

Development Committee

Tuesday, 7th May, 2013

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members present: Alderman Stalford (Chairman);
The High Sheriff (Councillor Kingston);
Aldermen Ekin and Stoker;
Councillors Austin, Hussey, Keenan, Kelly,
Mallon, Maskey, McKee, McVeigh, Ó Donnghaile,
Ó Muilleoir, Reynolds, Spence and Webb.

In attendance: Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;
Ms. S. McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives
and International Development; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillors Hendron, Mac Giolla Mhin and Kyle.

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of 9th and 23rd April were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st May.

Declaration of Interest

In respect of item 2, viz., 'New York/New Belfast - One City Conference', Councillor Ó Muilleoir declared in interest that he was the Managing Director of the Belfast Media Group which was organising the event.

New York/New Belfast Conference- One City Conference

(Councillor Ó Muilleoir left the room whilst this matter was under discussion.)

The Committee was advised that the Belfast Media Group and the Irish Echo would be hosting the fourth 'New York/New Belfast - One City Conference' at Fordham University, New York, on 12th and 13th June.

The Director advised the Committee that the theme of the conference would be 'building bridges of mutual benefit between two cities' and that a range of prominent individuals from business, community and political organisations would attend the event. He reported that the Council had been invited to speak at the conference and he indicated that the estimated cost of attendance, per delegate, would be £1,500.

Accordingly, he recommended that the Committee agree to authorise the attendance at the event of the incoming Chairman and the Director (or their nominees).

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Reynolds,
Seconded by Councillor McKee,

That, in accordance with the Committee's decision in 2012, the Director only (or his nominee) be authorised to attend the 'New York/New Belfast - One City Conference'.

On a vote by show of hands, seven Members voted for the proposal and nine against and it was declared lost.

Accordingly, the Committee adopted the recommendation and authorised the attendance at the event by the incoming Chairman and the Director (or their nominees).

Bursary Scheme - Prince's Trust

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

"1 Background Information

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Council has invested £300,000 in a Student Bursary Fund supporting hundreds of young people in the city to take part in further education and training opportunities.**
- 1.2 The 'Achieve' Bursary Fund which aims to improve the employment prospects of young people in the Belfast City Council area is currently being administered through Belfast Metropolitan College (Belfast Met) and The Prince's Trust with the funding made available through the Council's Investment Programme for 2012-2015.**
- 1.3 Members are reminded that through Belfast Met, grants of up to £500 can be applied for by young people living in Belfast who must be preparing to study or currently studying on one of the college's full-time further/higher or vocational education training courses at Levels 2-5. This includes 10 courses - among them, courses in IT, multimedia, science, tourism or hospitality.**
- 1.4 The Prince's Trust bursary (with funding allocated through the charity's Development Awards programme) is open to young people aged 16-25 residing in the city who are not in education, training or employment. The scheme aims to help recipients overcome barriers which may prevent them from undertaking training and education or moving into employment.**

2 **Key Issues**

- 2.1** Members will recall that a number of reports have of late been presented to the Strategic Policy and Resources and Development Committees in connection with development and implementation of the 'Achieve' Bursary Fund.
- 2.2** In particular the Committee is reminded that at its meeting on 25 January 2013 Members of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee received a full update on delivery of the bursary scheme during year 1 (2012/13) and considered appropriate levels of assistance for year 2 (2013/14).
- 2.3** Whilst an indicative split of £30,000 to the Prince's Trust and £70,000 to Belfast Met was the funding allocation in year 1, Members agreed to a 50/50 split in year 2 with £50,000 of the Council funding being allocated towards supporting further/higher education initiatives (through Belfast Met) and a further £50,000 of funding to help individuals access training or education (not at further or higher levels) or employment (administered through Prince's Trust).
- 2.4** Since this agreement was reached the Council has worked with both partner organisations to ascertain what volume of bursaries might be feasible to deliver given the change in funding allocations. Whilst it is difficult to predict the exact number of student applications to be received in 2013/14, Belfast Met expects to be able to offer approx 240 awards of £500 to new first year students entering in September 2013 to undertake a further/higher/vocational education training course at levels 2-5 of one the 10 priority courses. Members are reminded that Belfast Met will administer £120,000 in the current financial year (£70,000 carried forward from year 1 plus £50,000 from year 2) and will cover all costs associated with the awards administration.
- 2.5** In return for an investment of £50,000, The Prince's Trust will aim to support 202 young people during 2013/14 and help over 80% of those who receive a Development Award to achieve a positive outcome, progressing into education, training or employment.
- 2.6** Whilst the Trust is delighted to secure additional Council funding of £20,000, increasing the number of awards to be provided in year 2 by 39% on the previous year does pose an issue for the charity around staffing, administration and general management of the programme.

- 2.7 Members are reminded that the Prince's Trust is a youth charity which raises income from two main sources. Firstly, there is income received as a result of the charitable activities it undertakes, and secondly it raises voluntary income through corporate and individual donations as well as donations in kind. In the absence of any core funding and corporate administration and management support, all activities of the Prince's Trust are delivered on a project by project basis, each of which have their own dedicated management and administrative resources.
- 2.8 To this end, the Prince's Trust has submitted a proposal to the Council indicating it would require a small percentage of financial support to help cover the costs associated with administering 202 awards in the 2013/14 financial year. The proposed management and administration costs are as follows:

Cost category	Amount (£)
Programme Exe (46% time):	11,205.60
Administrator (9% time):	2,241.12
Total:	13,446.72

- 2.9 The organisation has indicated that it will use £3,962.28 of its own resources to contribute to the costs of delivering the Development Awards Programme in the Belfast City Council area in 2013/14. Therefore the net amount required for project administration costs is £9,484.44.
- 2.10 Members are advised that in assessing the needs of applicants for a Council bursary the Prince's Trust requires a range of people with different skills sets to be involved in the process. This includes:
- Administrative staff, who take the initial enquiry, check eligibility of the young person and confirm whether a positive outcome has been achieved at the end of the Award.
 - Programme staff or 'Volunteer Assessors' who meet young people face-to-face to complete their assessment and provide ongoing support.
 - Development Awards Executive who processes all programme paperwork; collects evidence of what the Award is for; pays the Award in terms of paying the supplier or purchasing goods and oversees funding in terms of allocating Awards in accordance with funding guidelines.
 - Head of Enterprise, Employment & Awards who reviews each individual Award and signs off for payment.

2.11 For individual assessments to take place the Prince's Trust is also required to:

- Train a number of Assessors including existing programme staff and external volunteers.
- Carryout an Access NI Check for each new Assessor in line with the Prince's Trust child protection policies.
- Complete an application which then has to be processed. This requires a member of staff doing further eligibility checks; assessing if the outcome of the award will be a progression; making sure that all of the evidence of what is actually needed has been enclosed which is then passed to a panel, approved and payment is processed.

2.12 Other roles involved in the process include creating new suppliers; negotiating discounts based on bulk purchases and charity status; promotion of the Awards in terms of marketing flyers & other promotion and developing a range of paperwork for the awards scheme itself.

2.13 In view of the above Members are asked to consider the proposal for £9,484.44 of the £50,000 amount allocated to the Prince's Trust in year 2 to be used to cover programme management and administration costs.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 An overall budget of £300,000 was allocated to the bursary scheme over a 3 year period 2012-2015.

3.2 The financial allocation required by the Prince's Trust to administer the scheme is £9,484.44.

4 Recommendations

4.1 Members are asked to consider the request for £9,484.44 of the £50,000 amount allocated to the Prince's Trust to be used to cover programme management and administration costs associated with delivery of the Council bursary scheme during 2013/14."

During discussion, a number of Members expressed concern that the administrative costs associated with the delivery of the Scheme by the Prince's Trust were somewhat excessive. It was pointed out that, given that the proposed administrative costs would be met from within the original budget allocated for the Scheme, it would reduce the amount of assistance available for students and, therefore, impact on the Council's ability to maximise the benefits which had been anticipated. The Director suggested that the administrative costs could be met from in-year savings to

ensure that the full amount could be made available to Programme participants. However, other Members suggested that the sum requested was reasonable when compared to the costs which had been incurred previously in the administration of similar-type schemes by external bodies.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Ó Muilleoir,
Seconded by Councillor Maskey,

That the Committee agrees that the Prince's Trust be authorised to administer the Bursary Scheme during its second year on the basis that a sum of £30,000 be made available initially and that the remaining sum of £20,000 be withheld pending a request being made to that organisation to review its estimated administrative costs.

On a vote by show of hands, nine Members voted for the proposal and seven against and it was declared carried.

Economic Impact of Belfast Anchor Institutions

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 22nd May, 2012, it had agreed to commission a report which would provide an overview of the economic impact which anchor institutions have on the City. The Director reminded the Committee that anchor institutions were organisations such as universities, hospitals, museums, libraries, churches and other large institutions which provided significant employment and expenditure within the local economy. Given, amongst other things, the relocation of the University of Ulster to the inner north area of Belfast, such research would enable the Council to identify opportunities to maximise the economic benefits which could be accrued in working with the full range of anchor institutions. Accordingly, the Committee considered a report, together with the contents of a research paper, which had been prepared by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies, copies of which were available on the Council's Modern.gov system.

In considering the report, a Member suggested that the Council should seek to build on the findings of the paper by enhancing its relationship with the key anchor institutions by hosting an engagement session prior to the July recess. A further Member, on behalf of the Democratic Unionist Party, indicated that he would wish his Party to receive a briefing on the contents of the research.

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report and the research paper and agreed that briefings would be provided to those parties who so wished. It was agreed further that, if practicable, an engagement event would be hosted by the Council prior to the July recess.

Belfast Tourism Monitor

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 22nd February, it had agreed that tenders be invited for the provision of tourism and research services for a three-year period from 1st April, 2013 till 31st March 2016, and had agreed also to delegate authority to the Director to accept the most advantageous tender received.

The Director reported that, given the contents of the Council's Cultural Framework for 2012/2015, together with the Integrated Strategic Framework for Belfast Tourism and the Departmental Business Plan, it had been deemed appropriate to review the scope of the contract to enable it to address the evolving nature of tourism in the City. He reported that, in order for the review to be undertaken, it would be necessary to extend the existing arrangement with the current contractor until 31st December, 2013, with a view to undertaking a further tendering exercise thereafter.

The Committee agreed to the extension to the contract as outlined.

Donegall Pass Community Centre - Management Arrangements

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

- 1.1 Donegall Pass Community Centre (Apsley Street, Donegall Pass) was constructed in 2001. Council support for the community centre was approved by the Community & Leisure sub-committee at its meeting on 12th March 1996. Council provided part funding toward capital and running costs. The total capital cost being £244,500. 75% of which was funded by 'Making Belfast Work.'**
- 1.2 Direct management of the centre by Council was viewed as a short term measure with the ultimate aim being to adopt the local community management model at the end of an agreed period (2 years). This was extended in 2003 and again in 2007 on the basis that both the local community and Council officers felt the capacity had not been adequately developed to support local independent management arrangements.**
- 1.3 Donegall Pass Community Forum (DPCF) published a master plan for the area in 2009 and officers met with representatives of the DPCF in order to assess their potential to assume management responsibilities for the centre.**
- 1.4 A full economic business plan (2010) was undertaken by DPCF in 2010 and this included stakeholder consultation, extensive desktop research and benchmarking analysis. The study considered a range of options for the management of the centre and associated risk.**

- 1.5 The Development Committee (11th May 2010) agreed to a request from the DPCF to 'seek to explore the possibility with Council of conducting a period of transition (1 year) which would allow it to fully examine the practicalities of assuming the management of the centre successfully'. Committee (14th September 2011) authorised an extension of the transition period for a further six months.
- 1.6 Before entering into agreement to undertake management of the community centre DPCF felt that a number of outstanding issues needed to be addressed. These related to income and expenditure (current and potential), programming of local services, the current design of the building and possible adaption to meet the needs of DPCF. Development Committee agreed (26th June 2012) that it would be necessary to provide some time to the DPCF (Autumn 2012) to allow them to consider fully all elements of this undertaking and to then provide a realistic, planned and robust approach to Council.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 DPCF have expressed its preferred approach which involves transferring services, projects and staff to the community centre in advance of undertaking the formal management of the facility. This transfer of their business and related staff team to the community centre would facilitate the acquisition of 'hands on' experience of management responsibilities. It will also support the provision of specific training to the DPCF and its staff on all aspects related to community management of a Council facility.
- 2.2 This arrangement has merit for Council as it will enable a partnership approach to services and support provision for the local community delivered from one local facility. It provides opportunity for joint working with no competing interests. The move to the community centre also represents a saving to the Council revenue grant to DPCF for its premises at Grove House.
- 2.3 Officers suggest that at the end of a period of one year, and following a robust assessment of the Forums ability, the process to transfer management would commence.
- 2.4 DPCF has since informed Council (March 2013) that the organisation is experiencing significant internal issues which they are actively attempting to address. On the advice of officers, DPCF have engaged the professional expertise

and support of an external agency to assist them in their efforts.

2.5 DPCF have agreed to provide details to Council of the measures employed to address the current internal issues of the organisation as well as evidence that all matters of concern have been fully resolved. This will be submitted to Council prior to any further progress of transfer arrangements. We will continue to work with DPCF to offer appropriate support.

3 Resource Implications

3.1 Financial

The community centre will require some internal adaption to accommodate the range of projects/services to be delivered by DPCF from the centre. Officers will work with Property and Projects to identify costs which we propose should be met from grant savings.

4 Recommendations

4.1 Members are asked to:

1. Endorse the proposal for transfer of DPCF services/projects and staff to Donegall Pass Community Centre;
2. Agree the proposed timeline and conditions associated with DPCF assuming responsibility for the management responsibility of the community centre:
 - submission of an evidenced based report indicating that DPCF have addressed their internal issues and that they are a competent, effective and cohesive organisation,.
 - Council staff to provide specific training and ‘hands on’ experience on all management responsibilities, standards, systems and procedures for 12 month period
 - Subject to an assessment of DPCF’s capability and the agreement of the Development Committee, the process to transfer management of the Donegall Pass Community Centre will commence.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Linenhall Library- Study Visit

The Chairman reported that the Committee had been invited to undertake a study visit to the Linenhall Library.

The Committee agreed to undertake the study visit on Wednesday, 29th May, at 3:30 p.m.

Chairman