

# Development Committee

Tuesday, 22nd November, 2011

## MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

- Members present: Councillor Stalford (Chairman);  
Aldermen Ekin, Humphrey and Stoker; and  
Councillors Ekin, Humphrey, Stoker, Austin, Hartley,  
Hendron, Keenan, Kelly, Kingston, Kyle, Mallon,  
Maskey, McVeigh, Mac Giolla Mhín, Ó Muilleoir,  
Reynolds, Robinson, Spence and Webb.
- In attendance: Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;  
Ms. S. McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives;  
Ms. C. Taggart, Community Services Manager; and  
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Requests for Deputations**

It was reported that no requests had been received.

### **Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau - Update**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 28th September, it had considered a six-monthly performance and monitoring report for the Belfast Visitor and Convention Bureau. At the meeting, a number of Members had raised concerns regarding the extent of the annual financial contribution which the Council made to the Bureau. The point was made that the Council should satisfy itself that its financial contribution was commensurate with the benefits achieved in respect of the promotion and marketing by the Bureau of Belfast as a tourist and business destination. In addition, the Committee had expressed concern that the matter of the permanent re-location of the Belfast Welcome Centre was an issue which needed to be resolved as soon as possible. Given the points raised, an invitation was extended to representatives of the Bureau to attend a future meeting. Accordingly, Mr. J. Jordan, Mr. S. Magorrian and Mr. G. Lennon, representing the Bureau, were admitted to the meeting and were welcomed by the Chairman. Each of the representatives outlined the key performance indicators and achievements of the Bureau to date in 2011.

During discussion, Mr. Lennon commented on the current position regarding the plans to relocate the Belfast Welcome Centre. He pointed out that the present building in which the Centre was located was not 'fit for purpose' and added that it was important that the matter of the future accommodation was resolved at the earliest opportunity. He stated that the Centre's location, given that it was not accessible at street level, was impacting on the number of visitors availing of the services of the Bureau. He suggested that, should suitable alternative premises be secured within the City, the Bureau could increase by 20% the number of visitors to the Centre and this, in turn, would enhance visitor numbers to a range of other tourist attractions.

During further discussion, the deputation answered a range of Members' questions including the potential for the establishment of additional air routes to and from the City; the Bureau's involvement in the promotion of the annual 'Orangefest' event; the potential of enhancing the City's tourism product insofar as it related to political tourism; and the requirement for the City to establish additional conference and exhibition facilities.

The Committee noted the information provided and noted further that the representatives of the Bureau would attend the Committee's meeting on 24th January, 2012 to discuss the Council's financial contribution to the organisation in 2012/2013.

### **Draft Framework to Tackle Poverty and Reduce Inequalities**

The Committee considered the undernoted report which referred to the above-mentioned framework document. It was noted that the framework document was available on the Council's Modern.gov website for perusal:

#### **"1 Relevant Background Information**

- 1.1 A proposal for a corporate poverty and inequalities framework was first presented to the Development Committee in November 2009. Following a series of further committee meetings, workshops, individual party briefings, and an all-party briefing on 11th October 2011, the latest draft was presented to Committee on 8th November 2011.**
- 1.2 At the most recent Development Committee meeting Members requested that a decision on adopting the framework be deferred for a further two weeks to allow an opportunity for individual Members to seek clarifications and if required to propose amendments to the draft. It was agreed that this would be particularly useful for newer Members of the committee who might not have had the opportunity to become fully informed on all aspects of the draft.**
- 1.3 Members should note that the proposals for the framework have become closely linked to the proposed Stimulus Investment Package. Both initiatives are based on the understanding that the council has a useful contribution to make in alleviating some of the effects of the economic downturn on our citizens and on local businesses. The framework also recognises the need to address the existence of inequalities and pockets of extreme deprivation within the city in order to emerge successfully from recession and enhance international economic competitiveness.**

1.4 It is, of course, not solely within the council's gift to end poverty in Belfast (nor to solely end the economic downturn). But with some additional co-ordination; a greater focus on the barriers faced by those in poverty who wish to use our services; and by offering a strong supporting and advocacy role with our partners; it is possible to make our services more accessible, better targeted and ultimately more effective for those most in need.

1.5 The draft being presented with this paper contains a series of revisions and additions based on the input from Members over the past ten days.

## 2 Key Issues

2.1 Listed below is an overview of the main issues raised by Members over the past two weeks concerning the previous draft of the framework. Working to a short turnaround time officers have revised the draft to reflect these issues:

2.2 (1) 'The council can only play a supporting role in addressing the causes of poverty'

The revised framework now puts greater emphasis on the fact that the elimination of poverty requires sustained intervention by government at both regional and national levels. However, the framework presents the case that the council also has important contributions to make by:

- Ensuring that our services are more accessible to those in poverty;
- Looking for opportunities to make more effective and targeted use of our existing resources;
- Working with our partners (both statutory and community based) to enhance their own service delivery to those in poverty;
- Raising awareness of the plight of an increasing proportion of Belfast's population who are at risk of falling into poverty;
- playing an advocacy role with Government for those most at risk as an integral part of the council's emerging external relationships strategy;
- Holding other statutory bodies to account.

2.3 These contributions are by no means insubstantial. Given the large number of services that we deliver at a local level, there are clear opportunities for the council to have a direct and positive impact at modest cost to the rate-payer.

- 2.4 (2) 'The role of partners in tackling poverty'  
Members noted the primary role of Northern Ireland Government Departments in addressing the causes of poverty in Belfast. It is obvious that there are a wide range of necessary interventions to be made at this level such as early years programmes; economic development initiatives, tackling worklessness; health interventions; education and skills; targeted investment in deprived and interface areas and tailored support for families and older people. The Executive has made commitments to many of these strands of work in its Lifetimes Opportunities strategy.
- 2.5 The Belfast City Council framework does not seek to supplant this government strategy. As noted above, we only have a specific range of limited interventions at our disposal. The framework proposes that the emphasis should be on partnership working and enhancing our advocacy role with Government on behalf of those Belfast citizens who are most at risk.
- 2.6 (3) 'The framework should focus on actions that will have the highest impact'  
There was broad agreement that the framework should emphasise those actions that link to existing council work and which will have the most direct impact on those in poverty. The action plan focuses on such activities as employability and skills initiatives; improving access to our services; advice provision; projects around food and fuel poverty and an active engagement to create the correct conditions for the eventual removal of peace walls.
- (4) 'How much will the framework cost?'
- 2.7 Earlier drafts of the framework did include specific budgets against individual pieces of work where these were available. These estimates were removed in later drafts as, over the intervening months, many ceased to be up to date.
- 2.8 Revised budgets (and staff time commitments) have now been included in the draft where available. It should be noted that, given the nature of the framework (in that it is encouraging the adaptation of existing strands of work) it is difficult to include budgets against all items.

- 2.9 In total over five years, the budget for delivery of this framework across the whole council is around £1.7 million (which includes existing initiatives), but in addition, the council receives around £5.3 million through grants and external funding. However, the cost of delivering only new initiatives would be around £150,000 (excluding few initiatives without indicated budget). The income is predicted to be around £44,350 which brings the current cost for the council to be around £105,000. It is worth mentioning that there is a potential to attract up to €500,000 through EU funds to deliver a specific project within this framework.

Members also requests estimates for staff time against each action. These have also been added to the revised draft where available.

- 2.10 (5) 'Measuring our impact'  
The council places great emphasis on effective performance management to allow us to better measure the impact of our work. The revised draft proposes an approach that, while not overly burdensome, will allow Members to track the impact of the framework against a basket of indicators.
- 2.11 The framework will be reviewed after its first year to determine its effectiveness. As part of this process, a more robust performance framework would be established based on an outcomes model. Key external agencies (statutory and civic) will be engaged with as part of this review. This would make a much more robust link between the outcomes we want to achieve regarding poverty, the indicators we would use to measure them, and the actions we aim to deliver. This approach would not be possible in the first year of the framework as the majority of the proposed work is based on pre-existing initiatives.
- 2.12 (6) 'Specific changes within the action plan'  
Based on the feedback from the Committee meeting on the 8th November and individual input by different councillors, we have slightly revised the action plan by:
- Removing development of a website (too time consuming with limited added value)
  - Adding an action on 'exploring alternative finance arrangements' (it would address specific needs in the city)
  - Adding actions on more active lobbying and developing partnerships (it would strengthen our role)
  - Adding majority of employability programmes the council supports (to be comprehensive)

- Adding columns with budget and income (as requested by majority of Members)
- Adding an action on 'creating conditions for the removal of peace walls'
- Merging 'supporting skills programmes through our community centres' with 'raising skills' action
- Focusing more on initiatives that can make a difference, i.e. employability
- Ensuring that the 'new' initiatives have not already happened (because the development of the framework started two years ago) and Simplifying monitoring and reporting action (to avoid bureaucracy).

### **3. Resource Implications**

- 3.1 Budgets for actions are identified within the framework. The majority of these are accounted for within existing service budgets.
- 3.2 The budget for a public consultation of £10,000 is included within the Policy and Business Development Unit budget for 2011/2012.

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

- 4.1 This framework aims to contribute to a reduction in inequalities. An initial equality screening identified the potential positive impact of the framework for many of the Section 75 groupings.
- 4.2 If the framework is adopted it will be subject to a statutory twelve week public consultation. The consultation will determine the results of the final equality impact assessment.

### **5 Recommendations**

#### **5.1 Members are asked to:**

1. Approve the revised draft framework to tackle poverty and reduce inequalities
2. Agree to a twelve week public consultation.
3. Agree to a review of the framework after its first year of operation."

The Director answered a range of questions from the Members in relation to the framework and, following discussion, the Committee adopted the framework and the recommendations contained within the report.

### **Future Renewing the Routes Programmes - 2011/2016**

The Committee agreed to defer, until its meeting on 13th December, consideration of the aforementioned report to enable individual Political Party briefings to be provided to those Parties who requested them. However, in the interim period, the Committee agreed, given the limited time available for the commencement of the project, to grant authority for the officers to invite tenders for the construction-related design services and measured-term contracts for the work associated with the future Programme.

### **B-Team Dissemination Events**

The Committee was reminded that the Council was the Lead Partner in the European Regional Development Fund INTERREG IVC project 'B-Team', which sought to bring together practitioners and experts from different countries to address the problems associated with the regeneration of Brownfield sites. As part of the project, the partners sought to improve regional policies and to promote the development of vacant sites in each location. Practical exchange of knowledge took place during "Brownfield Days" and the experience and lessons learned were collated and discussed at "European Dissemination Events". The dissemination events, which occurred five times during the three year period, sought to enhance learning through experience and disseminate the results to a wider audience.

It was reported that dissemination events would take place in Vilnius/Lithuania in April, 2012 and in Seville in November, 2012. The Director pointed out that the events would provide the Council's deputations with an opportunity to discuss issues pertinent to the regeneration of redundant Brownfield sites in Belfast. He added that the associated programmes would allow for a significant degree of political engagement with other authorities and support the development of meaningful partnerships. In addition, the Council would be afforded an opportunity to contribute both at a political and officer level and, whilst there were no costs for attendance at the events, it was anticipated that travel and accommodation costs would be in the region of £500 per delegate for each event.

The Committee approved the attendance of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, or their nominees, together with the appropriate officers, at the dissemination events in Vilnius/Lithuania and in Seville in 2012. It was noted that a report in respect of the hosting by Belfast of a dissemination event in September, 2012 would be submitted to the Committee in due course.

### **Glen Road Development Framework**

The Committee was reminded that the Department for Social Development had, in 2009, commissioned GVA Grimley as consultants to explore the feasibility of the development of a range of sites adjacent to the Glen Road and Monagh By-Pass, known as the 'Glen 10'. The Director pointed out that the Council was, since it owned a significant portion of land within the area, one of the key stakeholders in the project. He added that the consultants had identified, as a preferred option, the establishment

of a sustainable, mixed-use, urban extension to the west Belfast area which would address existing housing need and provide employment opportunities. These proposals were contained within a draft Development Framework which would be issued for community consultation in December, prior to further formal consultation, with a range of bodies and agencies in early 2012.

The Director recommended that the Committee consider receiving, at its meeting on 24th January, a presentation from the consultants acting on behalf of Department for Social Development in respect of draft Development Framework. He suggested, since the 'Glen 10' project had been identified as one of the Council's potential 'Place Shaping/Investment Stimulus' projects, that it would be prudent to extend an invitation to the Members of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to attend the meeting also.

The Committee agreed to this course of action and it was noted that an invitation to attend the meeting would be extended also to those Members representing the Upper Falls District Electoral Area.

#### **Belfast Business Awards**

The Director reminded the Committee that the Belfast Business Awards, which sought to recognise and reward business excellence in the City, had been held annually since 2004. He pointed out that, since 2010, the Council, in conjunction with Belfast City Centre Management, had overseen the delivery of the event, which in 2011 had cost the Council £29,000 to deliver. The Committee was informed that the Business Awards was just one of a range of awards, such as the Brighter Belfast Awards and the Fair Trade Awards, in which the Council was involved. The Director suggested, given the current economic climate and the significant work involved in delivering the events, that it might be prudent to re-evaluate the Council's overall involvement with a view to amalgamating or streamlining the range of ceremonies. He added that any re-evaluation would not detract from the individual integrity of the various awards ceremonies.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to provide sponsorship in the sum of £29,000 for the hosting of the Belfast Business Awards in 2012. It was noted that work would be undertaken to evaluate the Council's overall involvement in the current range of awards ceremonies with a view to a report thereon being submitted for consideration in due course.

#### **European Union Funds - post 2013**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:



**“1     Relevant Background Information**

**1.1     Members will be aware, that since the early 1990s, Northern Ireland as a European region has benefited from over 1 billion Euros in European Mainstream Structural funds, as well as significant funding from the many EU wide funding programmes accessed directly through the EU Commission. European funding operates in 6 year cycles, and currently, Northern Ireland benefits from the following programmes within the current cycle 2007-2013.**

- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) distributed via Department of Enterprise Trade and Industry ( DETI)**
- European Social Fund (ESF) distributed via Department for Employment and Learning (DEL)**
- INTERREG IVA distributed via Special EU Programme Body (SEUPB)**
- Peace III distributed via SEUPB**
- Rural Development Programme (RDP) distributed via Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD)**

**1.2     Members will recall a report to the Development Committee on 10 November 2010, seeking approval for the European unit to be proactive in trying to influence the shape of Structural Funds post 2013. To this end, the unit has engaged actively with Eurocities to contribute to a city government position with regards to how future funding will be prioritised and distributed, and the role local authorities should play with respect to this.**

**1.3     Belfast City Council contributed to the Eurocities response and provided a direct Council input to the UK government response, with respect to the EU Commission’s Consultation regarding the 5<sup>th</sup> Cohesion Report in November 2010. This report assessed the state of play with regard to regional policy and economies across Europe, and looked to future trends and needs to reduce economic and social disparities and increase prosperity across the Union. These responses may be accessed from the EU Unit but in summary they urged the UK and Northern Ireland governments to have a strengthened ring fenced urban dimension to future Structural Funds programmes, and to devolve some responsibility for the design and delivery of European funds to local authorities.**

1.4 At this time, Belfast City Council through the EU Unit, with Members approval, began to informally communicate early views (based on an urban policy dimension) to Northern Ireland government departments, Northern Ireland Assembly officials, MEPs and indeed directly with Commissioner Hahn, the EU Commissioner responsible for future Cohesion Policy and Structural Funds.

## 2 Key Issues

2.1 As a region of Europe, we are now at an important stage in the calendar for the emerging EU Budget and priorities for the period 2014-2020. The following significant progress has been made in the last few months.

### 2.2 29 June 2011 – 376 billion Euro allocated to EU Budget 2014-2020

Publication of the European Commission's proposal for a Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) for Cohesion Policy.

- €162.6 billion for Convergence Regions (N/A)
- €38.9 billion for Transition Regions (N/A)
- €53.1 billion for Competitiveness Regions (Northern Ireland)
- €11.7 billion for Territorial Cooperation (INTERREG)
- €68.7 billion for Cohesion Fund (N/A)
- €40 billion for Connecting Europe Facility

2.3 Note: The European Social Fund must represent at least 52% of Operational Programmes per Member State.

2.4 In summary the MFF confirms that:

- Cohesion Policy and Structural Funds are for all regions of the EU (based on GDP rate)
- Clear alignment to EU 2020 objectives and targets
- 4% reduction in the overall Structural Funds budget for Europe
- Focus clearly on the poorest regions
- Includes a stronger urban dimension with dedicated resources (at least 5%) and specific governance arrangements to include local players including Councils).
- 31% increase in Territorial Cooperation i.e. INTERREG, Urbact and Peace type activity.
- Focus on EU priorities linked to Europe's 2020 strategy (new 10 year Strategy for Europe) but in particular on

- (i) energy efficiency and renewable energies
- (ii) innovation and competitiveness in SMEs
- (iii) employment, education and poverty alleviation.
- Creation of a more transparent Partnership Contract Agreement with Member States and the Commission.
- Conditionality and results based programmes and performance bonuses for Member States.
- A new Connecting Europe Facility (€40 billion) for pre determined large scale ICT, transport and energy projects across Europe. As part of the core network corridors for transport the rail connection improvement from Belfast to Dublin has been identified for ongoing finance until 2018.
- Each Member State must allocate 20% of ERDF funding to competitiveness and employment, 60% of ERDF funding on SMEs, research and innovation and 20% to poverty and social inclusion.

## 2.5 5 October 2011

Publication of the new EU Regulations relating to the EU Budget 2014-2020, which set out the general legal provisions governing the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Agricultural, Fishers and Maritime Fund, and the Cohesion Fund (not applicable to Northern Ireland).

## 2.6 The key aspects of the new regulations may be summarised as follows;

- Structural funds for all regions
- A new Common Strategic Framework i.e. a common set of rules governing the EU funds outlined above.
- Partnership Contracts agreed between the EU Commission and Member States setting out Member States' commitments to concrete actions to deliver EU 2020 objectives.
- Member State programmes will be based around a menu of EU thematic objectives which are in line with the EU 2020 Strategy, namely investments in:
  - Research and innovation
  - Information and Communication technologies (ICT)
  - Competitiveness of SMEs
  - Shift towards a low-carbon economy
  - Climate change adoption and risk prevention and management
  - Environmental protection and resource efficiency

- Sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures
  - Employment and supporting labour mobility
  - Social inclusion and combating poverty
  - Education, skills and lifelong learning
  - Institutional capacity building and efficient public administration
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- At least 80% of ERDF to be allocated at National (Member State) level to
    - (i) energy efficiency and renewables
    - (ii) improvement of the competitiveness of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
    - (iii) innovation
  - ESF fully aligned to EU targets on employment, education and poverty reduction.
  - Minimum of 20% of ESF allocation to be invested in combating social exclusion and poverty.
  - Member States allowed to combine ERDF and ESF in match fund programmes to better suit their growth plans (PFG) to allow for a bigger impact on the ground.
  - Strong incentives will be offered for rewarding performance and delivery in Member States.
  - Reinforced territorial cooperation dimension across regions (cross border, inter regional and transnational).
  - A clear focus on territorial cohesion i.e. sustainable urban development plans with at least 5% of ERDF resources in Member State plans allocated for “integrated actions”, at a local level.
  - A new community led development approach working on the Leader, Rural Development Programme LAG model to deliver on special local actions.
  - In addition the Commission will launch extra calls for innovative actions in urban areas and make ESF human capital investment in cities easier.

## 2.7 NI and Belfast City Council Context

NI will continue to receive EU Structural Fund support through one of the 3 defined categories – that of well developed regions, whose GDP per capita is above 90% of the average with a 50% co financing rate for NI.

- 2.8 NI government can ensure a minimum of 5% of future Structural Funds are spent on sustainable urban development issues through designed Joint Action Plans for flexible geographical areas – A Belfast or COMET Plan for targeted local area investment?
- 2.9 NI government can opt to introduce community led local intervention plans developed and delivered by partnerships of social partners, local authorities and Non Government Organisations (NGOS).
- 2.10 NI will continue to benefit from INTERREG cross border, transnational and inter-regional funding but needs to lobby for a specifically agreed Peace IV programme.
- 2.11 NI must design future Structural Funds plans that reflect relevant priorities of the 11 thematic priorities in the new regulations and align closely to EU 2020 targets. NI can opt for multi fund programmes combining ERDF and ESF and focus on ‘Integrated territorial investments’ based on urban or the territorial strategies.
- 2.12 Belfast City Council and its stakeholders can be involved at the design through to implementation stages of the future funds including sub-delegation of fund management if the will is there at central government level.
- 2.13 Way Forward
- On 27th October 2011, the Chief Executive of Belfast City Council along with the Director of Finance, the Director of Development and the EU Manager met with the Head of EU Programmes for the DFP alongside senior representatives from Derry City Council. The purpose of the meeting was to explore the likely shape and delivery of Structural Funds in NI Post 2013 and the role that Belfast and Derry City Council would have as the 2 urban centres and regional drivers of the NI region.
- 2.14 DFP colleagues confirmed at the meeting that they are working their way through the detail of the newly published regulations and will provide detailed feedback to the UK government (Department of Business, Innovation and Skills) who will engage in high level negotiations with the EU Commission, Parliament and the other Member States.
- 2.15 This process will flow late into 2012, as all the regulations must be examined and discussed at every level.

- 2.16 DFP also confirmed that there is a still a real lack of clarity on how community led development models and Joint Action Plans will be developed and delivered.

DFP welcomed the early lobbying from both Belfast and Derry City Councils and requested that both Councils provided feedback on the regulations. They agreed to consult regularly with both Councils through BCC's EU Unit and to engage as early as possible once they begin to draft the future EU Structural Funds Operational Programmes for NI.

- 2.17 They confirmed the following timeline for the beginning of the next programming fund:

EU Level

- End 2011 Draft legislative proposals to be launched i.e. CAP Reform, Connecting Europe Facility and Horizon 2020 (successor to FP7)
- Dec 2011- Publication and consultation on the EU Commission's draft Common Strategic Framework
- 2011-2012 Member States and EU Parliament and Council to discuss and amend the MFF and legislative package and Member States begin to draft Partnership Contracts
- 2013 Development of each Member State's Operational Programmes
- 2014 Entry into force and adoption of 27 Programmes 2014-2020

- 2.18 NI Level

With this timetable in mind, Members are asked to consider and agree a lobbying plan for BCC to undertake with respect to ensuring that there is a strong urban dimension of the future programmes and that BCC will have a role in defining an Integrated Territorial Investment Plan for Belfast and its functional urban area (COMET).

- 2.19 The following timeline is proposed:

- Paper to agree lobby plan to Derry City Council and Belfast Committees – November 2011
- Hold a facilitated workshop early 2012 with key stakeholders including NI government departments, the Port, Belfast Metropolitan College and others to define the Belfast priorities post 2013, building on the

forthcoming Belfast Masterplan, Skills and Employability Strategy and the Integrated Economic Development Strategy and Urban Policy Framework

- Engage during this process with the 5 COMET Councils to ensure the priorities of the functional urban area are defined
- During the period December 2011 – March 2012, lobby:
  - (i) MPs and UK Representational Office in Brussels
  - (ii) OFMDFM, DETI, DEL, DSD, DFP
  - (iii) NI Assembly Committees
  - (iv) Junior Ministers
  - (v) DCLG, BIS and UK Minister for Cities
  - (vi) NILGA to ensure urban lobby is part of their overall lobby work with Committee of the Regions
  - (vii) MEPs, COR and ECOSOC Members
  - (viii) Ongoing participation in Eurocities and UK Eurocities common lobby.

### **3 Resource Implications**

- 3.1 Staff implications within European Unit to develop and lead the lobby.
- 3.2 £28,000 to engage an external Consultant to facilitate a Stakeholder Workshop and define common priorities for a Belfast integrated EU Plan.

### **4 Recommendations**

- 4.1 Members note the content of the report and agree to a lobby action plan led by the EU Unit and Chair and Deputy Chair, or their nominees, of Development Committee.
- 4.2 That Members agree to recruit a Consultant to facilitate a stakeholders' workshop in order to identify priorities for Belfast and the functional urban area aligned to the regulations, themes and possibilities for the Belfast Metropolitan Area."

The Committee adopted the recommendations

### **Quarterly Finance Update**

The Committee noted the contents of a quarterly finance report in respect of the Development Department as at 30th September, 2011.

### **MTV Europe Awards**

A number of Members referred to the hosting by the City of the MTV Europe Awards and it was agreed that the gratitude of the Committee be conveyed to those officers involved in the staging of the various events held over the weekend of 4th to 6th November.

In response, the Director indicated that he would convey the Committee's gratitude to the officers involved and stated that a post-event report would be submitted to the Committee in due course.

### **City Hall Christmas Lighting**

The Chairman advised the Committee that he had been approached by an Elected Member regarding the City Hall Christmas lighting. The Member had requested that the Committee consider erecting an additional 'Happy Christmas Belfast' sign above the East Entrance to the building.

After discussion, the Committee noted the request, however, it was agreed that no alterations would be made to the current display.

Chairman