

# Development Committee

Wednesday, 12th January, 2011

## MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor C. Maskey (Chairman);  
the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Humphrey); and  
Councillors Campbell, Crozier, Ekin, Garrett, Groves,  
Hargey, B. Kelly, Kyle, Lavery, Mallon, Mac Giolla Mhín,  
McKee, Mullaghan, J. Rodgers, P. Robinson, Rodway  
and Stoker.
- Also attended: Councillors Jones and Smyth.
- In attendance: Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;  
Ms. S. McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives;  
Mr. T. Husbands, Head of City Events and Venues;  
Ms. C. Taggart, Community Development Manager;  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and  
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

### Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 30th November and 6th December were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 5th January, subject to:

- (i) the omission of the minute of the meeting of 6th December under the heading "Cathedral Quarter Development Plan" which, at the request of Councillor Rodway, had been taken back to the Committee for further consideration.

### New Member

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed Councillor Garrett to his first meeting.

### Cathedral Quarter Development Plan

The Committee considered further the minute of the meeting of 6th December, a copy of which is set out hereunder:

#### **"Cathedral Quarter Development Plan"**

*The Committee was reminded that the Laganside Corporation had been dissolved in July, 2007. In 2008, the Department for Social Development, working in conjunction with the Council, Belfast City Centre Management and other key stakeholders, had set up a Steering Group to develop and implement a five-year Strategic Vision and Development Plan for the area.*

*The Department for Social Development had committed funding to enable the Steering Group to produce a Strategy and promote the area, including the employment of a Cathedral Quarter Development Manager. The Cathedral Quarter Development Plan had now been drafted and circulated for consultation and a draft Council response to the document is set out hereunder:*

**'1. Background & Discussion**

***The draft Cathedral Quarter (CQ) Strategy 2010-2015 proposes to establish a Management Trust which will:***

- ***Provide a forum for all stakeholders to work together***
- ***Work with disparate government agencies and departments to focus on the unique needs of the area***
- ***Leverage funding, including external resources not available to government***
- ***Manage the Cathedral Quarter's managed workspaces and event funding with appropriate government oversight***
- ***Facilitate the effective and efficient delivery of services Implement the Cathedral Quarter Development Strategy***

***Whilst the Management Trust would provide a focus for the CQ, Belfast City Council would have concerns that other areas across the city would want to adopt a similar approach and Council would need to consider this carefully within a city wide context, before any precedent is set. It is difficult to determine the power of a Trust within the current constraints of government departments.***

***Private/public sector financial models to support the development of Cathedral Quarter must be fully explored.***

**2. The CQ Development Plan**

***In guiding the future development of the Cathedral Quarter the four key priorities of the Management Trust will be:***

- ***To support the Cathedral Quarter as a centre for the arts and creative industries***
- ***To support the growth of the mixed-use economy in Cathedral Quarter***
- ***To generate high levels of public participation***
- ***To build and maintain a supportive Infrastructure***

*Belfast City Council (BCC) broadly supports the Priorities identified in the strategy*

*BCC notes that the draft strategy contains highly ambitious aspirations for the area in a relatively short period of time. These aspirations are commendable however need to be strengthened by a short, medium and long term implementation plan where the Key Targets should be SMART - specific, measurable, achievable and timebound.*

#### **CONSULTATION**

*BCC recommends that the Development Plan is open to consultation with a wider stakeholder network and not only those with direct interest in the Cathedral Quarter.*

#### **MARKETING, COMMUNICATION & VISITOR SERVICING**

*BCC would recommend that marketing and communication plans are strengthened in the implementation plan and that the proposed management trust works closely in partnership with the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BVCB).*

*It is also noted that the key target under Objective 3.3. to include "Visitor information point(s) in the Cathedral Quarter" must be done in partnership with the Belfast Welcome Centre and in consideration government departments that have the legislative powers over public land.*

#### **STREET TRADING & MARKET DEVELOPMENT**

*The CQ Draft Strategy does not allude to the development of on street trading or market development in the area. BCC has worked closely with representatives from the CQSG on designating locations in the CQ realm and seeks clarification on whether this remains an aspiration for the CQSC.*

#### **DEVELOPMENTS**

*Objective 2.2: Balance public and private land use to meet the needs of the cultural quarter (page 22) has a Key target to include: establish CQ as a Business Improvement District (BID) to facilitate zoning implementation. The plan should note that Northern Ireland at present does not have the legislative authority to establish a BID and the new Management Trust must factor into their plan that any change in legislation will take a number of years.*

*The role of DSD should be emphasised in bringing forward Royal Exchange and any other improvements in the adjoining NW quarter of the City.*

*The potential impact of the redevelopment of Central Library should be noted in the plan as LibrariesNI, through funding from Department of Culture and Leisure, plan to develop a mediatech facility and a £30m refurbishment completed in 2014. This development of arts infrastructure should be maximised in the CQ Development Plan.*

### **OPERATIONAL**

*Within Objective 4.1 of the Consultation, (Ensure a clean, safe and well-functioning public realm through effective local management), it does mention that maintenance of the public realm such as timely collection of bins and regular cleansing and upkeep of streets, footpaths and other surfaces must be coordinated to meet the needs of weekday, weekend and evening economic activity. BCC recommends that there is a need to ensure that any development within the area takes into account waste storage facilities and access to these.*

*This would also be recommended in a number of other objectives including:*

- Objective 1.4: Expand and renew the Managed Workspace provision*
- Objective 3.4: Promote best practice to ensure maximum accessibility to Cathedral Quarter premises, public spaces, services and activities*
- Objective 4.3: Improve access for pedestrians and cyclists and calm the traffic*

*CQSG should access the following link for full guidance:*

*<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/buildingcontrol/wastestorage.asp>*

### **FUNDING**

*BCC supports the plan but at this stage will not commit to any funding packages referred to in the plan.*

3. **Summary:**

1. *Members ask that the CQSG note that this plan necessitates wider consultation with all stakeholders and not just those with a direct interest in the Cathedral Quarter.*
2. *Council is minded to support the Plan however there would be no commitment at this stage to any of the funding packages referred to in the Plan.*
3. *The Cathedral Quarter Vision and Framework is top line and reflects the council's own strategies in relation to tourism, culture and arts; Cathedral Quarter is listed as one of the 9 tourism place destinations in the Belfast Integrated Strategic Framework.*
4. *BCC recommends that there is a need to ensure that any development within the area takes into account waste storage facilities and access to these.*
5. *The role of DSD should be emphasised in bringing forward Royal Exchange and any other improvements in the adjoining NW quarter of the City.*
6. *The potential of the impact of the redevelopment of Central Library should be developed as they plan a mediatech facility and hope to have a £30m refurbish completed in 2014.*
7. *BCC currently supports the work of the CQSG and will support their work along with all stakeholders and partners by sitting on the steering group at senior officer level.*
8. *Any emerging management structure should be considered on a city wide basis and innovative financing models should be explored.*
9. *Cathedral Quarter will include the MAC which when opened in 2012 will play a key role in supporting the culture and arts sector across the city.*
10. *Cathedral Quarter and its public spaces including Custom House Square provide the City with exciting event potential. Development and outreach initiatives similar to that explored as part of Culture Night should be developed further.*
11. *It is important that the CQ is not seen in isolation and is connected to other parts of the city including Titanic Quarter and North Belfast via the North Belfast Cultural Corridor both physically and through public transport.*

- 12. The development of the University and Royal Exchange are critical to the success of CQ and BCC should continue to work with all stakeholders to ensure the maximum opportunities are exploited with both of these significant developments for not only CQ but for the city.**
- 13. The strategy requires an action plan for implementation.'**

*After discussion, the Committee approved the draft response, subject to it being amended to include a request that more arcades and covered shopping areas be provided in the Cathedral Quarter and that the Plan include a specific statement indicating that the area will be a shared and welcoming quarter that is committed to a 'shared and better future' based on equity, diversity and interdependence for all cultural traditions."*

Councillor Rodway, at whose request the item had been taken back, referred to the proposed establishment of a Management Trust within the Plan and suggested that such a step, at this stage, might be considered premature given that it could lead to confusion and encourage other area-based development organisations throughout the City to adopt a similar approach.

The Director of Development reported that, since the meeting of the Committee on 9th December, he had met with the Chairman of the Cathedral Quarter Steering Group, who had advised him that the Group wished to work in partnership with the Council at all stages during the future development of the Plan and its associated management arrangements.

After discussion, the Committee affirmed its decision of 9<sup>th</sup> December to approve the draft response, subject to it being amended to reflect the Members' comments in respect of the establishment of a Management Trust. It was noted that the Committee would be consulted on an on-going basis in respect of the future management arrangements of the Trust.

### **Financial Estimates and District Rate 2011/12**

(Mrs. J. Thompson, Director of Finance and Resources, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered a report, which had been prepared by the Director of Finance and Resources, in respect of the estimates of revenue expenditure for the year 2011/2012. A copy of that section of the report, in so far as it applied specifically to the Development Committee, is set out hereunder:

- "11. A spending limit of £19,783,734 is recommended for the Development Committee which represents an decrease of £427,386 or 2.11% on 2010/11. The main items of expenditure are outlined in the attached Appendix and a summary of some of the proposed priority actions for the Committee,**

which will be funded by the 2011/12 estimates has been circulated to Members. The key drivers to the Departmental Estimates are:

**Uncontrollable costs**

- Superannuation – this cost has been increasing over the past number of years. The estimate for 2011/12 sees an increase of the employer's contribution from 17% to 18% which amounts to £48.5k.
- Employee costs – the increase of £72k represents increments due to movement on scale points and the assumed increase of £250 for staff earning less than £21k (subject to national negotiation).

**Councilwide Savings** – the savings of £418,920 were identified by the Department for its 2011/12 efficiency programme.

**Departmental Savings** – during the rate setting exercise further savings of £129k were identified through the departmental income maximisation and cost reduction programmes and these are incorporated within the 2011/12 estimates.

**Community Services** continues to work with community groups, organisations and citizens to build community capacity and to offer front line services and advice to the community sector. Continued alignment of budgets to actual costs incurred and in service efficiencies have meant that the budget for 2011/12 has been reduced by £13k despite certain uncontrollable increases in areas such as employee and utility costs.

During 2011/12 both the Waterfront and Ulster Halls will continue to provide world class entertainment and conference facilities that will help promote the cultural and economic regeneration of Belfast and so contribute to the economic benefit of not only the City but the region as a whole. Together with the City Events Unit, this service has decreased the budget by £51k.

The Economic Initiatives budget has been reduced by £168k. The departmental budget reviews including the efficiency and the income maximisation and cost reduction programmes have been able to identify savings which enable the inclusion of the new Local Tourism Destinations project (£120k) whilst still providing the reduction of £168k. The Tourism, Culture & Arts Unit programme reflects priorities identified through the

**Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework which has been developed in partnership with the NI Tourist Board and through the Integrated Cultural Strategy, which has been developed in partnership with the Arts Council NI. Reductions of £141k were implemented from the efficiency programme and included the removal of fixed term posts, reduction of travel budgets and reductions in consultancy through carrying out more work internally. A further reduction was also enabled through the additional income from both Markets and Tourism. These reductions will not impact on the delivery of the Economic Initiatives service plan, nor impact on the funding of any existing programmes.**

**The budget for Directorate is reduced by £195k. This is also due to departmental budget reviews which aligned budget to actual spend and the incorporation of efficiencies. These savings are incorporated into the Policy, SNAP, European, City Development and Directorate Units without adverse effect on the activity planned for 2011/12.**

**Work is ongoing on a communication statement on key messages for the rates announcement which will be discussed further at the Strategic Policy and Resources meeting on 21 January.**

#### **Recommendation**

**The Committee is requested to note the contents of the report and agree the cash limit for the Development Committee for 2011/2012 as £19,783,734.”**

The Director of Finance and Resources outlined the factors which had been taken into consideration in the preparation of the estimates and highlighted the costs which had contributed to a Departmental decrease of 2.11% from the previous year. She informed the Members that on 7th January the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee had agreed that the cash limit for the Development Committee should be £19,783,734. She then answered questions which were put to her by the Members.

Following further discussion, the Committee agreed unanimously that its cash limit for the 2011/2012 financial year be £19,783,734 and approved the allocation of resources as set out in the undernoted Appendix:



APPENDIX

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MAIN ITEMS OF ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE 2011/12

	Net Expenditure 2010/11 £	Net Expenditure 2011/12 £
<u>Community Services</u>	5,593,960	5,580,620
<u>City Events and Venues</u>	4,178,561	4,127,505
Waterfront/Ulster Halls	2,472,046	2,424,990
City Events	1,706,515	1,702,515
<u>Economic Initiatives Section</u>	6,362,568	6,194,570
Tourism, Culture and Arts	4,116,955	4,091,640
Economic Development	1,200,169	1,127,305
Planning and Transport	892,419	880,672
Planning and Development	153,025	94,953
<u>Directorate</u>	4,076,030	3,881,039
Development Directorate	1,891,213	1,865,188
City Development	904,698	877,574
Policy & Research	592,129	535,838
SNAP	397,304	356,032
European Unit	290,686	246,407
TOTAL	20,211,120	19,783,734

Ballymacarrett Recreation Centre: Management Arrangements

(Mr. J. Walsh, Legal Services Manager, and Mr. J. Nelson, Community Services Area Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1     Relevant Background Information**

**1.1     At its meeting on 6 December 2010, Members asked for further information to inform their consideration of the most appropriate mechanism for the future management arrangements in respect of the Ballymacarrett Recreation Centre. Legal Services were asked to comment on the legal implications of the review outcome, and associated options and information was requested in relation to the level of officer support provided to Connswater Community & Leisure Services Ltd.**

**2     Key Issues**

**2.1     Legal Services**

**Belfast City Council entered into a Lease with the Connswater Community and Leisure Services Limited (CCLS) for a three year Term commencing on 20 February 2006. The Lease allowed for a further extension to that three year Term for a further period of three years, on the basis that there was no breach or subsisting breach of Covenant as at 20 February 2009 after the initial three year Term had passed.**

**2.2     There are also provisions within the Lease such that if the Lessee (Connswater Community and Leisure Services Ltd) wished to remain on the premises for a further three years, notice was to be given to the Council to that effect, such notice being given not less than two, nor more than six months before the expiry of the Term granted under the Lease (i.e. the three year Term from 20 February 2006 until 20 February 2009 which would mean the notice would need to be served somewhere between 20 August 2008 and 20 December 2008).**

**2.3     This was not done, as one of the key members of the Group died. However, it was decided to permit the Group to remain in the facility under the terms of an extension to the Lease by way of Heads of Terms dated 24 November 2009.**

**2.4     Under the Heads of Terms it sets out that the Council agreed to an extension of the Lease for a further 12 month period with a review taking place after six months i.e. in and around mid 2010. The Heads of Terms further state that if the Review is successful, that a further Lease extension would be offered to the Group for a further period, to expire no later than the three year extension to the Lease as originally anticipated, namely 19 February 2012.**

- 2.5 That Review was commenced in mid 2010 but could not be completed until recently due to the fact that accounts were not available.
- 2.6 Unqualified accounts were received on 10 November 2010, however these accounts have not yet been formally considered and signed by the CCLS Board.
- 2.7 On review of same it appeared that there were a number of items of expenditure within the accounts which would give rise to concern that the Funding Agreement entered into between the Group and the Council had been breached.
- 2.8 The unapproved capital expenditure and volunteer payments are of concern. Moreover, it appears that despite the intervention of the Council and the opportunity for the Group to demonstrate compliance and capacity, the practices previously identified as improper have persisted to the extent that Members should question whether it would be appropriate to grant any further lease or funding. Whilst the issues identified initially might rather kindly, be characterized as naïve, the fact that the practices continued must give rise to a question as a matter of law as to whether the grant of any further lease or funding would be reasonable.
- 2.9 In the context of previous discussions of Committee, there may be a desire to see continuity of service provision. This of course needs to be balanced against the identified issues of capacity and potential financial impropriety.
- 2.10 The following options are those which should be considered:
1. To affirm the previous decision of the Committee of an orderly wind down of services, facilitated by the Council, and investigate alternative uses for the site.
  2. To continue service provision facilitated (as at present) through the Council, allowing time to engage with the group in terms of capacity building with a view to ascertaining in five months whether the Group has the necessary skill sets to deliver services and run the centre and its affairs in a proper and efficient manner.
- 2.11 If option 2 is adopted the Group should be required to replace the current Board. The issues regarding expenditure should be deferred to PSNI for investigation.

**2.12 Officer Supervision and Support**

As noted, Connswater Community and Leisure Services Ltd took over the management of Ballymacarrett Recreation Centre in February 2006 on the basis of a three year lease. Since then, Council has provided regular Community Development Worker support to this group to assist with its new responsibilities.

**2.13** Officers were aware that the management of the centre was a big undertaking for the group and that the transition from being a small neighbourhood group to being a larger Community/leisure provider with a substantial building to manage, would not be easy. One of the groups strengths was that they had a highly committed and motivated manager who had around him a committed team of volunteers who were determined to provide an effective local service.

**2.14** They did however need to develop:

- their management capacity at director level
- Their volunteer base
- Their marketing strategy

**2.15** To support the group in these areas, the Community Development Worker (CDW) organised visits with other similar facilities across the city to share learning and practice.

**2.16** In addition CDW support was put in place, initially to meet with the centre manager on a weekly basis. These meetings were developed in order to fulfil 2 functions:

- To address immediate issues/difficulties/ questions
- To develop the capacity of the group and to ensure that the structures and skills were in place to meet the governance requirements. This development support started by going through the guidelines and ensuring they were understood and the group were compliant with the requirements in relation to
  - A well run, accountable and capable community group, &
  - Accounting for Funding from Belfast City Council

- 2.17 In addition, information and guidance checklists were provided in the form of the DSD document **Setting Standards, Improving Performance – Best Practice in Finance and Governance in the Voluntary and Community Sector**.
- 2.18 Subsequent to this initial support, a 6 month review of the operation of Ballymacarrett Recreation Centre by CC&L Ltd was undertaken, concentrating around the area of governance. It looked specifically at:
- Accountability
  - Management structures and processes
  - Financial management
  - Centre usage and promotion
  - Complaints received
  - Wider community links
  - Difficulties experienced and positive solutions
- 2.19 It was felt that following this review, the group still needed to be supervised and supported, therefore the CDW support was extended until June 2007.
- 2.20 The total duration of the officer support was therefore for a period of 17 months. For the first year this support was on a weekly basis but as skills and confidences developed it was reduced at the start of February 2007 to fortnightly. While open to the whole Board, these meetings took place with John Cochrane the centre manager at that time and they considered all aspects of support including addressing areas of weakness as identified in the review.
- 2.21 Due to ongoing monitoring and relationship management, in April 2008 the Community Services Area Manager (CSAM) became aware of and started to address internal difficulties between the Directors and the Centre manager/MARA reps. As a result CDW support was again initiated for the group in the form of monitoring and advice to address this issue. In May 2008 following meetings with both parties, internal issues appeared 'resolved'.
- 2.22 Unfortunately in June 2008 four Directors, i.e. the Chair, Treasurer and 2 Business reps, resigned from the board. As a direct result, the CSAM and CDW support continued until the end September 2008 and this included the organisation of an AGM at which the election of new Directors took place. The importance of good governance arrangements was emphasised to the committee and reassurance was given by the centre manager that their difficulties had been overcome.

- 2.23 In February 2009, officers tabled a report to committee outlining the groups request for an extension of their lease. The officer recommendation was to facilitate a 1 year extension and conduct a review of management capacity after the initial 6 months. Officers suggested further capacity support given the recent loss of the volunteer centre manager. This support was not formally requested by the group and the proposed additional resource investment was questioned by Members at the Development committee. It was therefore decided that no extra support would be provided, unless requested by the group.
- 2.24 Monitoring of the group was therefore maintained at the same level as for other Independently Managed Centres. It is important to note that all previous support would be in excess of that normally allocated to BCC centres which are managed by Independent groups under contract.
- 2.25 CSAM support and advice was maintained on a monthly basis and whenever it was requested.
- 2.26 In line the previous committee decision and the signing of the Heads of Terms lease agreement in November 2009, officers initiated a Gate 5 review. The review was conducted by an internal officer team drawn from Property & Projects, Legal Services, Audit Governance & Risk Services (AGRS) and with direct CSAM involvement. It included active assessment and liaison with the new centre manager, Treasurer and the Directors.
- 2.27 The group had failed to meet their monitoring requirements in relation to 2009/10 financial support within the agreed time-frame and so to assist this process, CDW monitoring support was again put in place during September and October 2010 to facilitate this process and to support CCLS to meet their outstanding monitoring requirements and inform the committee paper.
- 2.28 In advance of the December committee report, there was no direct request from the group for the current board members to receive dedicated capacity building on governance matters and as a result they have not been in receipt of governance training. The group has since asked that the council consider conducting a training needs analysis and providing associated training.

- 2.29 The grant funding agreement with the independently managed centres allows for expenditure in relation to staff salaries and formal board training and development programmes to meet identified needs as supported by a business plan.

3 **Resource Implications**

- 3.1 As per the agreed interim arrangement, BCC officers are managing ongoing service provision on site. Any programme and additional staff costs are being charged to the 2010/11 grant allocation. All income is managed by BCC staff.

4 **Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

- 4.1 There are no related equality or Good Relations considerations

5 **Recommendations**

- 5.1 The Committee is asked to consider the noted additional information and agree the most appropriate future management option for the Ballymacarrett Recreation Centre.

6 **Decision Tracking**

Cate Taggart will action the Committee decision.

7 **Key to Abbreviations**

CDW – Community Development Worker  
DSD – Department for Social Development  
CSAM – Community Services Area Manager  
AGRS – Audit Governance & Risk Services  
CCLS – Connswater Community and Leisure Services Ltd  
MARA – Mersey Street Area Residents Association”

Councillor Kyle tabled for the consideration of the Committee a letter which he had received from the Honorary Treasurer of Connswater Community and Leisure Services Limited which provided an overview of the measures which had been implemented to address a number of issues of concern regarding the governance and financial arrangements of the Centre.

With the permission of the Chairman, Councillor Jones addressed the Committee and suggested that the report submitted to the Committee had not reflected the recent changes which had taken place within the management and governance arrangements at the Centre.

After a lengthy discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor J. Rodgers,  
Seconded by Councillor Rodway,

That the Committee agrees to extend, for a period of six months, the existing interim management arrangements at Ballymacarrett Recreational Centre, subject to the following conditions:

- (i) That no lease or contract be offered to Connswater Community and Leisure Services Limited;
- (ii) That the current support provided by officers of the Council would remain in place throughout that period;
- (iii) That a Development Plan be drawn-up for the Group which would include a training plan to increase the group's capacity;
- (iv) That, as part of the Development Plan, the Board of Directors of the Group consider strengthening their membership;
- (v) That the Group consider the holding of an Extraordinary General Meeting during that period;
- (vi) That a detailed Business Plan be drawn up for 2011/12, which would include outline plans for the following two years;
- (vii) That appropriate financial management and monitoring arrangements be put in place following consultation with the Council's Legal Services Section and Audit Governance and Risk Services;
- (viii) That issues involving potential inappropriate expenditure be brought to the attention of the Police Service of Northern Ireland; and
- (ix) That, at the end of this period, an assessment of the Group's progress be carried out and a report thereon, which would include a number of recommendations, be submitted to the Committee for consideration.

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



### **St. George's Sunday Market**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**"1 Relevant Background Information**

**1.1 St George's Sunday Market Review**

Members will be aware of a report taken to Committee in April 2010 requesting permission to operate a Sunday Market in St George's Market. In June 2010 permission was granted by Council for a trial of 3 months, commencing July and ending September 2010, an extension of which was granted in October until the end of January 2011.

1.2 The Sunday market differs from the Friday and Saturday Markets. Friday is the traditional variety market, Saturday is the traditional Food Market while Sunday is predominantly arts and crafts, with a small mixture of food and antiques. The Sunday market lay out is similar to that of the Saturday lay out, with an emphasis on several seating areas for customers/visitors to relax, enjoy the atmosphere and browse the various stalls at their leisure.

1.3 The weekly live entertainment is another attraction and assists in promoting new local bands willing to entertain.

**2 Key Issues**

**2.1 St George's Sunday Market Review**

Although starting at a traditionally quiet period for markets in Northern Ireland, due to summer holidays and other summer events held throughout the region, the Sunday market has performed well. Since October it has continued to attract new traders, as well as a new and steady customer base.

2.1 Stalls allocated each Sunday have continued to be above the required number of 120 stalls each week. This has ensured that operational costs are covered. On average 145 stalls are allocated each Sunday with up to 168 stalls allocated on occasion, with an average weekly income of £2,000. A positive point is that even on one of the worst days of the recent weather (Sunday 19 December) 96 traders turned up to trade, taking up a total of 128 stalls. The Markets unit continues to receive application forms from new potential traders on a regular basis and is steadily building a waiting list for the Sunday market.

2.2 Customer numbers attending the Sunday Market continue to be steady, August survey figures indicated approx 2500 customers, November/December survey figures indicated just over 3000 customers.

2.3 The November/December customer survey results so far indicate:

94% of customers stated that visiting St George's Sunday Market was the being the main reason for them being there

98% That the Sunday Market met or exceeded their expectations

2.4 The Sunday traders consider that many of the visitors and customers are now regular faces, with new customers being added weekly. Traders have also noted a regular turn out of tourists to the market. The traders also consider the new Sunday Market has not had any effect on the current customer/visitor numbers at the Friday or Saturday Markets.

2.5 Millward Brown Ulster on behalf of Belfast City Council has carried out an economic impact assessment on all the markets; including trader and customer surveys during November/December 2010 and January 2011. Full details of these results will be available later this month.

The November/December trader survey results so far indicate:

96% agree Sunday market should be made permanent

82% agree the range of goods available at the Sunday market should be expanded

84% agree there should be an increase in advertising and marketing of the Sunday market

92% agree if the Sunday market was made permanent they would commit to trading every Sunday

96% agree having live music at the Sunday market is a good idea

90% satisfied with current opening hours of 10.00am – 4.00pm

2.6 There are a number of new start businesses that have started due to new traders attending the Sunday market. These consist of mainly craft traders with some new food traders.

- 2.7 The traders and their representatives are keen to seek Council permission for the Sunday market to be a permanent fixture. Whilst there is uncertainty over the Sunday markets future, some traders attend other events as well, and that may continue until such times as a decision has been made by Council on the Sunday Market. They believe that with a permanent Sunday Market to promote, the current and any potential new traders would become more committed.
- 2.8 The St George's Market Traders' Committee will present their members' views, on the Sunday Market to Committee tonight.
- 3 **Resource Implications**
- 3.1 Operational Costs approximately £1550 per week exceeded by income from Sunday Market
- 4 **Equality and Good Relations Considerations**
- 4.1 There are no equality and good relations considerations attached to this report.
- 5 **Recommendation**
- 5.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider approval for the continuance of the Sunday Market in St George's as a permanent fixture in the Markets' Calendar subject to a positive review in one years time."

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

### **Christmas Lights Programme 2011**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

- "1 **Relevant Background Information**
- 1.1 At December's full Council meeting, Members requested that a report be taken to the Development Committee on the above matter. This report highlights the salient issues connected to the programme in 2010 and seeks guidance and approval from Councillors on planning and concepts for 2011.

**2 Key Issues**

**2.1 Popularity of the Christmas Lights Switch-on**

The level of public interest in this event has developed to the point that the 'switching-on' of the Belfast Christmas lights is seen by many as the 'official start' of the Christmas period. In 2010 Members agreed that the event be moved to a Saturday evening and for the second year running, the event content was designed specifically for families with young primary school children. The event, which took place on Saturday 20 November from 6.00–7.00 pm, was promoted in partnership between the Council, Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau (BVCB) and Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) retailer campaigns. It also coincided with the opening of the Christmas Continental Market. In terms of historical data it is estimated that in 2010 the Continental Market along with a series of carol and Christmas musical events, run by the Council, attracted in excess of 800,000 attendees, with Christmas Lights event attracting an audience in excess of 8,500.

**2.2 Event Management of the Christmas Lights Switch-on**

Security around this year's event was very successful but required 70 stewards, 18 BCC community safety officers and 100 police officers to ensure there was no repeat of the public disorder of the previous year. As part of the consideration of the appropriateness of the lights switch on event in its current format as a large scale public event, Members are asked to take into account the level of resources that was required this year and will be required again in future years.

**2.3 Continental Market Opening**

The Christmas market was opened immediately post the switch-on event. This created a number of logistical challenges mainly due to large crowd numbers trying to access the grounds of City Hall simultaneously, resulting in considerable queuing and crowd pressures both within and outside the market. Therefore, should the switch-on event for 2011 continue as per the 2010 event, the opening, crowd management and general access and egress into the market will need to be reassessed and any issues addressed.

**2.4 Traffic Management**

Thanks to work with Department for Regional Development (DRD) Road Service, Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and Translink there were no major traffic management concerns. However, the space used for the event remains challenging for any major event due to the volume of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

**2.5 Christmas Lighting and Signage**

In 2010 BCC spent £53,194.70 on lighting and signage of the City Hall and its grounds. This included the installation of the main tree; renewal of pea-lighting on some of the City Hall lime trees; lighting effects on the façade including a 'Merry Christmas' and 'B Festive' signs. In relation to the wider city centre area Members are asked to note that the BCC does not manage nor financially contribute to its festive lighting. This is managed by BCCM and BCTC with support funding from DSD and retailers.

**2.6 External Advice**

The selection of a Saturday evening has been endorsed by members of BCC's Events Advisory Panel (EAP) at a post Christmas Lights wash-up meeting. This meeting has input from BCCM/BCTC, PSNI, DRD Roads Service, BCC Environmental Services, BCC Corporate Communications and key external contractors. Overall this group was happy with Christmas Lights event on a Saturday evening.

2.7 However, PSNI have flagged up the issue of resources required to police any planned event and have requested further meetings to address the issue of managing large numbers of young people who congregate in the city centre during the event.

**3 Resource Implications**

3.1 In 2010 the total cost of the overall Christmas programme was £155,000. As stated, this included the Christmas Lights event; festive lighting on and around City Hall and schools choir concert at the Belfast Waterfront. A breakdown of this cost is as follows:

Christmas Lights Switch-on event	£83,625.26
Christmas Lighting	£53,194.70
Schools Carol Concert	£11,097.00
Marketing	£5,850.00
Contingency	£1,233.04
Total	£155,000.00

- 3.2 In 2011 it is proposed that this budget would decrease to £138,000. This figure is subject to full Council approval of budgets for 2011/12. The stated £17,000 saving will be made by deferring work on festive lighting and not renewing some festive features within the domain of the Council.

4 **Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

None.

5 **Recommendations**

5.1 That Members agree:

- the staging of the Christmas Lights event on Saturday 19 November 2011, from 6 to 7 pm, subject to PSNI input.
- to review the official opening of the Christmas continental market in conjunction with the Christmas Lights Switch on event and its related crowd management issues
- to the repetition of the 2010 festive lighting on and around City Hall

6 **Decision Tracking**

Officers will report back to Members, details of the proposed Christmas programme post Council approval of the City Events Unit's 2011/12 budget.

7 **Key to Abbreviations**

BCC – Belfast City Council  
BCCM - Belfast City Centre Management  
BCTC – Belfast Chamber of Trade and Commerce  
BVCB - Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau  
DRD – Department of Regional Development  
PSNI – Police Service of Northern Ireland  
TSG – Tactical Support Group”

With the permission of the Chairman, Councillor Smyth informed the Committee that it had been brought to his attention in early December that the sign which read 'Happy Christmas' had been placed at the east side of the City Hall and not at the front where he had understood it would be erected. He stated that it was only after contacting the Chief Executive in relation to this matter that the 'Happy Christmas' sign was moved to the front of the building, replacing the sign which read 'Be Festive'. He requested an assurance that, in future years, the 'Happy Christmas' message would be given prominence at the front of the building.

During further discussion, a number of Members expressed concerns in relation to the prolonged period during which the City Hall grounds had been closed to the public during the set-up and dismantling of the Christmas Market. Further concerns were expressed regarding the fact that the switching-on of the Christmas lights had coincided with the official opening of the Market and the general crowd management issues which had arisen. In addition, a number of Members referred to the need for additional vermin control measures to be put in place.

The Head of City Events and Venues pointed out that the placing of the 'Happy Christmas' sign at the east side of the City Hall had arisen due to an oversight and that the sign would in future years be placed at the front of the building. In addition, the Head of Economic Initiatives outlined the health and safety considerations which had led to the prolonged closure of the City Hall grounds during the erection and dismantling of the Christmas Market and agreed to address the issues which had been raised by the Members.

After discussion, the Committee noted the comments of the Head of City Events and Venues and the Head of Economic Initiatives and adopted the recommendations.

#### **Presentations Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau and Belfast City Centre Management**

The Committee agreed to receive, at a special meeting to be held in February, presentations from representatives of the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau and Belfast City Centre Management in respect of both organisations' proposed business plans for 2011-2012.

#### **Support for Sport - Event Funding**

The Committee deferred, until its meeting scheduled to be held on 9th February, consideration of a report in respect of requests for assistance which had been received under the Support for Sport Scheme.

#### **Northern Ireland Affairs Committee: Northern Ireland as an Enterprise Zone**

The Committee was advised that the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee at Westminster had, on 15th December, announced that it would be undertaking an Inquiry into Northern Ireland's designation as an Enterprise Zone. The Inquiry would examine a range of issues with a view to publishing a report towards the end of 2011 on the future re-balancing of the Northern Ireland economy. It was pointed out that written evidence to the Inquiry was to be submitted not later than Friday, 21st January.

The Committee agreed that a workshop be held to formulate a response for submission to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee.

### **Belfast City Masterplan: Review**

The Committee agreed that individual Party Group briefings be held in respect of the review of the Belfast City Masterplan prior to a draft response document being submitted to the Development Committee.

### **Mixed Martial Arts Competition - Ulster Hall**

The Head of City Events and Venues advised the Committee that a request to host a mixed martial arts competition in the Ulster Hall in May had been received from Clan War Promotions. He provided an overview of the proposed competition and requested that, since the Ulster Hall had not previously hosted an event of this nature, the Committee consider whether it would be appropriate to approve the request.

The Committee granted approval for the holding of the event, and future mixed martial arts events, subject to the events being in line with the Waterfront and Ulster Hall operating guidelines.

### **Review of Enterprise Agencies: Publication of Report**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

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

**1.1 In late 2009, Invest NI commissioned BDO to carry out a review of the Local Enterprise Agency (LEA) Network. Members may be aware that there are six LEAs in Belfast which are members of the umbrella group Enterprise Northern Ireland (ENI). These are:**

- East Belfast Enterprise
- North City Business Centre
- Ormeau Business Park
- Ortus
- Townsend Enterprise Park
- Workwest.

**1.2 These agencies provide workspace for a range of small businesses. They are also involved in the delivery of a range of business support services, including the mainstream business start up programme – Enterprise Development Programme – which is contracted by Invest NI.**

**1.3 There are also a number of enterprise agencies which are not part of the network as well as privately-run business centres which do not come under the ENI umbrella.**



## **2     Key Issues**

**2.1     The purpose of the LEA review was to consider a number of issues, namely:**

- The origins and historical development of the LEA network
- The current situation
- The impact of RPA in LEAs
- LEAs' future role
- What success will look like
- Recommendations on next steps.

**2.2     The report was overseen by a steering committee comprising representatives from the LEA network, LED forum (council representatives), Enterprise Northern Ireland and Invest NI.**

**The methodology for the work comprised four key stages including:**

- 1.   Why were LEAs established**
- 2.   How successful have they been?**
- 3.   How will LEAs succeed under RPA**
- 4.   What needs to change – and how?**

**2.4     In the course of this work, Minister Poots confirmed that the RPA process as planned would not proceed. However the report took account of the general commitment by Invest NI to ensure that local authorities were placed at the 'hub of the wheel' in terms of local enterprise support – regardless of whether or not RPA progressed – and suggested that it was important to create 'an effective enterprise pipeline...where LEAs support local council imperatives, which in turn align with the Invest NI strategy – where LEAs stimulate entrepreneurship at a local level in support of local council economic development activity, who in turn ensure a "pull through" of indigenous, export-oriented, growth businesses to avail of Invest NI assistance'.**

**2.5     The report concluded with a number of recommendations regarding the future of the enterprise agencies and the agency network. These included:**

- Need to embrace a development vision and plan to respond to the findings of the study. In particular, challenges were identified around the topics of the LEA 'USP', product and service offering, corporate governance and stakeholder engagement

- Need for LEAs to reconnect with their original ethos and re-invent for tomorrow's entrepreneur. The report identified a degree of 'drift' from the original ethos and suggested that it would be important for the network to apply its original values to the current and anticipated needs of local entrepreneurs in a way that not only engages them but also demonstrates best practice and takes account of creating greater synergy
- Need for LEAs to engage with Enterprise NI in a debate and discussion about structures, roles and responsibilities to underpin success. The report provides a development framework for the network and suggested that ENI commits to delivering on this in order to secure the future role and development of the LEAs.

- 2.6 In response to the report, ENI produced an appendix in which they noted that they accepted the challenges raised and committed the network to working with enterprise support stakeholders to provide best value support interventions. The network also called on government not to reduce its support for small business development in the current economic climate and drew attention to its particular expertise in this regard. A copy of the full report is available from the Economic Development Unit.
- 2.7 Since the completion of the report, ENI have sought to engage with councils on a regional level in order to explore opportunities for collaborative business development support. At a Belfast level, we have been engaging with the Belfast agencies in order to deliver joint enterprise events and to promote good news stories around new business starts.
- 2.8 In light of Invest NI support for collaborative working in the enterprise development field, there has been significant engagement between the council(s) and Invest NI in recent months to agree on a range of business support activities which will help existing businesses become more competitive, particularly focusing on increasing exports outside of the region. Invest NI have indicated that they will match-fund some of these activities, with additional funding available through the EU Structural Funds programmes. This will mean that £1 committed by councils will attract £3 match funding from other agencies. While the LEA network may be involved in the delivery of some of these activities, they will have to engage in a public procurement exercise and therefore cannot be guaranteed that they will be the successful bidder.

2.9 In the absence of any contractual arrangements, we will continue to work with the collective LEA network in Belfast – and with individual LEAs – in order to ensure a more coordinated approach to enterprise development in the city, particularly in the current climate.

3 **Resource Implications**

3.1 **Financial**

No specific financial implications at this stage.

3.2 **Human Resources**

Ongoing engagement between Economic Development Unit team and LEAs/Invest NI.

4 **Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

4.1 Any potential programmes will be equality proofed as part of the funding approval process.

5 **Recommendation**

5.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the completion of the LEA review report and its key conclusions.

6 **Decision Tracking**

No specific decision tracking required.

7 **Key to Abbreviations**

ENI – Enterprise Northern Ireland  
LEA – Local Enterprise Agency  
RPA – Review of Public Administration”

The Committee adopted the recommendation.

**Review of Planning Policy Statement 11 –  
Planning and Waste Management**

The Committee considered the undernoted report and agreed that the attached comments, as set out in Appendix 1, be forwarded to the Department of the Environment as the Council’s response to the consultation document. In addition, the Committee endorsed Appendix 2 of the report, which was a response to the document as prepared by the arc21 organisation:

**“1     Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1     On 22 November 2010, the Minister of the Environment announced a review of PPS 11 Planning and Waste Management and comments are now being invited regarding the existing policies, their operation and whether they might be improved.**
- 1.2     PPS 11 sets out the Department's planning policies for the development of waste management facilities. It includes guidance on the issues likely to be considered in the determination of planning applications. In addition, it explains the relationship between the planning system and authorities responsible for the regulation and management of waste.**
- 1.3     Waste is an important statutory service which Councils have to provide and in addition Councils could be fined should it fail to meet targets to minimise the amount of waste sent to landfill. The fines arise from the EC Landfill Directive which has set stringent national targets for the diversion of biodegradable waste for each Member State and is backed up by national targets and legislation. Failure by a Council in Northern Ireland to meet its targets would expose it to the risk of £150 per tonne fines per biodegradable tonne in-filled above its baseline allowance, unless it could demonstrate that it had taken ‘best endeavours’ to divert this material.**

**2     Key Issues**

- 2.1     The Draft Response attached in Appendix 1 takes account of the issues and comments raised in the consideration of waste issues during the draft BMAP process along with responses from internal consultation with Council departments. An arc21 response to the PPS11 review has also been produced on behalf of the eleven Councils that it represents in the Eastern Region. The Waste Management Service of Belfast City Council has contributed to this response, which is attached in Appendix 2.**
- 2.2     The Council welcomes the opportunity to present views regarding the existing PPS 11 and how it can be reviewed and enhanced.**
- 2.3     The Council recognises that a significant number, range and type of waste management facilities are needed in Northern Ireland to manage municipal, commercial and industrial waste. To achieve the targets, a reduction in the amount of**

waste produced will be required in conjunction with a significant increase in the waste management infrastructure. The Council considers the planning system as having a crucial role in ensuring that the hierarchy of waste infrastructure is delivered to allow waste management targets to be met.

- 2.4 There are three general categories of facilities ranging from the regional, local to the neighbourhood or community level which requires a differentiated approach to their land use implications. The review of PPS 11 should provide clarification to approaches and procedures for location of the hierarchy of waste management infrastructure. The Council would request further consideration is given to site selection and locational criteria to provide greater certainty for the provision of waste infrastructure.
- 2.5 The Council would seek to ensure that Waste Management Facilities are appropriately located so that they do not cause a statutory nuisance and/or pose an unacceptable risk to human health. The Council supports the criteria in Policy WM1 'the proposal will not cause demonstrable harm to human health or result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment'.
- 2.6 However, the Council would like to note that neighbourhood/ community facilities such as civic amenity sites, recycling centres, recycling points and other types of facilities should be integral parts of existing and planned developments. Proposals for Neighbourhood/ Community facilities should be permitted within new housing schemes, at major developments used by the public, and in appropriate locations where the environment and amenity of local residents can be adequately protected.
- 2.7 Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO)

The Council would request further clarification on the use of Best Practicable Environmental Option procedure and Strategic Environmental Assessment. Waste facilities ranging from the regional to the neighbourhood or community level require a differentiated approach to their land use implications and the Council considers that the BPEO procedure is not applicable to smaller scale facilities. The Council notes that in other jurisdictions in the UK, the BPEO procedure has been replaced by the application of SEAs. The Council would prefer clarification of the process with the use of SEAs or in the case of the retention of the BEPO procedure clearer guidance will be required on its scope and application.

## **2.8 Role of PPS**

The Council requests clarification on the format and role of the revised PPS 11. The Planning Reform consultation proposed that planning policy statements would be brief strategic documents with operational issues being dealt with in the local development plan. The Council expressed concerns on the limited and inadequate waste policy contained in draft BMAP. The Council would also request the review takes into account the Review of the Waste Management Strategy for Northern Ireland.

### **Resource Implications**

There are no resource implications.

### **Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

There are no equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report.

### **Recommendations**

Members are requested to:

1. Consider and if appropriate endorse the content of the suggested Council response to the PPS 11 review consultation as set out in Appendix 1.
2. Consider and if appropriate endorse the arc21 response set out in Appendix 2. The response was produced on behalf of the eleven Councils that arc 21 represents in the Eastern Region and which the Waste Management Service of Belfast City Council has contributed to.

### **Appendix 1**

#### **Draft Response**

The Council welcomes the opportunity to present views regarding the existing PPS 11 and how it can be reviewed and enhanced. The Council understands that this is an initial consultation but considers the timescale to respond too short. The Council would request that any future consultation period is extended longer than five weeks to ensure effective engagement. In relation to the timing of the PPS11 review process, the Council considers that it should take account of the Review of the Waste Management Strategy for Northern Ireland, (which was originally scheduled for 2010).

An arc21 response to the PPS11 review has also been produced on behalf of the eleven Councils that it represents in the Eastern Region. The Waste Management Service of Belfast City Council has contributed to this response, which is attached in Appendix 2.

#### Site selection criteria

The Council recognises that a significant number, range and type of waste management facilities are needed in Northern Ireland to manage municipal, commercial and industrial waste. To achieve the targets, a reduction in the amount of waste produced will be required in conjunction with a significant increase in the waste management infrastructure. The Council considers the planning system as having a crucial role in ensuring that the hierarchy of waste infrastructure is delivered to allow waste management targets to be met.

There are three general categories of facilities ranging from the regional, local to the neighbourhood or community level which requires a differentiated approach to their land use implications. The review of PPS 11 should provide clarification to approaches and procedures for location of the hierarchy of waste management infrastructure. The Council would request further consideration is given to site selection and locational criteria to provide greater certainty for the provision of waste infrastructure.

During the draft BMAP process, the Council put forward the view that all local development plans must identify appropriate locations required for waste management facilities where possible allocating specific sites and provide a policy framework which facilitates the development of these facilities.

It is noted that Planning Policy Statement 11, Planning and Waste Management (2002) states in relation to Development Plans, as follows: (page 17) '4.1. During the process of development plan preparation, District Council waste management groups may wish to discuss with the Department the likely extent of future waste management facilities for the particular plan area. As a result, particular sites for the development of waste management facilities may be identified together with the need for appropriate waste management facilities associated with new development.'

However draft BMAP made limited reference to waste management facilities and sites in Belfast:

'Belfast City Council own a large landfill site at Dargan Road, which also serves the surrounding Council Areas, which is expected to close in 2006. There are however a number of privately licensed waste disposal sites in the District which substitute the Council site.' (page 320. Part 4 Vol 2).

The Council made representations during the draft BMAP process stating that these requirements for waste management sites during the Plan period are likely to include Energy from Waste plant, mechanical / biological treatment plant, anaerobic digestion plant, and in vessel composting provision. In addition, provision is required for transfer stations, recycling and localised composting.

Limited sites have been identified in draft BMAP, therefore it is important that consideration is given to further site selection and locational criteria in Planning Policy Statement 11. This would include the need to separate incompatible land uses.

The need for clarity in the context of planning policy in the area of waste management is essential given the urgent imperative to comply with the relevant European and National environmental legislation

#### **Policy WM1**

The Council would seek to ensure that Waste Management Facilities are appropriately located so that they do not cause a statutory nuisance and/or pose an unacceptable risk to human health. The Council supports the criteria in Policy WM1 'the proposal will not cause demonstrable harm to human health or result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment'.

However, the Council would like to note that Neighbourhood/ Community facilities such as civic amenity sites, recycling centres, recycling points and other types of facilities should be integral parts of existing and planned developments. Proposals for Neighbourhood/ Community facilities will be permitted within new housing schemes, at major developments used by the public, and in appropriate locations where the environment and amenity of local residents can be adequately protected

#### **Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO)**

The Council would request further clarification on the use of Best Practicable Environmental Option procedure and Strategic Environmental Assessment. There are waste facilities ranging from the regional to the neighbourhood or community level which require a differentiated approach to their land use implications. The Council considers that the BPEO procedure is not applicable to smaller scale facilities. The Council notes that other jurisdictions in the UK, the BPEO procedure has been replaced by the application of SEAs. The Council would prefer clarification of the process with the use of SEAs or in the case of the retention of the BEPO procedure clearer guidance is required on its scope and application.



### Role of PPS

The Council requests clarification on the format and role of the revised PPS 11. Planning reform consultation proposed that planning policy statements would be brief strategic documents with operational issues being dealt with in the local development plan. The Council would support the development of locally appropriate guidance and policies for Belfast.

### Environmental Protection Issues

Under the Public Health (Ireland) Act 1878 the Council investigates and, if deemed necessary, takes action over any statutory nuisance and/or accumulations that are injurious to human health. As a key consultee to the Planning Service, the Council also ensures that matters relating to noise, air quality and land contamination are given due consideration during the planning process. During this process additional supporting documentation (contaminated land risk assessments, noise assessments, air quality impact assessments, etc) may be requested. The Council are then in a position to recommend necessary conditions be attached to any planning permission granted in order to protect human health. The Council therefore has experience of addressing nuisance and human health issues relating to waste management developments both through the enforcement route and through the planning process.

The Council considers the safe, sustainable and appropriate management of waste and its supporting infrastructure is critically important. The over-riding consideration by the Council is that Waste Management Facilities are appropriately located so that they do not cause a statutory nuisance and/or pose an unacceptable risk to human health. The Council therefore requests that the Key Principles listed in Paragraph 1.16 remain and that greater emphasis is placed on statements such as that contained with Paragraph 1.19 'Protecting the environment and human health are key principles in considering the development of waste management facilities or assessing other development in the vicinity of such facilities.'

Paragraph 1.19 suggests that the Department will take into account the most up-to-date research relating to waste management conducted by 'responsible government agencies.' The Council would support this consideration of the ever changing and developing science surrounding this subject but would also recommend the inclusion of research from other established and responsible bodies such as Universities, associations and NGOs.

Paragraph 2.4. The Council understands that the Department must make its planning decisions on the basis that pollution control regimes are properly applied and enforced. However, the Department must be aware that the Council recommendations made during the planning process are based on the assumption that planning enforcement is properly enforced and applied. The non-compliance of conditions on granted development is regularly encountered by the Council and the ability to ensure that they are enforced is severely constrained.

Paragraph 2.6 and throughout the Statement reference is made to out-of-date legislation. The Council would recommend a review of PPS11 in light of current legislation and their enforcing bodies such as the Revised Waste Framework Directive and the Landfill Directive. Specific consideration of the Environmental Liability (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 is required. In addition the Department may wish to take into account the implications of forthcoming legislation such as Part III of the Waste & Contaminated Land Order 1997 and the Soil Framework Directive.

Paragraph 2.12 encourages close co-operation between the Department and pollution control authorities. The Council is very supportive of this approach and regularly facilitates pre-application discussions with developers. This continual dialogue is always constructive and benefits all parties. Any future Statement must reflect and encourage this approach.

Point 4 of the Policy WM 1 must include vehicle emissions from the associated traffic movements themselves. Belfast has four Air Quality Management Areas declared on the grounds that two air pollutants exceed UK and EU limit values. These exceedances are predominantly as a result of traffic emissions from busy roads. Waste Management infrastructures have the potential to significantly increase traffic movements and pose a risk to the Council's ability to meet its statutory obligations under the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002.

Paragraph 6.3. Environmental Impact Assessments produced under the Planning (EIA) Regulations 1999 assist greatly in the Council ability to ensure that any proposed development does not adversely impact on human health. The requirement for such assessments is therefore a fundamental aspect of any such planning application. However, the Department needs to be aware that additional supporting information maybe required by the Council. For instance, where the proposal is to be located on brownfield land it may pose a risk to the future occupiers of that development and the surrounding environment. In these cases the Council would request that contaminated land risk assessments (in-line with Model

Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR11)) are produced to demonstrate that the site is, or can be made, fit for use. An EIA details the significant environmental effects of the proposed development and the measures required to mitigate those effects. As an EIA only relates to the requirements under the Regulations it may not provide the necessary level of information for the Council to fully determine the condition of a site or its suitability for the proposed end-use. An EIA is, therefore, by itself, no guarantee that the potential for contamination at a brownfield site to affect the proposed development has been fully assessed.

Paragraphs 6.6 to 6.8. The Council would agree with the Department's view that advice and opinions of the Councils should be sought in regards to Health Considerations. However, limited resources and time constraints often hinder truly effective consultations. Consequently, the Council would always recommend timely and thorough consultations prior to any formal application being made and encourage the up-front loading of the necessary supporting information.

Paragraph 6.12. As with the above comments regarding EIAs, applicants and the Department need to be aware that Traffic Impact Assessments do not necessarily provide the Council with the level of information required to assess air quality impacts of proposed developments. For many waste infrastructure applications Air Quality Impact Assessments will be requested. In 2008, the Council produced a guidance document for developers so that they could conduct thorough and defensible assessments to support planning applications. If any mitigation measures are deemed to be necessary then these would be conditioned at approval stage. This guidance document is available at:

<http://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/airquality/AirQualityandLanduseplanning.pdf>

Paragraph 6.19 Noise – The Council agrees that the operation of waste management facilities is likely to produce noise from both inside and outside buildings and that intermittent and sustained operating noise will be of concern if not controlled especially if night-time working is carried out. It will be necessary in almost all cases to impose planning conditions relating to noise levels and also limiting the hours of operation.

Paragraph 6.21/6.22 Dust and odours – Dust and particulates from waste management facilities can be minimised through the use of well maintained and managed equipment and vehicles. At the planning stage conditions requiring operators to prepare a scheme of measures to suppress dust on site will be most necessary.

In relation to odours from a waste management site good practice is normally sufficient to ensure a satisfactory situation. Such good practice requirements are incorporated into the terms of waste licences and relate to such things as design, operation and permitted emissions. Waste management licences are no longer issued by District Councils, currently being issued by the NIEA. As a result District Councils can only influence the terms of a waste licence at the Planning stage which could be summed up as a broad brush approach, the Council would prefer to be involved in the details of drawing up the license.

Paragraph 6.26. In addition to abandoned mines resulting in land instability the Council would add that old landfills, inter-tidal land reclamation and land-raising activities can result in significant land stability issues that require consideration.

The Council is supportive of the principle set out in point 3 of part (c) of Policy WM 2. The re-development of brownfield land is important if a region is to develop without the undue pressure on greenfield sites. However, this re-development must be both appropriate and protective of human health and the wider environment. Demonstrating that this is the case can only be achieved through the production of suitably robust contaminated land risk assessments carried out in-line with the Environment Agency's Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination (CLR11).

#### Paragraph 7.8 Composting

Depending on the scale of the composting scheme there is the potential for the generation of odour, dust, noise and bioaerosols causing problems to nearby residential and commercial properties. Noise and dust can be controlled through operational measures, however odour is not. An odour management plan could be required as part of their planning permission to ensure this issue is properly dealt with and controlled.

Paragraph 7.14. The Department may consider the lack of hazardous waste facilities in Northern Ireland for the management and treatment of significantly contaminated soils arising from brownfield sites. Soils arising from brownfield re-developments often fall into the Hazardous Waste category as defined by the EU Directive 91/689/EEC. The lack of hazardous waste facilities has a significant cost burden on brownfield redevelopment, acting as a potential barrier to the re-development of contaminated sites.

Paragraph 7.17. When considering proposals for incinerators the Council would request detailed air quality impact assessments be provided to demonstrate that the facility has no detrimental impact on air quality and prevent the Council from meeting its obligations under the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002. This information would be best provided up front and after detailed discussion with the Council regarding its proposed methodology prior to any application being made.

Point 1 of part (a) of Policy WM 3. The Council would request that all proposed landfill or land raising facilities have no unacceptable adverse impact on human health that cannot be prevented or appropriately controlled by demonstrably suitable mitigation measures.

With regards to Policy WM 4 the Department may wish to take heed of the recent ruling by the English High Courts in R (Birch) v Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council [2010] EWHC 416.

Paragraph 9.1. The Council would agree that past deposition of reportedly inert waste has been inappropriate. The Council has particular concerns regarding this type of waste disposal activity with regards to the associated and often acute risks to human health. The Council could only recommend approval of such activities if sufficient detailed supporting information was attached to any proposal and, most importantly, any subsequently recommended conditions were rigorously enforced.

The Council is supportive of Policy WM 5 and the Department needs to be aware when considering the location of future waste management facilities that adjoining future developments maybe restrained or curtailed. This factor further strengthens the need for measured and considered locating of future waste management facilities in the first instance. Applicants for developments adjoining such facilities will require additional supporting evidence to support the assertion that future residents will not be adversely impacted. This burden may not be immediately evident to future developers of adjoining sites.

Annex A. The Council regularly recommends detailed development-specific conditions be attached to planning permissions. Each application is considered on its own merits and circumstances. The development of targeted, appropriate and specific conditions is an integral aspect of ensuring that human health is afforded the necessary level of protection. Consequently, the Council is of the opinion that 'model conditions' cannot be written to encompass all circumstances and waste management practices. It is recommended that this approach is strongly avoided by the Department.

Annex C of PPS 11 requires fully updating.

Appendix 2

arc21

**DRAFT CORPORATE RESPONSE TO THE  
REVIEW OF PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT (PPS) 11 –  
PLANNING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Report

The Department is undertaking a review of Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 11 - Planning and Waste Management and have invited comments on existing policies, their operation and how they could be improved.

The arc21 response is as follows.

Executive Summary

We welcome the opportunity to comment on this preliminary consultation on the review of PPS11.

We consider that there is an opportunity to examine the Policy Statement in a more holistic way as we feel that the current PPS focuses too narrowly on issues relating to sites and facilities only.

In this context we would consider it appropriate that the scoping of the Review extends to the following areas:

- The Strategic context and particularly the interaction between EU Waste Law, the Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy, the Regional Development Strategy and the various Area Plans.
- The relationship / interaction / potential for further integration of land-use planning and waste management planning in terms of infrastructural development for waste.
- The timing and sequencing of the outcome to the Planning Policy Statement in relation to the Review of the Waste Management Strategy for Northern Ireland and the sub-regional Waste Management Plans.
- The impact of the Planning Reform Agenda, and transfer of planning function under RPA.
- The relationship between planning and permitting regimes.
- The concept of Best Practicable Environmental Option in the context of the Planning Policy Statement.
- The need to ensure that current policies around site selection do not change.

- The respective roles of district councils and sub-regional waste management groups particularly in relation to the planning / statutory consultation process.
- The potential role of planning gain and / or community infrastructure levy in the context of waste management planning applications.
- The issue of pre-application dialogue / community engagement in the planning process in relation to waste management facilities.
- The stated planning principle of a 'presumption in favour' in the context of the wording of the policies.
- The principles of 'Need' and 'Essential Interim Landfill Capacity' in the Northern Ireland waste management context.
- The interaction with the other Planning Policy Statements, Plans and guidance e.g.:
  - Existing Area and draft Area Plans.
  - PPS3 and PPS7 particularly regarding vehicular access to developments for the purposes of waste management.
  - The relevance to the Renewable Energy Agenda, particularly PPS18 and the Strategic Energy Framework.
  - The significance of waste management in the context of economic development as articulated in PPS4 and Draft PPS24.
  - The relationship with the General Development Order in the context of permitted waste management development.
  - The provisions for waste handling and storage in developments as articulated in the recently issued Local Government Waste Storage Guide.
- Notwithstanding all of the above, we consider that it is critical that the timing, methodology and outcome of the review do not undermine the approaches taken by the Waste Management Groups and their partners in the context of land assembly, procurement and statutory consents, in the interests of maintaining the momentum to deliver mission-critical waste infrastructure. Rather, the process should be designed to reinforce these programmes.

## Discussion

These points are expanded below.

### 1. Strategic Context

We consider that there needs to be a reaffirmation of the strategic context for the Policy Statement with particular reference to the legal imperatives cascading from Europe through the Revised Waste Framework Directive and the Landfill Directive in terms of the need for the provision of waste management plans and an integrated network of critical infrastructure as articulated through the Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy; and the interaction with regional and spatial planning through the Regional Development Strategy and the various Area Plans.

The need for clarity in the context of planning policy in the area of waste management has never been more acute given the urgent imperative to comply with the relevant European and National environmental legislation.

### 2. Land-Use and Waste Management Planning

We consider that there is an opportunity to re-visit the debate around the need or otherwise for the integration of land-use and waste management planning in Northern Ireland as we consider that the separation in policy terms has arguably led to a lack of clarity in the application of spatial planning for waste facilities. It should be noted that the Northern Ireland region takes a somewhat different approach to that in the rest of the UK where spatial plans do address waste management issues in an integrated fashion.

### 3. Timing

As noted in the Minister's recent statement there is a commitment in the 2006 Waste Management Strategy to review PPS11 before the next review of Waste Management Plans in 2011. In addition there is a scheduled review of the Waste Management Strategy itself in 2011. It was hoped that the appropriate sequence would be to revise the PPS before the Strategy and subsequent Waste Management Plan reviews. It is therefore concerning to note that the current consultation is purely primarily scoping and that it is unlikely that the outcome of the review process will be completed before the end of 2011.



4. **Planning Reform and Transfer of Planning Functions**

The Minister has made some recent statements about proposals regarding the implementation of Planning Reform and the Transfer of Planning Functions. It is considered appropriate that the review of the PPS takes cognisance of these proposals in a strategic context.

It is for example considered appropriate that the PPS follows the paradigm recommended in Planning Reform for a more strategic focus to PPS's with operational issues being deferred to Area Plans.

It should also be noted that the Planning Reform Agenda aspires to a more expeditious PPS process. Accordingly, we would express our concern at the likely time horizon for the current process.

We would also recommend that consideration should be given to the relevance of some of the specific waste policies currently contained in the PPS as well as the context presented therein (subject to our comments on WM2 elsewhere). In addition, the commentary of legislative provisions will require updating e.g. rWFD; SEA Directive; Habitats Directive; Environmental Liability Directive.

5. **Planning and Permitting**

One of the main thrusts outlined in section 2 of the current PPS, addressing the relationship between planning and pollution control regimes, in our view remains appropriate. For example, we consider that there may be an opportunity for greater connectivity between the Planning Service and NIEA.

We feel that consideration should be given to improving the content of this section to enhance understanding and application, through the inclusion of some practical examples.

6. **Best Practicable Environmental Option**

In our opinion one of the main technical focuses in the context of the review should be how to address the principle of Best Practicable Environmental Option. There has been much debate and some confusion about the application of the principle of BPEO in planning terms in Northern Ireland. Government BPEO guidance focuses on generic technical solutions. This guidance and approach has been used and developed in the formulation of the Waste Management Plans.

Some statutory agencies, however, appear to seek to interpret BPEO at a site specific level.

Accordingly, we consider it is imperative that the new PPS gives clarity and robustness in this context and is supported by a policy position from the Department.

We consider that otherwise there is a danger of inconsistency of interpretation of BPEO and its application particularly in the context of individual planning submissions.

In our view it is important that the historic strategic application of BPEO by the Waste Management Groups is not undermined.

7. **Site Selection Criteria**

Waste Management Groups (and others) have to date used current location criteria (WM2) to assess sites. It is important that the parameters for this do not change in view of the current Waste Management Groups' procurement and land assembly process.

8. **Respective Roles of District Councils and Sub-Regional Waste Management Groups**

District councils are the competent authorities for waste management functions while sub-regional waste management groups, as voluntary coalitions, have adopted the role of waste planning and delivery vehicles and have also taken on the role of procurement of relevant services and infrastructure.

We consider that there is a need to define the respective roles of district councils and sub-regional waste management groups in the context of the planning and statutory consultation process.

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (Northern Ireland) 2010 clarified the statutory status of the sub-regional Waste Management Groups and their capacities to enter into long-term contracts (with associated commitments) to facilitate the provision of waste related infrastructure.

District councils are statutory consultees but there has in the past been a protocol for also consulting with sub-regional groups in parallel in respect to relevant applications.

9. **Planning Gain / Developer Contributions**

The issues of planning gain / community infrastructure levies are discussed in detail in the Planning Reform document. They are also discussed to some extent in PPS18.

We consider it appropriate in the context of waste management to further expand on this debate as it would relate to waste management, in terms of scoping the current review.

10. **Pre-application Dialogue / Community Engagement**

The pre-application discussion process has already been implemented. We are also cognisant of the focus in the Planning Reform document on community engagement, the relationship with the Public Participation Directive and the underlying Aarhus Convention. We would consider that the scoping exercise should include consideration of these issues as they relate to waste management facilities.

11. **Presumption in Favour**

We are aware of the principle of the 'Presumption in Favour' of the planning applications as a tenet of planning policy in Northern Ireland. In the context of the current PPS we feel that in places the wording of the current policies could lead the reader to make a contrary inference.

We would also consider that some of the terminology around impacts appears to be absolute (i.e. do not always express extent) in terms of mitigation measures. We therefore feel that there is a need to review the language and nomenclature utilised in the current document.

12. **Need and Essential Interim Capacity**

The demonstration of Need is again a principle espoused in planning policy in Northern Ireland, not only for waste management but for many other significant applications. If a proposal is connected to public procurement this can be an issue in terms of potentially having several applications competing for one service. Accordingly, we would recommend that this is included in the scope of the consultation.

We note the policy direction in GB towards a National Policy Statement setting our strategic need for mission-critical waste infrastructure and would support a similar approach in Northern Ireland.

Similarly the principle of Essential Interim Capacity for landfill would appear to us to have less relevance than it did when included in the current PPS. Indeed this seems to us to be inappropriate in a market-driven economy and again we would recommend this is included in the scope.

13. Interaction with Other Policy Statements / Guidance / Area Plans

a. Area Plans

We have concerns that current delays in completing draft Area Plans (which remain material considerations) could create delays in determining regionally significant waste applications due, amongst other things, to the issue of prematurity. Accordingly, we would recommend that this issue is included in the scope of this consultation.

13.2 PPS3 and PPS11

We feel that there is a potential tension between the Quality Initiative and the need for access for service vehicles particularly in residential applications and specifically in the context of waste management collection and servicing. We consider it would be appropriate to include this in the scoping.

13.3 Renewable Energy

We consider that there is an opportunity to optimise waste as a resource in terms of integration of energy and waste management policies in Northern Ireland. We feel this is pertinent in the context of, inter alia, the Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland and the Sustainable Energy Framework. Accordingly, we recommend that the issue of integration of Land-Use, Waste Management and Energy Policy in the planning context is addressed in the consultation with specific reference to PPS18 and the Strategic Energy Framework.

13.4 Relevance to Economic Development

The current debate relating to economic development as it relates to planning is very pertinent in the context of waste management. The Northern Ireland Waste Management Strategy alludes to the potential for economic activity and job creation through the development of infrastructure and services in Northern Ireland and this has been further reinforced by the recent Green New Deal Initiative.

Economic development is also a headline objective in the Northern Ireland Programme for Government and other cross cutting policies and is obviously very much in the mind of the current Executive. Some of the planning issues are articulated in PPS3 and the Draft PPS24. Accordingly, we consider that in the current review, consideration should be given to including in the scope of the current process in the context of waste management.

**13.5 General Development Order**

We would consider it appropriate to consider the relevance of the General Development Order, particularly permitted development activities as they relate to waste management e.g. Local Government operations including mini recycling centres and bring banks. We would recommend that this is included in the scope of the consultation.

**13.6 Waste Handling and Storage**

The Minister recently announced the launch of the Waste Storage Guide which was formulated by Local Government. We feel there is an opportunity for this to be mainstreamed in planning terms through the auspices of PPS review. We would therefore recommend its inclusion in the scoping.

**14. Maintaining Stability**

As stated above, while we welcome the opportunity to comment on this review, we consider that it is critical that nothing in the process serves to undermine the progress being made by the Waste Management Groups to deliver mission-critical waste infrastructure for the treatment of residual waste. Conversely, we feel that the review itself potentially represents an opportunity to reinforce the work of the Groups to date, in the context of land assembly, procurement and the statutory consent process.”

**Regional Development Strategy –  
10 Year Review Consultation**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1** The Shaping Our Future Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2025 10 Year Review consultation document was launched by the Minister for Regional Development on the 6th January 2011. The RDS is an overarching spatial

framework to influence the future distribution of activities throughout the Region to 2025. A public consultation process was initiated, requesting for comments to be submitted by the 31st March.

- 1.2 The revised document will replace the RDS published in 2001 and amended after a 5 year review in 2008.
- 1.3 During the consultation period, information events are planned across the Region, with two events being held in the Waterfront Hall in Belfast on 26th January from 2pm to 4pm and from 6pm to 8pm.

## 2 Key Issues

- 2.1 In February 2009, the Council engaged with Department Regional Development (DRD) on initial consultation on the RDS 10 yr review and submitted preliminary views to inform and assist the RDS review process. The initial submission outlined seven key strategic themes which the City Council considered of critical importance and should be incorporated in the revised RDS, namely:

- countering the depopulation of the city
- strengthening Belfast as the hub of the region's economy
- connecting the city with the wider region
- enhancing and developing the city centre
- addressing the challenges of the inner and middle city
- protecting and enhancing the natural assets of the city
- linking the vision to policies and actions

- 2.2 The revised RDS identifies the following key challenges on climate change, rebuilding and rebalancing the economy, population growth, the location of jobs and houses, infrastructure provision and the protection of our natural and built environment.

- 2.3 A summary of the main issues outlined in RDS consultation document is attached in Appendix 1. Elected members may wish to note the following points:

- The importance of Belfast City is recognised 'as the heart of a Metropolitan Area, as the driver for regional economic growth; it remains the regional focus for administration, commerce, specialised services and cultural amenities'.

- Paragraph 4.26 recognises the pockets of deprivation within the city – 35% of the City’s population experience deprivation.
  - The consultation document identifies a number of key developments as opportunities to open up significant opportunities for rapid growth in Belfast , including: Titanic Quarter; Sirocco Quays, University of Ulster campus; Royal Exchange and City Quays. The Council may want the document to consider the inclusion of additional sites including the North Foreshore.
  - The Council would welcome the identification of the following priorities:
    1. Regenerating inner and middle city areas with a focus on urban villages and public hubs as places for community facilities and services, and opening up opportunities to benefit from investment.
    2. Reinforcing the quality of the City centre shopping and business area and making it accessible to all by creating attractive and accessible links for inner city communities.
    3. Ensuring all citizens of Belfast benefit from wealth creation
  - The Council welcomes Strategic Guidance 4: Grow the population of the City of Belfast
  - The consultation document states that ‘a precautionary approach needs to be taken in relation to future major retail development proposals based on the likely risk of out of centre shopping developments having undesirable impacts on city centre’. The Council considers that strategic guidance protecting the regional retail function of Belfast City Centre needs to be strengthened restricting the continued growth of out of town centre retail.
- 2.4 The Council considers that the RDS should play a critical role in setting the context for the continued development of Belfast as the driver of growth for the region. It is welcomed that the consultation document recognises the importance of Belfast as the regional focus and also identities the issue of continued population loss in the city.

The Council considers it essential that the RDS maintains the balance of future growth in favour of Belfast as the driver of growth and provides formal linkages to any linked Investment Strategy proposals such as the transportation plan, infrastructure proposals and the emphasis on public transport provision and connectivity.

- 2.5 The Development Department will prepare a response taking account of the issues and comments raised by elected members along with responses from internal consultation with Council departments.

Members should note that DRD are holding public events to provide information and clarification on the RDS 10 year review. This presents the opportunity for the Council to contribute through both officer and political participation at the events and highlight issues needed to influence the final RDS and ensure the potential for the continued development of Belfast.

Members may wish to attend one of the events scheduled in Belfast on the 26th January in the Waterfront Hall from 2pm to 4pm and from 6pm to 8pm. In addition it is suggested that Council officers arrange briefing sessions with elected members prior to the DRD consultation event to discuss the review document.

3 **Resource Implications**

- 3.1 There are no resource implications

4 **Equality and Good Relations Considerations**

- 4.1 There are no equality and Good Relations Considerations attached to this report

5 **Recommendations**

Members are requested to:

- 5.1 Note the two consultation events on the RDS 10 year review to be held on the 26th of January and the opportunity for elected member participation at the events.
- 5.2 Agree for officers to schedule elected member briefing sessions prior to the consultation events on the 26th January.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations and approved the attendance of any Member of the Committee who so wished at the consultation events.



**Visit by Delegation from Heifei, China**

The Director of Development reminded the Committee that there existed strong links between Belfast and the city of Heifei in China. He stated that, as part of the Chinese New Year celebrations, which would take place at the beginning of February, a delegation from Heifei would visit Belfast to undertake a programme of activities during a four-day period. He referred specifically to an all-day cultural event which would take place at St. George's Market on 6th February, together with a Chinese New Year dinner which was scheduled to take place at the Europa Hotel the following evening. He reported that the Lord Mayor had received correspondence from the Chinese Welfare Association requesting financial assistance from the Council and, accordingly, the Director of Development sought the Committee's authority to provide funding of £1,500 towards the hospitality costs associated with the visit of the delegation and the Chinese New Year celebrations.

The Committee granted the authority sought and agreed that invitations to attend the events associated with the New Year celebrations would be extended to each member of the Committee.

**Delivering Tourism Locally –  
Local Tourism Destinations**

The Committee agreed to defer, to a special meeting to be held later in the month, consideration of a report in respect of the allocation of funding towards the promotion of local tourism initiatives. It was noted that Area Briefings in this regard would be organised by the Director of Development prior to the special meeting taking place.

Chairman