expected is no more than 10 days per annum. The Board will meet approximately 6 times per annum with meetings generally lasting 2-3 hours. The position of Director is unpaid, with reimbursement for out of pocket expenses incurred by Directors in carrying out their role.

Assurance

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

2.2 User and Community Engagement

As part of its partnership agreement with the Council, GLL is required to regularly engage with centre users and report on customer and community satisfaction with the services and programmes provided. Their normal practice is to establish quarterly 'Meet the Manager' sessions, which is an open meeting where all customers are invited to speak face to face with the centre manager, with a view to improving the service. It is GLL's intention to roll out these meetings in Belfast later in the spring, following the immediate transition period.

Feedback from these meetings and other media (e.g. written customer complaints/compliments) will be used in their business planning processes, as well as their required Improvement Plan to Council.

In addition, as part of the equality obligations in the agreements, an annual review with Section 75 groups is required, to ensure that any specific impacts are not being missed in the neighbourhood-based 'Meet the Manager' sessions.

3.0 Resource Implications

Financial: A revenue grant has been agreed for Active Belfast Limited, up to £45,000 per annum. The user and community engagement is part of the existing contract arrangements with GLL.

Staff: Secretariat support to Active Belfast Board will continue to be provided.

Assets: As per the contractual arrangements.

4.0 Equality Implications

The Leisure Transformation Programme was screened in for a full Equality Impact Assessment. Its conclusions have been integrated into the relevant contractual agreements.

5.0 Committee decisions required

Committee is asked to:

- 1. Approve the selection criteria for the public recruitment of the Board of Directors**

2. Note the community and user engagement planned by GLL.”

After discussion, during which the Director answered a number of questions in relation to community involvement and attendance allowance, the Committee adopted the recommendations.

Mr. A. Hassard

The Chairman advised the Members that this would be the last meeting of the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee which would be attended by Mr. Andrew Hassard before his retirement and, on behalf of the Committee, he commended Mr. Hassard for his outstanding service to the Council.

**Transfer of Planning Function –
Response from the Minister**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 16th January, it had agreed that a letter be forwarded to the Minister for the Environment, Mr. Mark Durkan, MLA, outlining the Council's concern at the anticipated costs which would be incurred in overseeing the transfer of the planning function from the Department of the Environment to the Council.

The letter to the Minister, which had been copied to the Finance Minister for information, had outlined also the Council's concerns in respect of the possible costs which would be incurred in replacing the planning portal post-2019. Accordingly, the Council had requested that clarity be provided on the longer-term options for the portal, particularly in respect of its future governance and funding arrangements. Finally, the Council had sought assurances on the extent of the Industrial De-rating grant which would be made to the Council as a result of Local Government Reform.

The Chief Executive reported that the Minister's response had indicated that the extent of the budget to be allocated to the Council had been clarified within the Department of the Environment's document entitled "Transfer of Planning Functions to Local Government – Position Paper on Transfer of Resources" which had been issued in January. It had been suggested by the Minister that the budget to be provided to the Council, coupled with the additional income generated through the planning function, would enable the Council to deliver and manage the planning function in an efficient manner following Local Government Reform.

With regard to the planning portal, the Minister had confirmed that the responsibility for its replacement and upkeep would transfer to local Councils in 2019. However, it was intended that a "Planning Portal Board" would be established early in the 2015/16 financial year to examine the requirements for the portal post-2019. That Board would consist of representatives of the eleven new Councils, together with officers from the Department of the Environment. Despite that step, the Minister suggested that the development, governance and costs associated with the new portal would fall within the remit of local government. Given that the "Planning Portal Board" had yet to be

established, the Minister felt that a meeting between himself and a Council deputation would not be beneficial at this stage.

In relation to the Industrial De-rating grant to be paid to the Council, the Minister had confirmed that the Council would be in receipt of the full grant for 2015/2016.

After further discussion, the Committee agreed that a further letter be forwarded to the Minister reiterating its request that he meet and with an All-Party deputation from the Council as there were a number of important issues in relation to planning and reform that still had to be addressed.

Democratic Services and Governance

Geographical Options for New Area Working Groups

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 In March 2014 Council agreed to a programme of work that would prepare the organisation, and the city, for the introduction of community planning from April 2015. The aim of community planning is to ensure that by working together with the Council public bodies can deliver better services that have maximum impact of the lives of our residents.

1.2 The Council's programme has a number of inter-connected strands of work. The initial focus of the programme has been at the city level, with Members and senior officers working with key partners to establish a long term vision and outcomes for the city, while at the same time beginning to identify medium term priorities for actions. The further development of this work (which is required under community planning legislation) is the subject of a second paper before Committee today.

1.3 Alongside the 'city level' strand, Members were also keen to develop the Council's approach to community planning at the local level by addressing such questions as:

- **How to establish local outcomes that are reflective of local priorities and that also align with city outcomes?**
- **How can we work better with local partners to improve service delivery at a local level?**
- **How can we identify, manage, and maximise the impact of local interventions?**
- **What are the most effective geographies for local community planning?**

- 1.4 **Members agreed that their Area Working Groups would provide an important channel through which to explore these issues in a practical manner. These Groups were established to assist Members in identifying local needs and priorities and opportunities for action. Members have been enthusiastic about this way of working and have suggested that they continue as building blocks for the Council's emerging approaches to local area working.**
- 1.5 **However, Members will be aware that the boundaries for the existing five Area Working Groups are based on District Electoral Areas (DEAs) which will change from 1 April 2015 (as a result of Local Government Reform). Thus in order for the Area Working Groups to continue to meet from April, new boundaries will need to be established that reflect Members' electoral constituencies and which can form the basis for future thinking on local community planning.**
- 1.6 **To address this, Transformation Committee agreed in June 2014 to commission expert support for Members to establish a new pragmatic geographical model for the Area Working Groups as part of wider preparations for future local community planning. Following a procurement process Deloitte were appointed to engage closely with Members and officers to develop pragmatic options for approval. This paper presents these options.**

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 **Deloitte were commissioned in November 2014 to engage with Members on the issues associated with area working and to develop proposals for new geographies. Deloitte were asked to draw upon current practice in Council and the approaches of other cities as a basis on which to develop criterion-based options for consideration by Members.**
- 2.2 **As part of this work the consultants engaged with Transformation Committee in December; sought the views of Party Group leaders and the Budget Panel; and held a number of workshops with senior officers on the implications for local service delivery. They also carried out desk research looking at the structures in other cities, and the existing local boundaries of our other partners in the city.**
- 2.3 **Feedback from Members suggested that there were points of consensus for a future model including :**

- Strong support for a four-area model based on 'clusters' of new DEAs. (There was also some limited support for a three-area model.)
- Giving their alignment with Members' political constituencies, there was no support for splitting individual DEAs as this was seen as undermining Members' accountability to their constituents.
- There was support for the need to closely link the work of future Area Working Groups with the outcomes and priorities of the Belfast Agenda at the local level
- There was support for better cross-working between individual Area Working Groups.
- The city centre was seen as a separate strategic issue and not directly relevant to the options appraisal process; however, city centre residents needed to be factored into the thinking of future AWGs.

2.4 Following an analysis of the engagement feedback and the desk research, Deloitte developed the following criteria as a basis for prioritising a 'best-fit' geographical option:

- Do the new areas align with Members' political constituencies?
- Are the areas the right size to reflect local need and support the development of local solutions?
- Will the number of areas be expensive to administer?
- Is there a good balance of populations between areas?
- Will the new areas make it easier for the Council to work with partners who also have local boundaries?

2.5 The standard 'building block' for all the options under consideration was the District Electoral Area. This was to ensure that all options under consideration aligned with Members' political constituencies. On this basis Deloitte began with a long list of options that included a ten-area model (ie, an Area Working Group for each of the city's ten DEAs) through to a three-area model based on 'north and west', 'south and west' and 'east and south' clusters of DEAs. However, when examined against the criteria most of these options proved to be flawed. (For example, a ten-area model would be very expensive to administer; while a three-area model would be unlikely to support local solutions.)

- 2.6 The analysis arrived at two options both of which are based on four 'clusters' of DEAS (referred to as Option 4(a) and Option 4(b). Maps of both options are included as Appendix One.
- 2.7 The key difference between the options is the location of the Court DEA (which is made up of Forth River, Ballygomartin, Shankill, Woodvale, Clonard and Falls wards.) In option 4(a) Court is clustered with Castle and Oldpark DEAs in the north of the city. In option 4(b) Court is clustered with Black Mountain and Collin in the west. Deloitte noted that Option 4(a) offered a better population balance between the four clusters. However, Option 4(b) offered a stronger precedent in terms of previous approaches to area working. Their individual characteristics are presented below:

2.8

Option 4a				
Area 1: Castle, Oldpark, Court				
Area 2: Botanic, Balmoral				
Area 3: Titanic, Ormiston, Lisnasharragh				
Area 4: Black Mountain, Collin				
	Castle, Oldpark, Court	Botanic, Balmoral	Titanic, Ormiston Lisnasha rragh	Black Mountain Collin
Population of each area:	96,176	68,597	98,249	70,704
Difference between the smallest and largest areas: 29,652				
Number of councillors in each area:	18	10	19	13
Current Political representation				
SF	6	2	1	10
DUP	5	2	6	0
SDLP	2	2	1	2
UUP	1	2	4	0
All	1	2	5	0
PUP	2	0	1	0
Other	1	0	1	1

2.9

Option 4b				
Area 1: Castle, Oldpark				
Area 2: Botanic, Balmoral				
Area 3: Titanic, Ormiston, Lisnasharragh				
Area 4: Court, Black Mountain, Collin				
	Castle, Oldpark	Botanic, Balmoral	Titanic, Ormiston Lisnasha rragh	Court, Black Mountain Collin
Population of each area:	63,807	68,597	98,249	103,073
Difference between the smallest and largest areas: 39,266				
Number of councillors in each area:	12	10	19	19
Current Political representation				
SF	4	2	1	12
DUP	3	2	6	2
SDLP	2	2	1	2
UUP	1	2	4	0
All	1	2	5	0
PUP	1	0	1	1
Other	0	0	1	2

2.10 Applying the preferred model

Once agreed by Members the preferred geographical model will be applied to the re-organisation of new Area Working Groups allowing these groups to begin meeting again from April 2015

and allowing Members to develop a new programme of work for the Groups to support local community planning.

- 2.11 One of the initial tasks of the re-organised Area Working Groups is likely to be a consideration of their link to wider local community planning. In a review of their work in April 2013 Members acknowledged the positive impact the Groups have had – and recommended that the on-the-ground practical approach to local issues would offer an important contribution to emerging thinking on local area working.
- 2.12 Members will be aware that the Area Working Groups were originally established by SP&R Committee in April 2012 to play an advisory role, informing the implementation of the Belfast Investment Programme. Committee agreed that they would have no delegated authority. Ultimately, they make recommendations to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on local investment decisions. This has included recommendations associated with the Local Investment Fund (LIF).
- 2.13 Members should note that any decision on future iterations of LIF (or other local investment vehicles such as a new neighbourhood renewal programme) will have to be considered by the relevant Committee post April 2015. This would include consideration of any related criteria and allocation models. These decisions are separate from the decision for a preferred geographical model for new AWGs.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 The budget for the development of the geographical options has been supported by Department of the Environment's LGA fund.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

- 4.1 Equality and good relations implications will be considered as part of the development and implementation of this work.

5 Call In

- 5.1 This decision is subject to Call In.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Members are asked to:

Agree on a preferred option as a basis for the re-organisation of new Area Working groups post-April 2015.”

A Member suggested that there was a third option which the Committee might wish to consider which would involve splitting up the six Wards in the Court District Electoral Area between North and West Belfast. This would be based on community identity and would require the Councillors elected to the Court DEA to commit to either one of those Working Groups or the other.

Accordingly, it was

Moved by Councillor Kingston,

Seconded by Councillor Spence,

That the Committee agrees to a third option for the new Area Working Groups post-April, 2015, that is:

Area 1 – Castle DEA, Oldpark DEA and the Court Wards of Ballygomartin, Forthriver, Shankill and Woodvale

Area 2 – Botanic DEA, Balmoral DEA

Area 3 – Titanic, Ormiston and Lisnasharragh DEAs

Area 4 – Blackmountain DEA, Colin DEA and the Court Wards of Clonard and Falls

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

Further Proposal

Proposed by Councillor Beattie,

Seconded by Councillor Attwood,

That the Committee agrees to adopt Option 4(b), as set out in paragraph 2.9 of the report, as the basis for the reorganisation of the Area Working Groups post-April, 2015.

On a vote by show of hands eight Members voted for the proposal and none against and it was declared carried.

Allocation of Political Places on the Belfast Policing Community Safety Partnership and the Four District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships

The Committee considered the undernoted report

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 The Council is required, under Part 3 of the Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, to establish the Belfast PCSP and the four DPCSPs. The Council must, under this legislation, make the appointments, so far as is practicable, to reflect the strength of the Parties on the Council.**
- 1.2 Furthermore, Part 3, Section 6 (1) (f) of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 makes provision for the filling of positions of responsibility. Under this legislation, Political Members appointed to the PCSP and the four DPCSPs are considered positions of responsibility.**
- 1.3 The Committee, at its meeting on 30th January, deferred consideration of this report until its meeting in February.**

2 Key Issues

2.1 Appointment of Political Members to the Principal PCSP

Members are reminded that, in 2012 the Council decided to appoint a 19 Member Policing and Community Safety Partnership which comprised 10 elected Members appointed by the Council and 9 Independent Members appointed by the Northern Ireland Policing Board. There were also representatives from 7 statutory bodies and the voluntary and community sector, however there is no formal appointments process for these members.

- 2.2 The Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 provides that the Council may decide to appoint either 8, 9 or 10 Political Members to the PCSP. The number of Independent Members is to be set at one less than the number of Political Members. The decision which the Committee must make on the number of Political Members to appoint needs to factor in both the size of the partnership, but also its political make up.**
- 2.3 Appendix 1, Part A, sets out the allocation of places to the political parties on the Council based upon a PCSP (the citywide partnership) comprising 19 Members, 17 Members and 15 Members (numbers include both Political and Independent Members). This is based on several proportionality methods, namely the quota greatest remainder, the droop quota, D’hondt and Sainte Lague formulas. The Council, in the past, has favoured the use of the quota greatest remainder method for sharing out of Committee posts. This formula works on party strengths and**

is aimed at providing proportionate representation reflecting party strengths in the Council.

- 2.4 This is further complicated as the legislation also provides that the Political Members of the PCSP shall include the persons who hold the Office of Chair of each of the DPCSPs. This means that 4 of the Political appointments to the PCSP each year will be reserved for the Chairs of the 4 DPCSPs.
- 2.5 In addition, for any particular DPCSP there is a requirement that, *so far as is practicable*, the Chair will be held in turn by the 4 largest Parties on the Council during the 4-year term (although there is a slight difficulty with this as discussed below in 2.8). Accordingly, when considering the political nominations to the PCSP, it needs to be remembered that some Parties will already have obtained places through the Chairs of the DPCSPs..
- 2.6 The Committee is then firstly required to determine whether it wishes to appoint a PCSP comprising of 19 Members, 17 Members or 15 Members and to select the proportionality method for doing so. In making this decision Members should be mindful of the fact that additional multi-sectoral members could add at least a further 10 people to the partnership.
- 2.7 The Committee is reminded that the nomination of a political Member to hold a position on the PCSP or on one of the 4 DPCSPs is considered to be a position of responsibility under the provisions of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 and, therefore any consideration of the appointment of political Members can only be undertaken at the same time as all other positions of responsibility are being considered. Indeed, it is not possible to be certain that the outcome of the political makeup of the PCSP and the DPCSPs will precisely reflect the numbers set out in Appendix 1 as these choices will be included in a larger pool of positions of responsibility.
- 2.8 Allocation of places and the appointment of the Chairs on the DPCSP's
- 2.9 The 4 DPCSPs will have 6 Political Members each (as determined by the legislation), giving a total of 24 Political Members. The legislation requires that, so far as is practicable, the political membership of all 4 DPCSPs taken together reflects the balance of the Parties immediately after the last local election. Again, this can only be determined when all of the positions of responsibility are

being allocated at the second annual meeting of the Shadow Council in March.

2.10 Part B of Appendix 1 shows the results when applying the standard formulas used by the Council in respect of appointments to the DPCSPs, namely the quota greatest remainder, the droop quota, D'hondt and Sainte Lague.

2.11 Chairs of the PCSP and DPCSPs

Under the legislation, the position of Chair of the PCSP is to be rotated, *so far as is practicable*, amongst the 4 largest Parties represented on the Council.

2.12 Accordingly, in the 4-year term, the position of Chair would, in accordance with the spirit of the legislation, be held in turn by the Sinn Féin, Democratic Unionist, Alliance and Social, Democratic and Labour Parties.

2.13 For any particular DPCSP there is a requirement that, *so far as is practicable*, the Chair will be held in turn by the 4 largest Parties on the Council during the 4-year term. Accordingly, when considering the political nominations to the PCSP, it needs to be remembered that some Parties will already have obtained places through the Chairs of the DPCSPs. However, when applying any of the available proportionality formula used by the Council this would not be possible with the current party strengths on Belfast City Council as the 3rd and 4th largest political parties on the Council, the Alliance and the Social Democratic Labour Parties, would only be entitled to 3 places each across the four DPCSPs. Accordingly, if this model is applied, there would always be a DPCSP that would not have an Alliance or Social Democratic Labour Party representative.

2.14 The Council previously sought legal advice on the approach that it would be advised to take in these circumstances. This advice, which was provided by Junior Counsel, is attached in Appendix 2. Although the advice does not rule out the possibility of the Council deciding not to apply its normal formula rigidly (i.e. it would be within the powers of the Council to do so), it concludes that on balance the Council would be best to continue to apply the process which the Council has habitually used, i.e. appointments to the DPCSPs should be shared out on the basis of the model used by the Council without adjustment.

2.15 This recommendation is also made based on the sequencing of the Council's obligations contained within the legislation.

It is when exercising the power to appoint Political Members to the DPCSPs that the Council is required to ensure that membership of the DPCSPs is proportionate to party strengths. The obligation to rotate the DPCSP Chairs arises not when appointing Political Members but when actually appointing the Chairs each year.

- 2.16 The outcome of this approach would also have an impact on the composition of the PCSP as the Chair of each DPCSP is entitled to membership of the PCSP. Furthermore, the vacant Chairs would have to be allocated to the largest Party groupings which would result in both Sinn Féin and the Democratic Unionist Party holding two Chairs of the DPCSPs during the affected years.
- 2.17 The Committee is required to determine whether it wishes to appoint Political Members to the 4 DPCSPs based on the legal opinion as outline in Appendix 2.
- 2.18 Once the decisions are made by Committee, a meeting of the relevant Party Leaders will be necessary to allocate places using a d'Hondt based table of choices.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial Resources

£122,500 of service delivery costs per annum until March, 2016. This has already been agreed via the revenue estimates.

3.2 Human Resources

None.

3.3 Asset and Other Implications

None.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

- 4.1 None at present.

5 Call In

- 4.1 This decision is subject to Call In.

5 Recommendations

5.1 The Committee is asked to:

1. Determine whether it wishes to appoint a PCSP comprising of 19 Members, 17 Members or 15 Members.
2. Determine the proportionality method to be used to give indicative Party allocations on the PCSP and the DPCSPs
3. Determine whether it wishes to appoint the Political Members to the four DPCSPs based on the legal advice.

Appendix 1

A. Allocation of places to the PCSP – 3 scenarios (not considering chairs of DCSPS)

PCSP 10 Positions		Droop Quota		D'Hondt		St. Lague	
Quota Greatest Remainder							
SF	3	SF	3	SF	4	SF	4
DUP	2	DUP	2	DUP	3	DUP	2
ALL	2	ALL	2	ALL	1	ALL	1
SDLP	1	SDLP	1	SDLP	1	SDLP	1
UUP	1	UUP	1	UUP	1	UUP	1
PUP	1	PUP	1	PUP	0	PUP	1
TUV	0	TUV	0	TUV	0	TUV	0
GREEN	0	GREEN	0	GREEN	0	GREEN	0
PBPA	0	PBPA	0	PBPA	0	PBPA	0

PCSP 9 Positions		Droop Quota		D'Hondt		St. Lague	
Quota Greatest Remainder							
SF	3	SF	3	SF	4	SF	3
DUP	2	DUP	2	DUP	2	DUP	2
ALL	1	ALL	1	ALL	1	ALL	1
SDLP	1	SDLP	1	SDLP	1	SDLP	1
UUP	1	UUP	1	UUP	1	UUP	1
PUP	1	PUP	1	PUP	0	PUP	1
TUV	0	TUV	0	TUV	0	TUV	0
GREEN	0	GREEN	0	GREEN	0	GREEN	0
PBPA	0	PBPA	0	PBPA	0	PBPA	0

PCSP 8 Positions

Quota Greatest Remainder		Droop Quota		D'Hondt		St. Lague	
SF	3	SF	3	SF	3	SF	3
DUP	2	DUP	2	DUP	2	DUP	2
ALL	1	ALL	1	ALL	1	ALL	1
SDLP	1	SDLP	1	SDLP	1	SDLP	1
UUP	1	UUP	1	UUP	1	UUP	1
PUP	0	PUP	0	PUP	0	PUP	0
TUV	0	TUV	0	TUV	0	TUV	0
GREEN	0	GREEN	0	GREEN	0	GREEN	0
PBPA	0	PBPA	0	PBPA	0	PBPA	0

B – Appointment to DCSPs

DPCSP 24 Positions

Quota Greatest Remainder		Droop Quota		D'Hondt		St. Lague	
SF	8	SF	8	SF	8	SF	8
DUP	5	DUP	5	DUP	6	DUP	6
ALL	3	ALL	3	ALL	3	ALL	3
SDLP	3	SDLP	3	SDLP	3	SDLP	3
UUP	3	UUP	3	UUP	3	UUP	3
PUP	1	PUP	1	PUP	1	PUP	1
TUV	1	TUV	1	TUV	0	TUV	0
GREEN	0	GREEN	0	GREEN	0	GREEN	0
PBPA	0	PBPA	0	PBPA	0	PBPA	0

* Please note that as the Alliance and SDLP parties only have 3 DPCSP places across the 4 DPCSPs, each of those Parties will only be represented on 3 DPCSPs. Therefore, there will be one year in the 4 year term when the Chair of two of the DPCSPs will not be able to be held by the Alliance and SDLP parties as the 3rd and 4th largest parties on the Council. The Chairs of those 2 DPCSPs for that year will be held by the Sinn Fein and DUP parties.”

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Robinson,

Seconded by Councillor Kingston,

That the Committee agrees to appoint a Policing and Community Safety Partnership comprising nine political members and eight independent members.

Amendment

Moved by Councillor Jones,

Seconded by Councillor Attwood,

That the Committee agrees to appoint a Policing and Community Safety Partnership comprising ten political members and nine independent members.

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

The original proposal standing in the name of Councillor Robinson and seconded by Councillor Kingston was put to the meeting when twelve Members voted for and two against and it was declared carried.

Moved by Councillor McVeigh,

Seconded by Councillor Carson and

Resolved – That the Committee agrees that the d'Hondt system of proportionality be used to give indicative Party allocations on the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships and the District Policing Community and Safety Partnerships.

The Committee agreed further to appoint the Political Members to the four District Policing and Community Safety Partnerships based on the legal advice as previously provided to the Council.

Development of New Standing Orders

The Committee was reminded that the Shadow Council, at its first meeting on 11th June, 2014, had adopted the Department of the Environment's Model Standing Orders for the regulation of business at Shadow Council and Shadow Committee meetings. That was always seen as a stop-gap measure until such times as the Shadow Council had developed its own set of Standing Orders.

The Democratic Services Manager reported that the new Standing Orders could not be fully developed until the Assembly had passed the Local Government (Standing Orders) Regulations (Northern Ireland). At present those were expected to be presented to the Assembly later in the month for agreement by affirmative resolution. Those Regulations would include elements which would be mandatory for inclusion in the Council's own Standing Orders. The consultation on the Regulations had identified those issues as:

- Qualified Majority Voting
- Call-In Process
- Positions of Responsibility – Time Limits
- Appointment of more than one Committee

He explained that, in the meantime, officers had drawn together a draft of what the new Standing Orders might look like. Officers had tried to make use of plain English where possible and to make the Standing Orders more easily understood and applied. The draft Standing Orders had been split into sections. Section 1 dealt with the transaction of business at a full Council meeting, Section 2 provided for the transaction of business at Standing Committees and Section 3 included some miscellaneous Standing Orders. Appended also to the draft Standing Orders was the current operating protocols for the Licensing and Planning Committees, although those might also be amended by the controlling Committees over the next couple of months.

The Democratic Services Manager indicated that it was hoped that the Local Government (Standing Orders) Regulations (Northern Ireland) would be made by the Assembly in time for a further report on the Standing Orders to be presented to the Committee at its meeting in March.

During discussion, several Members made some suggestions as to possible amendments to the Standing Orders and noted that those would be incorporated in any revised report which would be submitted to the Committee in March.

Operation of Call-in

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 Section 41 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014 provides that a Council’s Standing Orders must make provision requiring reconsideration of a Committee decision (Call In) if 15% (9 Members) present to the Chief Executive a requisition on either of the following grounds:

- 1. That the decision was not arrived at after a proper consideration of the relevant facts and issues (Procedural Grounds); or**
- 2. That the decision would disproportionately affect adversely any section of the inhabitants of the district (Community Impact).**

2 Key Issues

2.1 The Local Government (Standing Orders) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 are expected to be passed by the

Assembly later this month. These Regulations will provide detail of how the Call In procedure should be followed and what mandatory provision will have to be included in the Council's own Standing Orders to facilitate this. It is expected that the Regulations will be accompanied by guidance on a number of matters, including the operation of Call-In. To date, neither the Regulations nor the guidance have been sent to the Council and, therefore, the issues raised in this report and the suggested adoption of a Call-In requisition form may need to be revisited if the Regulations say something which is different from what we expect

2.2 These Model Standing Orders provide that all decisions taken by a Committee under a Traditional Committee system, whether under delegated powers or ones which require Council ratification, will be subject to Call In except if the decision is one:

1. Of a regulatory or quasi-judicial nature which is subject to a separate appeal mechanism (such as decisions of the new Planning Committee and new Licensing Committee from April 2014 onwards but this category will not apply during the Shadow Year);
2. Where an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council's or the public's interests

2.2 In order to provide the Committees with the information which they require when taking decisions, each summary report will include a section which highlights if the decision is subject to Call In (the default position) or if it is not, or if it is recommended that the Committee decide that it should not be, then the reason should be stated in the summary report.

2.3 Either a set of draft minutes of the Committee meeting or a register of decisions taken at the meeting will be required to be published by Democratic Services no later than 2 working days after the meeting. This publication will commence the period for requests for Call In to be submitted by Members.

2.4 Requests for Call In on Procedural Grounds

2.4.1 If at 10.00am on the fifth working day following the publication of the draft minutes or decision register at least

9 Members have requested a decision which is subject to Call In to be reconsidered (on procedural grounds) and have stated on their request the reasons why this should be the case, the Chief Executive shall at the earliest opportunity arrange a meeting of an Ad Hoc Committee comprising the Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons of the Standing Committees will be convened to consider if the Call In request is a valid one. That Ad Hoc Committee will be entitled to:

1. Conclude that the request is valid and refer the decision back to the Committee which made it for reconsideration. In which case the decision will not be up for ratification at the Council meeting;
2. Conclude that the request is not valid and, in the case of a decision for ratification by the Council, refer the decision to the Council.

2.4.2 If any Call In request from a Member has not highlighted on their request why the decision should be reconsidered and have not redressed that omission upon being advised of such by the Chief Executive within the Call In period, then the Chief Executive will deem that request to be inadmissible.

2.5 Requests for Call In on Community Impact Grounds

2.5.1 Any request for Call In of a decision on Community Impact Grounds must state in the reasons given as to why the decision should be called in:

1. The section of the inhabitants that would be affected by the decision; and
2. The nature and extent of the disproportionate adverse impact

2.5.2 The identification of the section of the inhabitants could be on the basis of location or by a common interest or by any other clearly identifiable category.

2.5.3 Those Members requesting the call in will also need to consider in what manner the decision, if implemented, would disproportionately affect adversely that section of the inhabitants. The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, in its Guide for Public Authorities on Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, defines 'adverse impact' as an

effect on those affected by a policy that is less favourable. The Oxford Dictionary defines disproportionate as 'out of proportion'. Members will wish to take account of such definitions in their consideration of whether to call in a decision

2.5.4 After the expiry of the five working days from the publication of the draft minutes or the decision register if the minimum required number of Members (9) have properly called in a decision and given the required evidence then the Chief Executive will within two working days seek the opinion of a practising solicitor or barrister on whether the Members have articulated their case for the decision to be reconsidered..

2.5.5 When the opinion is received by the Chief Executive she will:

1. Circulate the legal opinion to all Members; and
2. Include the decision in question on the agenda for the next available meeting of the Council at which any decision will be required to be taken by a qualified majority (80%) of Members present and voting.

2.5.6 A Call-In requisition form has been developed to assist members in the operation of this process and is attached at Appendix 1. Copies of this form will be made available from Democratic Services upon request.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 None directly associated with this report.

4 Equality and Good Relations Implications

4.1 There are no equality or good relations considerations associated with this report.

5 Call In

5.1 This decision is subject to Call-In.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Committee is requested to note the information on the operation of the Call-In process and to approve the use of the Call-In requisition form."

After discussion, the Committee adopted the recommendations and noted that a report on how the Council would seek legal opinion on any decisions/recommendations Called-in on Community Impact Grounds would be submitted to a future meeting.

Finance/Value-for-Money

Requests for Financial Assistance/Support Fund

(Councillor Carson left the room whilst this item was under consideration.)

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of a report in relation to Requests for Financial Assistance/Support Fund to enable further information to be obtained in relation to what the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister were doing to support the specific organisations in question (originally funded through PEACE III), to ascertain whether there would be support, what form that would take and how it would inter-relate with any interim support.

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

Progress on Community Development Grant Aid Programme 2015/17

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 **Relevant Background Information**

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to:**

1.2

- **To update members on the progress of the Community Development Grant Programme 2015/16 and outline challenges due to the delay in the Executive budget decision and a reduced budget allocation from DSD.**
- **To seek approval to update the area allocation model for our Advice grants to reflect the latest demographic and deprivation data (as instructed by the Development Committee Feb 2012)**
- **To consider any revision to the funding bands for the Capacity Building and Revenue funds.**

Community Development Grant Progress

At the Statutory Transition Committee (April 2014), members agreed to progress to an open call process for the Community Development Grant Programme 2015-2017 which is managed by Community Services.

1.3

- **Generalist Advice:** currently funded through the 5 advice consortia across Belfast for the provision of generalist advice services. Support was provided to ensure that the programme encompassed the advice support models currently administered in Castlereagh and Lisburn.
- **Capacity Building Grants:** funding leadership within the community development sector to build the capacity of local groups to meet needs.
- **Revenue Grants for Community Buildings:** provide running costs for community buildings to enable groups to meet community needs.

1.4 Council has traditionally invested approximately £2.6m annually in support of local Community Development activity of which £1.568 million comes directly from the Department for Social Development (DSD) via their regional Community Support Programme.

1.5 In planning for the 15/16 CDGP, application has been made via our Service Convergence budgets to expand the programme to cover the extended council boundary as part of LGR. Current grant aid and community development support in the Lisburn and Castlereagh areas differs from the historical Belfast Community Support Programme. Committee have therefore approved this additional fund (£405,523) to extend our grant aid programme and community development support to address needs in the incoming areas.

1.6 The CDGP was to be aligned to the transfer of Urban Regeneration and Community Development functions and budget from DSD to Council however this transfer has been deferred to April 2016. Given the delay, DSD will continue to manage the regional CSP however the allocation model has been reviewed to reflect the new geographies across the 11 Councils and will be revised in line with any agreed cuts in the DSD budget. We have not yet received formal confirmation of the level of CSP grant to council for 2015/16.

Process

1.7

- The large grant process to date is summarised below:
- 3rd June 2014: Launch and open call for 3 large grants (Advice, Capacity Building & Community Buildings Revenue).

- June/July 2014: Workshops and support provided to potential applicant groups
- 11th July 2014: Application process closed
- August to November: grants assessed, scored and ranked
- December: Assessment process verified by panel.

Small Grant Programme: This includes Summer Scheme Grants and Community Development Project Grants. The BCC small grant programme was opened to application in November 2014 with a closing date of 21st January 2015. A total of 182 applications (89 Summer Scheme and 93 Project) were received and are currently being assessed.

2 Key Issues

2.1 Generalist Advice Services

Council currently administer an annual grant programme of £861,885 to consortia in north, south, east, west and central Belfast under its Advice and Information Services grant programme. This programme supports the consortia to deal with an average of 127,400 enquiries per year across the city. The current delivery of the programme is based on review recommendations made in 2012 and is partially funded through the Community Support Programme by the Department for Social Development as part of its 'Opening Doors' advice strategy.

2.2 The programme includes a formula for determining the percentage allocation of funding to the four quadrants and to central Belfast. This formula, which takes account of need (via the proxy of population and deprivation), was previously reviewed in 2012 to ensure it is up to date and based on available and credible data sets.

2.3 In agreeing the area allocations which are currently applied, the Development Committee (Feb 2012) agreed a 'Local focus' model which focuses at the much smaller Super Output Area level and thus is more sensitive to pockets of deprivation. The review would have resulted in a reduced budget allocation for East and West Belfast and council subsequently agreed a revised budget allocation to ensure that no area would receive less funding than they had previously obtained in 2011/2012.

2.4 This resulted in an additional funding uplift of £36,000 p.a. being allocated and committee agreed that the option be

applied for four years (with a review of the option in 2015).
(See appendix 1)

2.5 Deloitte was contracted to complete the review (applying the most up to date statistics) in line with the timeframe for the open call for 15/16 grants. The review was in light of the new council boundary, including, the increased numbers of SOA, population size and deprivation measures. The report by Deloitte highlighted that;

- a. East will increase by seven SOAs and population by 16,776
- b. South by four SOAs and population by 7,986
- c. West by thirteen SOAs and population 25,523
- d. North is not receiving any new areas

2.6 Our total available advice budget for the city is yet to be confirmed however we have early indication that DSD will continue to ring-fence their advice funding within the CSP contract and expect the same level of match funding from councils. Based on this assumption and the notional additional CSP allocation for the extended boundary, we can assume an estimated grant of £912,931.

2.7 The preferred option proposed by Deloitte is to amend the 2012 formula to reflect population change and deprivation. The revised allocation and variance impact is outlined in the Table below:

Area	Current % Allocation model	Budget Allocation 2012 based on % Allocation	Proposed Allocation Based on New Boundary	Proposed Budget Allocation based on 2015 Review	Variance from 2012 Allocation model
Central	10.00%	82,588.50	10.00%	91,293.10	8,704.60
East Belfast	13.39%	110,586.00	14.41%	131,872.88	21,286.88
North Belfast	28.87%	238,433.00	24.71%	225,904.78	-12,528.22
South Belfast	16.33%	134,867.02	15.37%	140,637.02	5,770.00
West Belfast	31.41%	259,410.48	35.37%	323,223.22	63,812.74
TOTAL	100.00%	£825,885.00	99.86%	£912,931.00	£87,046.00

2.8 Given the larger total Advice budget available, the revised allocation model shows an increase in the financial value of allocations in line with population growth in South, East and West areas of the city.

2.9 Committee may wish to consider whether the percentage allocation should stay consistent for central Belfast. It may be considered that the revisions to the rest of the model for population and disadvantage would not impact on the rationale for a city centre service and thus this consortium might maintain their previous grant value. Any saving could be then be used to offset and maintain the allocation for the north consortia which, based on the revised model, will reduce. This approach would be in line with that agreed by committee in 2012.

2.10 Capacity & Community Buildings Revenue Grant

Traditionally the volume and value of the applications received to the Community Development Programme has exceeded the amount of funding available. In order to maximise the utility of what is a limited programme budget, council have adopted a banding mechanism through which the level of grant funds are determined and allocated to individual proposals. This approach offers a mechanism to spread our grant budgets so we might support as much eligible activity as possible whilst ensuring we meet targeted outcomes and have a reasonable breadth of programmes supported across the city.

2.11 Council have not yet considered an area allocation model for these grants or any of our Community Development grants other than that for generalist advice services.

2.12 Current funding bands

The current bands for both programmes are outlined below:

i Capacity Building Fund: Groups should meet a threshold score of 65% to be recommended for funding.

- Band A- applicants scoring >80%, maximum grant £49,664.44
- Band B- applicants scoring >70%<80%, maximum grant £33,109.63
- Band C- applicants scoring >65%<70% , maximum grant £27,591.36

2.13

ii **Community Buildings Revenue Fund:** Organisations are broadly classed according to the size of their building. The size of the building, together with the proposed programme and anticipated community usage, will determine the maximum amount of running costs that will be funded. A small neighbourhood facility based in a flat or a portacabin is classed as grade 1, Community Centres under 400m² are Grade 2, and larger community facilities are grade 3.

- Grade 1 facilities receive up to £6,010
- Grade 2 facilities receive up to £12,730
- Grade 3 facilities receive up to £18,734

2.14 Programme from 2015

As noted the Community Development Grant Programme benefits from significant annual levered funds from DSD. Pending the new time-frame for the transfer of Urban Regeneration and Community Development, officers have been liaising with the Department to determine the level of funding which BCC will receive for the coming year. Initial conversations with DSD officials and pending formal notification of the outcome of the consultation on the DSD budget, suggests there may be a significant reduction and while this has yet to be confirmed, officers are working on an estimated reduction of 20%.

2.15 As noted above, early indications suggest that the element of the grant which is ring-fenced to support generalist advice provision will be protected at 14/15 levels and this will be conditional on a consistent level of BCC match funds. This condition limits the remaining grant available for our other grant categories and corresponds to a 28% cut. The impact will be more profound if the level of additional CSP grant to reflect the extended boundary funding is less than anticipated.

2.16 **Implications**

There are a number of implications as a result in the delayed notification of the level of CSP grant income and the likelihood that this will be somewhat lower than previous years.

- The number of projects council funds may be reduced compared with previous years.
- The grant allocation per project may be reduced.

- Projects are unlikely to be allocated the amount requested in their application and this may impact on programme feasibility
- Groups will not receive notification of Council's decision before April 2015.
- Groups will not be awarded contracts until April 2015, potentially leading to cash flow issues.
- The level of services provided by community organisations may be reduced.
- Some community facilities may not receive sufficient funding to stay open.
- There may be an increase in requests for council services and support to help meet service gaps within neighbourhoods.

2.17 Proposed Changes to the banding mechanism for 2015

The extended Belfast boundary has led to an increase in the number of community organisations requesting grant support. Given this higher demand alongside the anticipated reduction in the total grant budget available, members may wish to consider the need for changes to the current bands. Any such amendments are proposed as an opportunity to spread the limited grant pot in a transparent and equitable way so as a larger number of local organisations across a wider geography.

2.19 It is proposed therefore that Council consider the following changes to funding bands which are outlined below:

2.19 i. Capacity Grant:

The table sets out the current funding band for capacity grants and suggest 2 further options. The first reflects the full potential percentage impact of any projected cut in the DSD grant and the second represents a modified reduction of 15% which will have less impact on the related viability of those programmes which formed the basis of applications submitted.

	Current Grant award	25% Reduction	15% Reduction
	Maximum	75% of Current Maximum	85% of Current Maximum
Band A	£ 49,664.44	£ 37,250.00	£ 42,200
Band B	£ 33,109.63	£ 24,750.00	£ 28,150
Band C	£ 27,591.36	£ 20,500.00	£ 23,500

2.21 Committee may also wish to amend the base quality cut-off score which groups need to achieve to attract funding. The existing bands are based on previous eligibility and scoring criteria. Any amended score for the new bands may be revised to take into consideration the new scoring criteria framework. By reducing the maximum grant level per band, we can fund a larger number of organisations, and thus more local community based services, while continuing to offer a significant individual grant contribution. Additionally, by reducing the threshold and band qualifiers, we will ensure groups with lower capacity, or those who are first time applicants to Council, will not be disadvantaged when compared to groups which have a higher capacity or a longer-term working relationship with Council.

2.22 Officers would suggest reducing the threshold score to 55% alongside the reductions in the maximum grant available and would suggest the following bands.

- Band A: >70%
- Band B: >65% and <70%
- Band C : > 55% and <65%

2.23 ii. Community Buildings Revenue:

Given the size of this grant it will not cover the totality of any centre's running costs. Members may consider whether we should apply a similar percentage reduction in the level of revenue grant or alternatively, given the lack of an inflationary increase since 2010 alongside the much lower individual grant award, committee might retain the current categories or offer a slight % increase to reflect inflation. For example:

- Grade 1: up to £ 6,500 (small community flats or portacabins)
- Grade 2: up to £13,000 (community centres under 400m2)
- Grade 3: up to £18,000 (larger community centres)

2.24 Summary

Members will be aware that in the context of the current funding climate and the new areas within the extended council boundary, there is an increase in the number and value of applications received.

- 2.25 As already referenced, officers are not yet in a position to confirm the total grant budget available for allocation and have outlined options to amend the current allocation models for members consideration. Once budgets are confirmed, officers may need to amend the band allocations to reflect affordability and to offer a reasonable spatial spread of funded projects within the grant categories.
- 2.26 Members should also note that any proposed additional allocation to a particular grant category will adversely affect the total available grant for the remaining categories within the Community Development Grant Programme.
- 2.27 If agreeable, officers will apply the revised funding bands to the suite of applications currently under assessment and subsequently table specific funding recommendations for Councillor consideration in March (subject to confirmation from DSD of Council's funding allocation) with a view to issuing letters of offer in April.
- 2.28 As per point 2.25 above, if our assumptions in relation to the total grant budget available are inaccurate, officers request delegated authority to further review the allocation bands within the Capacity and Community Buildings Revenue categories, and amend accordingly but within the agreed principles set down in this paper.
- 2.29 The budget allocation for April 2016 following the transfer of Urban Regeneration and Community Development will not be determined until later this year. Therefore it would be difficult to offer two year contracts to successful organisations without provision for contract review at the end of the first year. It is therefore proposed that grant contracts should be for a period of 12months with an option to extend.

Summary of Applications

In advance of formal tabling of applications for consideration, the following is a brief summary of applications to the Capacity and Community Building Revenue grant categories:

- 84 groups have applied for Revenue funding totalling £1,118,205.
- 30 Projects have applied for Capacity Building totalling £1,340,759.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 None associated with this report. A report confirming the total available CDGP budget and making specific recommendations for awards to generalist Advice Services, Capacity and Community Buildings Revenue grants will follow in March 2015.**

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

- 4.1 There are no Equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.**

5 Recommendations

5.1 It is recommended that Members:

- i Note the progress of the Community Development Grant Programme and challenges faced due to budget delay and reduction.**
- ii Note the implications of budget delay and anticipated reduction on Council's ability to support community organisations and the potential impact on the level of local service provision within the city**
- iii Consider the revised area allocation model for the generalist Advice Services grant programme.**
- iv Agree the revision of funding bands, including the maximum grant allocation per band, for both the Capacity Building and Community Buildings Revenue grant programmes**
- v Pending confirmation of the total budget available, agree that officers should further review the allocation bands within the Capacity and Community Buildings Revenue categories, and amend accordingly but within the agreed principles set down in this paper."**

The Director of Development reviewed the main aspects of the report and referred specifically to the revised allocation in funding in relation to Generalist Advice Services. He pointed out that there would be an increase in all areas with the exception of North Belfast which would see a variance of -£12,528.22. However, he suggested that the increase in the variance for Central of £8,704.60 could potentially be allocated to North Belfast, which would leave a shortfall of £3,823.62 which could be found from within Departmental budgets. Therefore, North Belfast would receive the same budget allocation as it did in 2012 in the sum of £238,433.

After discussion, the Committee approved the area allocation model for the Generalist Advice Services Grant Programme, subject to inclusion of those suggestions which had been made by the Director in relation to the Central and North Belfast areas. The Committee agreed further to defer consideration of the provision of the funding bands in relation to the Capacity Building and Community Buildings Revenue Grant Programme to enable further information to be obtained.

Asset Management

Belfast Investment Fund

The Committee was advised that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 13th February, had considered a report in relation to the Belfast Investment Fund and had agreed to recommend to the Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval to advance the Lagan Gateway Project, that is, the phases including the lock, the bridge and the footway, at less than 50% match funding, but stressed also that to new criteria needed to be developed for the Belfast Investment Fund. The Committee had recommended also that approval be granted for the acquisition of the ex-Finlay factory site at Blackmountain in the sum of £250,000 for a freehold interest in the site.

The Committee endorsed the recommendations of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Area Working - Local Investment Fund Update

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

"1.0 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Members are aware that the Area Working Groups (AWGs) were established in 2012 as a means of connecting Members to local areas in preparation for their role in community planning under the Reform of Local Government. In governance terms, the AWGs were established to have an advisory role, informing the implementation of the Investment Programme. Since this time, the AWGs have played an integral role in recommending investment decisions for their areas in terms of the Local Investment Fund (LIF); the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF); the Feasibility Fund and Local Interventions Funds to the SP&R Committee.**

However there a number of major opportunities and challenges facing both the Council and the city currently including

- the reform of local government and the enhanced roles and responsibilities in addition to the extended boundaries including the
 - transfer of statutory planning powers from DoE
 - emerging statutory community planning duty which will be at a city, thematic and area level
 - transfer of regeneration powers and associated assets and projects from DSD (April 16)
- the emerging Social Investment Fund (SIF) projects
- a range of strategic projects being delivered across the city by partner organisations including the Rapid Transit system, the new University of Ulster, the emerging thinking around Urban Villages
- the emerging Leisure Transformation Programme (LTP)

Together with the continued implementation of the Council's Physical Programme, all of the above provide a great opportunity for Members to make a real difference to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of Belfast, particularly in terms of physical investment decisions. Given this changing context and the need to ensure that the Council has to deploy increasingly stretched resources as effectively as possible which places a greater emphasis on Area Planning.

2.0 Area Working Group Updates

LIF was established under the Investment Programme as a £5million fixed fund designed to support the delivery of local regeneration projects in neighbourhoods and to help connect Members to local areas. LIF was financed through a financed through re-allocation of existing resources. A fixed fund means that this is a 'one-off' pot of money and that there are no budget allocations for this beyond the current commitments.

Current status of LIF as of 9 February 2015

- £5million total allocation (April 2012) - £1,127,500 for North/South/East and West and £490k Shankill
- Designed to fund neighbourhood regeneration projects between £15,000 and £250,000

- 62 projects worth £4,702,596 have been allocated in principle funding of which
 - 20 projects completed worth - value - £998,573
 - 9 currently on the ground - value - £907,596
 - 28 at tender preparation stage- value - £2,334,427
 - 5 not yet through due-diligence - value - £462,000

- £1.23m for projects has been paid out to date (projects completed and currently on ground) so far with £3.47m to be paid out

- There is a £297,404 remaining allocation under LIF (currently all in North)

	<u>Project details</u>	
NORTH	17 projects approved in principle - £830,096 in total Remaining allocation - £297,404	4 completed - £140,000 2 projects on the ground - £85,596 8 at tender preparation stage - £412,500 3 not yet through due-diligence - £192,000
SOUTH	12 projects approved in principle - £1,127,500 Remaining allocation - £0	4 completed - £195,541 2 projects on the ground - £238,000 6 at tender preparation stage - £693,959
EAST	8 projects approved in principle - £1,127,500 Remaining allocation - £0	2 completed - £130,852 1 projects on the ground - £250,000 4 at tender preparation stage - £496,648 1 not yet through due-diligence - £250,000
WEST	17 projects approved in principle - £1,127,500 Remaining allocation - £0	6 completed - £236,500 3 projects on the ground - £304,000 7 at tender preparation stage - £567,000 1 not yet through due-diligence - £20,000
SHANKILL	8 projects approved in principle - £490,000 Remaining allocation - £0	4 completed - £295,680 1 projects on the ground - £30,000 3 at tender preparation stage - £164,320

- There are 5 projects which are still not through the due-diligence process – officers are continuing to work closely with the groups to try to progress these however it is likely for a number of reasons (including lack of match funding and sustainability issues) that these projects will successfully get through the due-diligence process - if all these projects do not go through this could mean an additional £462,000 is unallocated

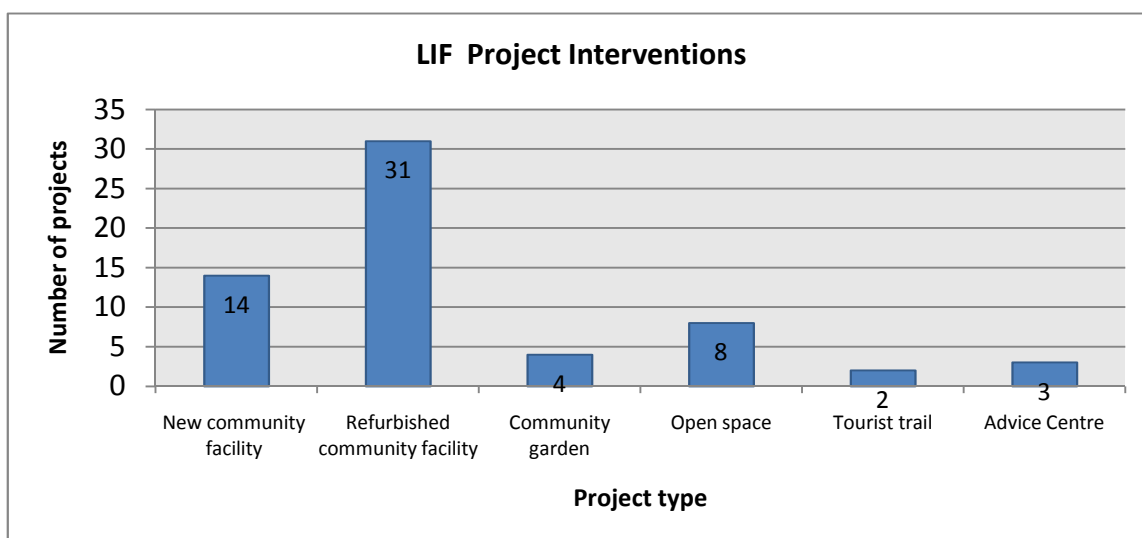
- It should also be noted that some of the projects which have gone through due-diligence and at tender preparation stage

are dependent on receiving match funding from other sources and/or have a number of other outstanding issues and there is still a risk that these may not progress

- The average value of a LIF project to date is £75,848 (North - £48,830; South- £93,958; East - £140,938; West - £66,324 and Shankill - £61,250)
- The average time that it has taken to get a project through the due diligence process is 9.66months (North – 8.19months; South- 9.5months; East – 10.29months; West – 10.97months and Shankill – 9.38months)

Projects funded and benefits

- An analysis of the 62 projects funded or recommended for funding to date have fallen into a number of key categories



- Monitoring and evaluation framework worked up for all projects (draft attached)
- Robust monitoring of all the completed LIF projects is currently underway and this will continue as projects complete
- Benefits to date include
 - Ballysillan Community Forum – ‘The renovated premises has increased the profile of the centre and provided a comfortable bright waiting area for clients’

- Benview Community Centre – ‘The upgrade of the park has been an amazing benefit to the centre and the whole area of Ballysillan. The park is widely used by a variety of groups’.
- CRJ – Springfield Road – The enhancements have allowed the organisation to operate on a more professional basis in a quality comfortable environment. Staff feel more positive. The improved environment means heating costs have been reduced

Recent AWG Meetings

The North AWG met on 11 February to consider reallocating some of their current underspend on the following schemes:

Shore Road

- Creation of a Garden of Reflection on Shore Road in conjunction with the HUBB Community Centre.
- Creation of a Community Garden on land at Ivan Street in conjunction with Grove Housing Association who own the site

The AWG recommends allocating £24,000 to each project at the moment with any surplus on Ivan Street being transferred to the Garden of Remembrance scheme once full costs are known.

Ardoyne

- Allocation of £40,000 to the Wishing Well project provides out of school and pre school services and will allow completion of a £600,000 scheme also supported by SIF.
- Allocation of £6,000 for a ground condition survey to allow DSD to complete a playground at Glenbryn.

Ligoniel

- £20,000 to the Ligoniel Improvement Association for physical enhancement to the hills. Create an outdoor classroom and provide signage to the forest walk at the Ligoniel environment and heritage site.

Antrim Road

- £18,000 contribution to refurbishment works at 283-289 Antrim Road in association with Cumann Cultúrtha Mhic Reachtain.
- Further consideration to be given to St Gemmas school when further details are known.
- Further schemes at risk were notified to the AWG which may mean further monies may become available for reallocation.

South Area Working Group

- South Area Working Group met on 12 February and noted they also had two schemes at risk which they wish to reconsider in March when confirmation or otherwise of additional funding should be known.
- The AWG also received presentations on behalf of Bredagh GAC and Taughmonagh Football Club and agreed to give further consideration to supporting these schemes as funding becomes available.

3.0 Resource Implications

Financial: As outlined above.

Human: Officer time in working with groups on developing their project proposals

Assets: none at present

4.0 Equality Implications

All LIF projects will be screened to indicate potential equality and good relations impacts and any mitigating actions needed.

5.0 Call In

Subject to call in.

5.0 Recommendations

Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and

- Agree to move the proposed projects forward.”

The Director reported that, subsequent to the report having been issued, the North Area Working Group had agreed to allocate £11,032 funding from within its existing Local Investment Fund to enable additional work to be undertaken at St. Mary's Nursery School (Community Gardens), including landscaping and tree removal and he recommended accordingly.

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

**Corporate Accommodation Strategy –
Award of Tender**

The Committee was reminded that, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting of on 19th June 2014, had endorsed the commencement of a public procurement exercise to procure new build office accommodation in the City centre and had delegated authority to the Director of Property and Projects to award the tender with a further report to be submitted providing an update.

Subsequently, at the meeting of the Shadow Strategic policy and Resources Committee on 16th January, 2015, the Members had been advised that the procurement process had entered a Competitive Dialogue procedure following the submission of three responses. In order to ensure value for money, a comparator proposal for the same building design utilising one of the Council's own City centre sites had also been costed as part of the process.

Following assessment of the three submissions and the cost of the Council building on its own site, it was recommended that the Committee authorise the Director of Property and Projects to award a tender to McAleer and Rushe for the provision of new build offices for the Council at the Clarendon House site as representing the best value for money solution, subject to the capital financing model which had been proposed.

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

The Committee noted that there would be a requirement for a staff workplace assessment to be undertaken and for an occupational standard policy to be developed to complement the accommodation strategy and take account of the Council's future organisational structure.

**Transfer of Assets and Liabilities from Castlereagh
Borough Council and Lisburn City Council**

The Committee noted the contents of a report in relation to the transfer of assets to the Council from Castlereagh Borough Council and Lisburn City Council and noted that there was ongoing engagement between those Councils, with a view to getting a resolution on all critical issues prior to the vesting date and that further reports would be submitted to the Committee as appropriate.

Local Government Reform –
Department for Regional Development
Off-street Car Parking

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Members will be aware that as of 1st April 2015 the Council will be responsible for the Department for Regional Development (DRD) off-street car parks including their management and enforcement (excluding Park & Ride and Park & Share car parks).
- 1.2 Members are reminded that there are currently 30 off-street car parks with approximately 2200 car parking spaces. 17 of these car parks, comprising of 1567 parking spaces, serve the city centre and are charged. The remaining 13 car parks, outside the city centre, are free to use. 7 of the charged car parks are currently leased by DRD from NIHE, DSD, Belfast Harbour Commissioners, BCC and the University of Ulster.
- 1.3 At the Transition Committee meeting on 9th December, Members gave authority for the Estates Unit to enter into discussions with NIHE, DSD and Belfast Harbour Commissioners to renew the lease/licence terms for the leased/licensed car parks, subject to a subsequent report being brought back to the relevant committee for agreement on the terms of the leases/licences. A verbal update was also given at this meeting regarding renewal of the agreement for the Frederick Street car park, which is currently owned by the University of Ulster and leased to DRD.
- 1.4 Members will also recall that DRD were proposing to retain ownership of the car park at Corporation Street for the development of the York Street Interchange. Initially DRD had proposed to retain a number of car parks required in connection with proposed road schemes but they subsequently changed their position on this and confirmed that they only intend to retain the Corporation St car park. The Transition Committee, at their meeting on 13 October 2014 had agreed that all off-street car parks should transfer on the 1st April 2015.
- 1.5 Members had agreed that should any proposed road schemes go ahead in the future then DRD could acquire the car parks by agreement or via compulsory purchase powers. In both cases the Council should receive a capital premium based on the

open market value of the sites which could be used to provide alternative car parking spaces. Members were advised that if any car parks were to be developed by DRD for the purpose of road schemes then the Council, who will have the statutory responsibility for off street car parking, may potentially have to provide car parking elsewhere at their expense.

2 Key Issues

2.1 Transfer Scheme

A draft Transfer Scheme scheduling the transferring assets has been forwarded by DRD and the detail of this is currently being considered by officers. It is anticipated that the Transfer Scheme will be brought before Members in March.

2.2 Leases and Licences:

Revised licence terms have now been agreed by Estates (subject to Committee approval) in respect of the following car parks:

(i) Station Street: (licence from DSD): Open ended licence to commence 01/04/2015 at £1 pa.

(ii) Kent Street (licence from DSD): Open ended licence from 01/04/2015 at £1 pa.

Note: Both of these DSD owned assets are proposed to transfer to BCC in April 2016 as part of the Transfer of Regeneration function.

(iii) Frederick Street: Licence from UU from 01 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 at £25,750 pa (previous rent £25,000 pa). UU will require possession of this car park on 31 March 2016 to construct its multi storey car park.

(iv) Corporation Square: Licence from Belfast Harbour Commissioners for part only of site (27 spaces). Remainder is DRD owned. Licence from Harbour Commissioners from 01 April 2015 – envisaged that this will be a 9 month licence expiring 31 December 2015. £4860pa [same rental level as per previous agreement with DRD].

(v) Bankmore St: Licence from NIHE to run from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2106 at £25,200 p.a. (rent assessed by LPS, based on turnover).

(vi) Cromac Street: Licence from NIHE to run from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 at £45,420 pa (rent assessed by LPS, based on turnover).

It should be noted that there is no guaranteed security of tenure in respect of these NIHE owned car parks beyond 31 March 2016.

Smithfield Car Park is currently held by DRD under a licence agreement from BCC but this agreement will now come to an end.

2.3 Corporation Street Car Park

In recent correspondence from DRD, they have confirmed that they do not intend to transfer the Corporation St Car Park to the Council. They have advised that they have not included the surplus from this car park in the rates neutral calculation. DRD have suggested that the Council may wish to enter into a lease/licence with DRD to allow the Council to operate the car park until such time as it is required for development and that the Council may wish to use the income from this arrangement to finance the purchase of additional parking spaces, should they feel this is required. The annual surplus for this car park is £66,000. DRD have advised that the car park is likely to be required for development in June 2017.

2.4 Members are asked whether they wish to re state their previous position that all car parks should transfer or accept DRD's position that Corporation Street will not transfer to the Council as it is required for the York St Interchange. If Members accept DRD's position that it will not transfer, it is proposed that a lease /licence is entered into with DRD for use of the car park until required by DRD. If the lease option is agreed by Members it is also recommended that agreement is sought from DRD in respect of any surplus lands being transferred to BCC at nil cost, once the York Street Interchange Scheme has been completed.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial Implications

The revised rentals, as set out above represent a very slight increase on current rents. It should be noted that there is no guaranteed security of tenure in respect of the leased car parks. Members are also being asked to advise on DRD's proposal in relation to the Corporation St car park.

Human Resources

Staff resource to complete the lease /licence renewals and future staff resource associated with the use and management of the car parks.

Asset Implications

There are currently 30 operational car parks with 28 currently included in the Transfer Scheme from DRD although 7 are held under lease /licence from 3rd parties. The Frederick Street car park has not been included in the Transfer Scheme but there is a proposed separate licence agreement with UU. The car park at Corporation Street has also been excluded from the current DRD Transfer Scheme.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 No equality or good relations implications associated with this report.

5 Call In

5.1 This decision is subject to Call In.

6 Recommendations

6.1 Members are asked to

(i) approve the terms of the revised lease/licence agreements in respect of the car parks at Station St; Kent St; Frederick St; Corporation Square; Bankmore St and Cromac Street, as outlined above; and

(ii) advise if they accept the position of DRD that they retain the Corporation Street car park and that an interim lease/licence agreement is entered into with DRD for use of the car park (pending the York Street Interchange Road Scheme). If Members agree to proceed with the lease option it is also recommended that agreement is sought from DRD in respect of any surplus lands being transferred to BCC at nil cost, once the York Street Interchange Scheme has been completed.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations and agreed that the Chief Executive write to the Department for Regional Development regarding the potential land remaining after the York Street Interchange was completed transferring to the Council to potentially compensate for the loss of Corporation Street Car Park.

**Proposal for Web Summit Event
at St. George's Market**

(Mr. G. Lennon, Chief Executive, and Ms R. McGuickin, Director of Business Tourism, Visit Belfast, were in attendance for this item.)

The Director of Development submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 Members will be aware that St George's Market currently operates as a market three days per week – Friday, Saturday and Sunday. On non-market days, the market is available for hire for other events and this ensures that it can generate an income for the council outside of market days.

1.2 A request has now been received from Visit Belfast to hold an event on four non-market days (i.e. Monday to Thursday, 15-18 June 2015). However the event set-up and break-down will require access to the market before and after the main event (i.e. Sunday 14 June and Friday 19 June). This would have the effect of closing St George's as a market on those two days.

2 Key Issues

2.1 Members will be aware that the Integrated Tourism Strategy places a significant emphasis on the importance of business tourism to the city. Investment in facilities such as the new Waterfront Conference and Exhibition Centre are intended to support an increase in the volume and value of business tourism, thereby generating knock-on benefits for the local hospitality sector in particular.

2.2 The tourism strategy also focuses on the need to both develop and attract a number of international events that will draw visitors to the city and create a positive image and profile of Belfast. It suggests that there are opportunities to align these events to the business sectors in which the city has real strength, such as creative industries, software and IT and financial services software.

2.3 The Web Summit is an international business event that has taken place in Dublin each year since 2010. Growing from an event that attracted 500 people in its first year, the 2014 event attracted 22,000 visitors to the city for a three day event that included a range of side-events all across the city.

The cumulative impact in terms of tourism spend is significant and it is one of the largest events that takes place in Dublin each year.

- 2.4 The organisers of the Web Summit also run a number of related events at various locations across the world throughout the year. These are focused on specific elements of the tech industry. The organisers are seeking to develop a new event and have identified Belfast as their preferred venue for the event.
- 2.5 The event is actually comprised of two related events called MoneyConf and EnterConf. It focuses on the financial services software and enterprise software industries – areas in which Belfast is developing a niche offer, with the presence of a number of both multi-national and indigenous businesses operating on a global scale. It will run over a period of 4 days and organisers expect to attract 2000 delegates per day over the 4 days. The event could generate up to £4million in economic impact and could help place Belfast on the international stage as a location for global tech-based events.
- 2.6 The organisers have identified St George's Market as their preferred venue. Visit Belfast have confirmed that this is the only venue that provides adequate conference and exhibition space for the event. The proposal is to run the Money Conf event on Monday 15 June and Tuesday 16 June. The changeover will then take place on Wednesday 16 June and the EnterConf event will take place on Thursday 18 June and Friday 19 June. The strike down from the EnterConf event will happen after the event on Friday, with a view to having the market ready for traders to access it for business on Saturday 20 June. Therefore, if members were to agree to hosting the event, this would have an impact on two trading days, namely Sunday 14th and Friday 19th June 2015 and would mean that the market could not function on those days.
- 2.7 This situation has never previously arisen as events have always been confined to non-market days. If members were to agree to not hold the market, consideration would need to be given to managing the relationship with the 180 traders who trade there daily and communicating the message to the 5,000 visitors who come to the market each day.
- 2.8 Visit Belfast had been looking at opportunities for re-locating the market to other locations across the city but this would present significant logistical challenges and there would

probably be substantial cost implications – which have not been taken into account by any party at this stage. Likewise, officers looked into the potential of re-locating the market to Waterfront Hall for those two days but this was not possible, largely due to logistical reasons.

- 2.9 At present, the organisers have confirmed that they want Belfast to host the event and they are keen to launch it as soon as possible to ensure maximum attendance. However officers have advised them that this will not be possible until there is a decision from elected members as to whether or not it will be feasible at St George's.
- 2.10 The organisers have also suggested that, if the event is a success, it is their intention to look at anchoring the event in Belfast for at least three years, and they have confirmed that they would expect to grow the audience to 15,000 attendees by that point. Given the increasing numbers, the organisers have looked at the new Waterfront Hall as a possible location for next year's event. While they are interested, the June dates are already provisionally reserved at this point so they may have to look at alternative dates.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 Venue hire will generate around £10,000 in income to the council. However, if the two market days were to be cancelled, this would represent a loss of income of around £5,000 from traders.
- 3.2 If the market traders were to be relocated to another area, there would be significant cost implications. These have not been calculated, and it has not been confirmed how these costs would be met, or who would be responsible for meeting the costs.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

No specific equality and good relations implications.

5 Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the request to hold the Web Summit MoneyConf and EnterConf events in St George's Market from 15-19 June 2015
- Note that the event will require set-up and break-down time either side of the main programme, and

that this would mean that the venue could not function as a market on Sunday 14 June and Friday 19 June

- **Consider how they wish to deal with this request.”**

During discussion, several Members expressed the view that, whilst they were in support of hosting the proposed conference at the St. George’s Market, they were concerned at the impact which the event would have on the market and traders.

Mr. Lennon and Ms McGuickin outlined the options which were being considered for relocating the traders from the St. George’s Markets during the days which the Market would be used for the conference, which included the use of the front lawns at the City Hall and potentially Custom House Square. It was felt that a reasonable compromise could be offered to the traders and that the relocation of the market during those days would be supported by a major marketing initiative which would seek to increase the footfall and attract new customers.

After further discussion, the Committee agreed to accede to the request to hold the Web Summit Money Conf and EnterConf events in St. George’s Market from 15th till 19th June, 2015, subject to a information being provided to Members of the Council on discussions with the traders and proposals to relocate the markets prior to the Shadow Council meeting scheduled to be held on 3rd March.

Human Resources

Update on Organisational Development Work

The Committee noted the contents of a report which provided an update on the Organisational Development work for the new Council and agreed:

- (1) to the holding of a briefing on the Local Government Association Peer Review by Members of the peer team on 5th March, 2015 at 10.30 a.m.;
- (2) to the interim arrangements for the management of the services within the current Parks and Leisure Department and the current Health and Environmental Services Department, pending options for the new organisation structure which would include proposals for a City and Neighbourhood services department.

The Chief Executive reported that the recruitment exercise for the post of Director of Planning and Place had been completed and that distinct contractual terms were being developed, given the specific nature of the appointment and the potential for further organisational changes.

Good Relations and Equality

District Councils' Good Relations Action Plan 2015 – 2016

(Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee was reminded that the Council submitted an annual Action Plan to the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister in order to draw down funding for the Good Relations work of the Council. Accordingly, the Good Relations Manager submitted for the Committee's consideration the undernoted report:

"1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 **Members may be aware that the Council submits an annual Action Plan to OFMDFM every year in order to draw down funding for the Good Relations work of the Council. Correspondence has been received from OFMDFM advising that Action Plans must be submitted by 27th February 2015 in order to be scored and assessed.**
- 1.2 **The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the content within the draft Action Plan for forwarding to OFMDFM for approval as this Action Plan will be delivered under the new Belfast Council after April 1st 2015. The draft Action Plan is attached as appendix 1.**
- 1.3 **The Good Relations Partnership endorsed the Action Plan at its meeting on 9th February 2015.**

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 **District Councils are identified within the Together; Building a United Community strategy as a key delivery agent. This delivery is through the District Council's Good Relations Programme which is 75% funded by OFMDFM.**
- 2.2 **Action Plans are to be based on an audit of Good Relations issues and need within the Council area. To that end, the Good Relations Unit have updated the audit that was carried out in January and February 2014, in order to incorporate those issues that have been identified in those areas coming into Belfast in April. The updated audit is attached as appendix 2.**
- 2.3 **Action Plans must be aligned with the Government strategy Together; Building a United Community, under the 4 key priority areas of:**

- Children and Young People
- Our Shared Community
- Our Safe Community
- Our Cultural Expression

2.4 It should be noted that the above themes are also reflected in the EU Peace IV programme. While the attached Action Plan only covers the 15/16 financial year and Peace IV covers 2014-2020, it is anticipated that information regarding the Good Relations audit and action plan will feed into the process of developing the Peace IV Action Plan thus providing complementarity.

2.5 The headline actions contained within the Plan include the Good Relations and St Patrick's Grant Aid Schemes, work on Decade of Centenaries, Interfaces, support for the Black Minority Ethnic Communities and development of an approach regarding bonfire management.

2.6 The attached Plan has been drawn up in accordance with the Council's estimates for 15/16. However, given the experience last year when Council was informed late in the year that the budget had been significantly reduced and that OFMDFM have advised that the initial indications of the Department's 15/16 budget suggest an opening position that is lower than their opening position last year, the Action Plan may have to be prioritised which may particularly impact on grant aid provision. Members will be aware that in the context of the current funding climate and the new areas being added to the Council, there is likely to be significant increase in requests for funding in 15/16.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial: The Action Plan will be 75% funded by OFMDFM with the remaining 25% included in the Council's 2015/16 budget. The bid to OFMDFM totals £918,000 and an amount of £688,500 is being requested from OFMDFM – this has been included within the 2015/16 estimates. However, as outlined in point 2.6, last year the Council was only awarded £466,000 as a 75% contribution from OFMDFM and thus the programme had to be reprioritised and reduced accordingly.

It should also be noted that funding for Sumer Intervention monies form part of a separate bid to OFMDFM and is paid at 100% from the Department.

3.2 **Human Resources:** Funding to support the delivery of the Action Plan supports a portion of some of the salaries within the Good Relations Unit.

4 **Recommendation and decision**

4.1 To approve for submission to OFMDFM, the attached Action Plan to be delivered during 2015 – 2016. Members are also requested to note that this Action Plan submission is subject to alteration and amendment during the assessing and scoring process that will be undertaken by OFMDFM. The Council will be notified of any changes in the final approved Action Plan.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations, subject to the amendment of Action 1 in 4.2 Cultural Diversity Celebrated to include the following: “To support communities with unwanted bonfires and to help transform them into positive community events”.

The Committee noted that a full copy of the Action Plan was available on the Council’s website.

Chairman