

Development Committee

Tuesday, 16th September, 2014

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Hargey (Chairman);
Aldermen M. Campbell, Ekin, Kingston,
Stalford and Stoker;
Councillors Beattie, Convery, Kelly, Kennedy,
Kyle, Magee, Mac Giolla Mhín, Ó Donnghaile,
Ó Muilleoir, Spence and Verner.

Also attended: Councillors Attwood and Garrett.

In attendance: Mr. J. McGrillen, Director of Development;
Mrs. L. Toland, Head of Economic
Initiatives and International Development; and
Mr. B. Flynn, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Alderman Webb and Councillors Keenan and Reynolds.

Minutes

The minutes of meeting of 19th August 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 September.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Belfast City Centre Management - Request for Additional Funding

The Committee was reminded that the Council, at its meeting on 1st July, had acceded to a request by Alderman Rodgers that the minute of the meeting of 17th June, under the heading "Belfast City Centre Management – Request for Additional Funding", insofar as it related to a request to provide funding to meet a proposed salary increase for Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) staff, be taken back to the Committee for further consideration. At its meeting on 19th August, the Committee had agreed to defer consideration of the matter to enable a deputation from BCCM to attend a future meeting.

Accordingly, the Committee considered further the undernoted minute of the meeting of 17th June:

“The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 14th January, it had agreed to provide funding in the sum of £190,000 to Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) as the Council’s contribution towards its running costs for 2014/2015. It was reported that the Board of BCCM had since undertaken a review of the salaries of its staff and had adopted the NJC scales, a measure which had resulted in a shortfall of £30,000 in salary costs for £2014/2015. Accordingly, the Director reported that a request for financial assistance for 50% of the shortfall, that is, £15,000, had been received from BCCM.

In addition to the aforementioned request, the Director reminded the Committee that BCCM had been one of six successful applicants selected by the Department for Social Development to oversee a pilot Business Improvement District (BID) project. He reported that BCCM had requested also that the Council consider making a contribution towards the employment of a Development Manager to oversee the implementation of that project. The total cost of employing the Development Manager, over an 18 month period, would be £90,000 and the Council had been requested to consider providing 50% of that cost.

In respect of the request by BCCM for a contribution towards meeting the re-evaluated staff salary costs, Members expressed concern that the Council, should it accede to the request, would be creating a precedent which could encourage further organisations to submit one-off requests for funding. The point was made that employees within the public sector had been subject to pay freezes in recent years and BCCM should have anticipated the extra costs and incorporated them within their original request for annual funding. Therefore, it would be inappropriate for the Council to meet the request as submitted.

Regarding the request for funding for to employ a Business Manager for the BID pilot project, the Committee noted that the Department for Social Development had agreed to contribute a sum of £45,000 towards the post. Accordingly, the Council would be required to provide funding of £15,000 in 2014/2015, with a further amount of £30,000 being allocated within the Council’s 2015/2016 budget to support the project.

After discussion, it was

*Moved by Alderman Ekin,
Seconded by Alderman Webb and*

Resolved - That the Committee agrees not to accede to the request for £15,000 from BCCM to meet the increase in costs of staff salaries; but agrees to provide funding in the sum of £45,000, over a two-year period, to meet the costs associated with the employment of a Business Manager to oversee that organisation’s BID pilot project.”

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mr. A. Irvine and Mr. W. McGivern, representing Belfast City Centre Management. Mr. Irvine gave an overview of costs associated with meeting the proposed increase in staff salaries. He indicated that the organisation would be seeking a sum of £13,909, which the Council should consider on a one-off basis.

After further discussion, it was

Moved by Councillor Spence,
Seconded by Councillor Kennedy,

That the Committee rescinds its decision of 17th June and agrees to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it re-examines the Council's budgetary underspend to establish if a sum of £13,909 could be identified to meet with the request for additional funding as submitted by Belfast City Centre Management.

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

St George's Markets Traders' Association - Deputation

In accordance with its decision of 19th August, the Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed to the meeting Mr. P. Dyer, Mr. S. Kerr, Ms. C. McLaverty and Mr. P. Lynn, representing the St. George's Market Traders' Association.

The representatives of the Market Traders requested that consideration be given to establishing a post of Market Manager who would be present during the days on which the facility was open to the public.

The members of the Traders' Association left the meeting.

The Director reminded the Committee that a staff review of the Market was ongoing and that a further report in this regard would be submitted for its consideration in December.

Noted.

The Rank Organisation - Proposed Casino in Belfast

In accordance with its decision of 18th February, the Chairman, on behalf of the Members, welcomed Mr. J. Minne of JPR Consulting, together with Mr. D. Waugh of the Rank Organisation, who were in attendance to apprise the Committee of the plans which had been formulated to establish an entertainment centre in Belfast, which would include a casino.

Mr. Waugh reported that the Rank Organisation was one of Europe's largest entertainment companies and was proposing to create a £20 million entertainment

complex on a site yet to be identified. Such a facility, he reported, would include a mix of attractions, including a bowling alley, a casino, restaurants and a cinema. The development would incorporate also a hotel and would generate upwards of 200 skilled jobs. Mr. Waugh pointed out that any proposal for Belfast would require the Council to seek special dispensation from the Northern Ireland Assembly to grant a gambling licence to allow a casino to operate.

Mr. Waugh suggested that the form of gambling which would take place within the casino would be strictly regulated and monitored. The Rank Organisation would seek to recruit staff locally, specifically from areas of greatest social need. He concluded by pointing out that the Rank Organisation would, if granted permission to operate, extend its responsible gambling programme to Northern Ireland and would seek to engage with parties who may have concerns on the operation of a casino.

During discussion, a number of Members expressed concern in respect of the proposals which had been presented. In particular, it was pointed out that a casino licence could not be granted in Northern Ireland under the current legislation. In addition, Members referred to the negative social and health impacts of compulsive gambling. Mr. Waugh undertook to consider the issues which had been raised, particularly to the research findings which he had referred to regarding the economic merits of such entertainment complexes, and undertook to clarify such issues at a future meeting of the Committee.

Noted.

City Marketing

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Background Information

1.1 In August 2013 Members considered an update paper in respect of an International Marketing Framework for Belfast.

1.2 The report considered City Marketing and positioning. Members approved the following;

- **The development of a city narrative.**
- **A refresh of the City Brand ensuring it reflects the city’s ambitions, its values and narrative, which is collectively owned by the City’s stakeholders.**
- **Agreed target audiences, product development priorities, marketing materials and communications channels, including a strong digital, on-line presence.**
- **Agreement on the optimal structures for co-ordinated marketing of the city.**

1.3 Members agreed to the recruitment of an external city marketing expert to undertake this piece of work and approved

a budget of up to £50,000 from the existing City development budget to carry out the work.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 Recruitment of the external agency/ City marketing expert has been delayed due to the need to align this with other related activity taking place in the Council, including the review of marketing and the community planning process. It is also important that this aligns with a similar project being undertaken by Invest NI and NITB given Belfast's importance in a regional context.
- 2.2 This piece of work is now underway and there have been some opportunities for council officers to feed into the development of the draft proposals. This will provide a useful regional perspective to help frame the repositioning work for Belfast.
- 2.3 In parallel, Members will be aware of a range of strategy development activities being led by the council. These include the Regeneration Strategy and Investment Plan, the draft Integrated Tourism Strategy and draft Economic Strategy. All of these documents touch on the need to define the city narrative in order to help position Belfast and secure buy-in from partners.

3 Resource Implications

- 3.1 £50,000 has already been set aside within the existing City development budget during financial year 2014/15.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

- 4.1 No specific equality or good relations considerations.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 It is recommended that Members:
- Note the contents of this report;
 - Give delegated authority to the Director of Development to approve the most economically advantageous tender for the city positioning work, subject to a form of contract being drawn up by Legal Services.”

The Committee adopted the recommendations.

Council's Support for Employability – European Social Fund

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1 Relevant Background Information

1.1 Members will be aware that the European Social Fund (ESF) is an EU fund to address economic inactivity and increase workforce skills. In Northern Ireland, the programme is administered by the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL). Funding is allocated by means of an open call for projects. Successful projects attract funding of up to 65% of the total project cost and project promoters are expected to find the remaining 35% funding from other sources. Currently, Belfast City Council provides match funding for five projects and supports its HARTE programme – which is delivered by a partnership of local training providers.

1.2 At the August 2014 meeting of the Development Committee, Members were advised of DEL’s plans to launch a call for projects under ESF. DEL has subsequently advised that the call will be launched in mid November 2014, closing date at the end of December 2014. Projects will be assessed by a range of selection panels and it is expected that approvals will be issued late January/early February 2015 spanning 2015-2018.

1.3 Members also agreed a proposal to hold an event for training organisations across the city and other relevant partners interested in employability and skills development. The aim of the event was to understand the scale and nature of existing and planned employability support activities across the city, with a view to informing how Council can best use its resources to support those projects requiring match funding and also ensure that a strategic approach is taken to the employability and skills challenges across the city. The event took place on 3 September 2014 and almost 60 representatives from local training organisations attended.

2 Key Issues

2.1 Members have been updated on difficulties for the Council, presented by the open call process for ESF. Updates have been provided in previous reports on officer engagement with DEL staff to identify a way in which the match funding provided by Council and other public sector bodies can be used to contribute to targeted delivery. While many of the individual projects produce positive outputs in their own

right, it is almost impossible to measure the overall impact of the investment in terms of skills development or employment outcomes within the city. In the Belfast City Council area, 44 ESF projects operate (around £35 million over three years) and 18 projects based in Belfast and operate regionally.

- 2.2 The transfer to councils of responsibility for community development and regeneration powers from Department for Social Development (DSD) means that there is likely to be a much more significant and diverse demand on Council resources to match fund projects in the coming financial year as well as in future years. While DEL has signalled that there are a number of ESF measures that will be 100% funded i.e. Family Support Programme and measures to target young people aged 16-24 not in education, training or employment – other measures (e.g. support for economically inactive, lone parents, those with health issues etc.) still require match funding at a level of 35% of overall project costs.
- 2.3 In addition to ESF, there are a range of additional initiatives supporting employability and skills development that are being delivered in specific parts of the city or will commence in 2015. These include the Social Investment Fund (SIF), Peace IV programme, United Youth Programme and Lottery funding.
- 2.4 Given the limited budget available, the assumption is that Council resources should be used to meet identified gaps or target specific activities that are not already planned or underway, or that will complement planned activity, with a view to improving sustainable employment outcomes and building skills levels to meet employer needs. Equally, it will be important to consider how this activity can sit within an overall strategic plan to address economic inactivity and improve skills levels across the city. Consecutive reports have identified the inactivity levels in some communities as the largest drag on the city competitiveness. In addition, the changing skills requirement of the new growth sectors in the city mean that there is a need to ensure that residents have access to the skills that they need to access future employment opportunities.
- 2.5 At the August 2014 Development Committee, Members were advised that work was under way to update Council research on employment, inactivity and unemployment by target group and by area with a view to helping Council identify specific

challenges and priorities for intervention. Key statistics are included in Appendix 1 and are summarised below:

- Since 2012, the NI employment rate has risen from 67% to 68.4% but this growth has not been matched in Belfast.
- A recent report by Centre for Cities suggests that Belfast remains at the bottom of the league for cities whose residents have no formal skills. 30.4% of Belfast's working age population have no qualifications, while at the other end of the skills spectrum, 26% have a level 4 qualification (census data).
- There are extensive variations in unemployment rates across the city. Levels in the Waterworks and Duncairn are three times the NI average while long term unemployment is over 10% higher than the average in Twinbrook, Poleglass, New Lodge and Colin Glen.
- Economic inactivity as a result of long term sickness or disability is approximately three times the NI average in Whiterock, Falls, Collin Glen, Crumlin and New Lodge wards. Nine of the 10 most severely deprived wards in Northern Ireland in respect to education and skills are in Belfast; Shankill, Crumlin and Woodvale are the top three respectively.
- Oxford Economics' employment projections carried out as part of Council's Integrated Economic Strategy indicates areas with the highest level of job growth opportunities from 2012 to 2022 are in accommodation and food, information and communication, professional, scientific and technical and other service activities. Sectors which fared reasonably well during the worst years of the economic recession included administration and support, finance and insurance and arts, entertainment and recreation.
- Employment rates vary significantly depending on age and skills profile. People with higher skills have a higher employment rate. In the 16 – 44 age group, the employment rate was estimated at just 45.1% for people with no qualifications compared to 91.4% for those with Level 4 qualifications and above. The employment rate again reduces significantly for 45-74 year olds with no qualifications - estimated at 26.4%, compared to 71.4% of those with Level 4 qualifications and above.
- Belfast's role as a hub of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is clear: since 2002 Belfast has accounted for 50% plus of total NI FDI and over 60% of service sector FDI. If lower levels of Corporation Tax are achieved, this will become an increasingly advantageous position for Belfast as accelerated and increased FDI will produce more high quality jobs in the city. However, these are generally

- higher skilled jobs and – given the references to challenges around low skills levels – consideration needs to be given to how those residents can be up-skilled to avail of upcoming opportunities.

2.6 At the 3 September event, participants were asked to identify key roles for Council to undertake in supporting employability and skills development initiatives, to consider why some areas remained disadvantaged and identify what could be done to address the significant skills challenges.

2.7 Further work is required before a definitive paper with recommendations on priority actions can be presented to Council. However, based on the research to date – some of which is outlined above – as well as a review of current delivery and feedback from the parties attending the event, a number of guiding principles are proposed to steer any future Council decision on this issue.

1. Need for a citywide approach

A city-wide approach is proposed to support strategic, partnership-led action and address long term labour market issues that impede the city's economic growth.

2. Need to consider targeted interventions and differentiated approaches

A city-wide approach does not mean equal distribution of resources across the city. There are particular areas of need (both geographical and target groups) and resources should be prioritised for those that require greatest support.

3. Partnership between Belfast City Council, DEL and others

To improve the service provision for clients, partners identified a clear role for Belfast City Council's role, bringing together the various stakeholders who will help to deliver change across the city. This includes DEL, BMC and others in the community/voluntary and private sectors. Council's role will be a strategic and guiding one, providing intelligence to allow for future planning, supporting greater alignment between skills demand and supply, up-skilling the sectors, sharing and promoting best practice. The Council also has a role to play in raising awareness of upcoming opportunities arising from major development schemes such as University of Ulster, Royal Exchange and North Foreshore.

4. Support is needed for older males, lone parents, disabled people and minority ethnic communities

Although addressing youth unemployment has to be a pillar of any future labour market intervention, many partners at the event suggested that government policy was focusing disproportionately on young people not in education, employment or training. There was a call to ensure that Council and its partners should not forget others within the labour market that are also severely disadvantaged including older males, lone parents, disabled and minority ethnic communities. This targeting should be based on thorough knowledge of how the unemployment figures were composed and what target groups should be identified for specific interventions.

5. The role of the private sector is critical

The private sector will remain the main job creation sector and therefore it is important that they have a role in the design and delivery of a future city-wide programme. There were numerous references to the fact that Belfast is a micro-business economy and that consider be given to align employment opportunities within small business needs. Participants recognised the significant efforts that Council had taken over the last three years to improve employment and work placement opportunities for long-term unemployed residents and asked that Council retains this focus by working with other public sector partners to encourage them to adopt similar approaches.

6. Need to avoid duplication/local competition

As previously referenced, employability and skills support is provided through a range of statutory programmes, commissioned services and community-based provision across the city. Partners recognised and agreed this can create duplication, generates competition at a local level across the city. Council support should seek to actively avoid local duplication and encourage collaboration among partners, so that efforts do not hamper an already significant and complicated range of local provision.

7. Need to improve data sources and information sharing

Sharing information and market intelligence is required. Currently, it is not possible to see the collective impact of skill improvement/job outcomes in Belfast. The resilient nature of deprivation – including skills and education suggests that the combined effort is not being translated into positive outcomes. It is therefore suggested that consideration is

given to establishing a management information system to allow enhanced data sharing, track progress and set targets to address non-performance before it is too late.

8. Need to focus on outcomes and tracking progress

There was significant discussion as to what constituted successful outcomes in the range of employability support. While it was recognised that intervention needs to be flexible to meet the needs of the individual, it is considered that any initiatives which the council decides to support should be based on measuring outcomes in terms of jobs created and skills developed. Although not all individuals will move along the support pipeline at the same pace and will require differentiated support, instances of repeat training at the same level – without any consideration of progression – should not be supported. Projects need to be able to demonstrate the outcomes they will achieve and provide evidence of their ability or capacity to deliver these.

9. Employability and skills cannot be considered as stand-alone interventions

Very often, those who are not in work face a range of barriers beyond skills or competencies required and many face health-related issues. It is therefore suggested that any interventions supported need to take account of how wrap-around services can be used to help the individual into employment. This may include consideration by Council as to how its services can support this activity, including community outreach and leisure provisions.

10. Need for transparency in decision-making around funding

Council was asked to be clear about its priorities and to establish a transparent decision-making process by which any applications could be assessed. In the case of ESF projects, this may require the establishment of a set of secondary criteria (in addition to the ESF programme criteria). The research under way will help the council identify priority target groups and locations as well as gaps in provision and specific interventions that might be supported. It is proposed that this will form part of assessment criteria. Equality and Good Relations' considerations will be factored into the prioritisation and assessment process.

- 2.8 Subject to agreement by Members on these principles, it is proposed to present a report to the Development Committee in October to agree priority areas for Council intervention and support and to establish a possible assessment process for any applications, in line with these principles. This may

include Council making a bid to DEL under ESF to lever resources and then commissioning delivery against agreed targets and priorities by third party organisation(s).

3 Resource Implications

3.1 No specific resource implications at this stage.

4 Equality and Good Relations Considerations

4.1 No specific equality or good relations implications.

5 Recommendations

5.1 It is recommended that Members:

- Note the preliminary research findings on employability, unemployment and skills issues in the Belfast City Council area.
- Note feedback from the 3 September 2014 event with training and skills development partners.
- Note and agreed the proposed principles to guide any future Council support for employability and skills development activities.
- Agree to receive a report at the October 2014 Development Committee meeting to agree priority areas for Council intervention and support and establish a possible assessment process for applications, in line with the 10 principles.”

The Committee agreed to adopt the recommendations as set out and agreed further that a further report be considered at the meeting scheduled for 21st October.

Former Visteon Site - Feasibility Study

(Councillors Attwood and Garrett attended in relation to this item.)

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

“1. Relevant Background Information

1.1 In December 2013, Fold Housing submitted a planning application for a mixed-use scheme on the former Visteon site on Blacks Road in West Belfast. The proposed development consists of demolition of existing buildings and development of 244 social and private/affordable residential units with access from Blacks Road. The proposal also involves a non-residential element to include community centre and class B business units with associated parking which will be accessed from Finaghy Road North.

- 1.2 Following meetings with various groups on the proposal, an elected member requested that the Council commission a Feasibility Study of the site. The purpose of the Feasibility Study was to consider the optimal use of the site to support future city development.
- 1.3 On 18 March 2014, Development Committee agreed to allocate £15,000 for the preparation of a Feasibility Study on the site. A consultant was subsequently appointed on 1 August to undertake the Study examining the suitability, viability and deliverability of various land use options on the site.
- 1.4 A draft Feasibility Study has been completed which explores the following land use options:
- Option 1: All industrial / Business
 - Option 2: All residential
 - Option 3a: 70% Industrial / Business
30% Residential
 - Option 3b: 30% Industrial / Business
70% Residential
 - Option 3c: 40% Industrial / Business
40% Residential
20% Other (Community, Creche, Convenience Store, Nursing Home)

2 Key Issues

2.1 Key Development Considerations

2.2 *Ownership*

The site was acquired by Fold Housing Association in June 2013 at a reported cost of £2.4m. It is estimated that the cost of demolition and pre-development investigations undertaken to date is approximately £1m. It is noted that the cost of re-acquiring the site for non-residential use would significantly impact upon the feasibility of any future development options.

2.3 Planning and Policy Considerations

On the 9th September 2014, the zoning status of the site as unzoned white land was confirmed by DOE Planning via its formal adoption of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP). As a result, it is now confirmed that it is no longer designated as an Area of Existing Employment, as previously proposed under draft BMAP. In this regard, there is no longer a presumption under planning that only employment uses

should be developed on this former industrial site. Rather, the site can be developed for non-employment purposes if it satisfies a number of planning considerations outlined in Planning Policy Statement 4 entitled Planning and Economic Development (PPS 4).

- 2.4 Under PPS 4 a range of land uses can be considered feasible for this site. Indeed, judging by the experience of the former Bass Ireland site on the Glen Road, this can also include mainly residential use. On balance, therefore, the percentage mix of uses proposed under the extant planning application would have to be seriously considered by DOE Planning under the adopted BMAP and PPS 4.
- 2.5 **Environmental Factors**
The Feasibility Study examines the potential implications of developing the various land use options. While the Study acknowledges that industrial use poses the least risk to human health compared to residential use which is the most sensitive end use, it concludes that even if the site is redeveloped for industrial use, it would require significant remediation measures and costs.
- 2.6 **Traffic/Access Issues**
A Traffic Review was undertaken to assess the impact of the various land use options on the road network. The traffic review examined the impact of the options identified in 1.4 as well as the conditions when the former factory was operational and traffic conditions forecasted for the current planning application. The Traffic Review deduced that development options based primarily on residential use posed least pressure on the existing accesses and surrounding junctions.
- 2.7 **Demand /need to retain land for industrial use**
The Feasibility Study identifies a number of sites zoned for employment/industrial use across west Belfast. The study notes that land zoned for employment/industrial use is being lost to other, often residential, uses (for example at Glenmona and the former Bass Ireland site). The report suggests that approximately 15 hectares (37 acres) of zoned employment / industrial land remains undeveloped. The Study highlights that this figure is significantly below the figure suggested in the Lisney Property Review (169 acres). The Feasibility Study suggests that the undeveloped zoned land could, in theory, generate over 600,000 sqft of employment/industrial space.

2.8 Demand/need for social housing

The Feasibility Study notes that there are approximately 1,500 applicants for social housing in the Andersonstown area, with over 1000 classified as being in housing stress.

2.9 Viability

The viability of each option was estimated on the basis of the return minus the cost to develop the site. Furthermore, the study suggests that a viable proposal would require a standard profit margin of 12.5-15%. The various options produced the following estimates:

Option	Use	Estimate of Development Value	Estimate of Development Costs	Value to cost balance
Option 1:	All industrial/business	£14,187,955	£25,658,438	-£11,470,483
Option 2:	All residential	£30,689,421	£25,415,284	£5,274,137
Option 3a:	70% Industrial/Business 30% Residential	£19,138,395	£25,585,492	-£6,447,097
Option 3b:	30% Industrial/Business 70% Residential	£25,738,981	£25,488,230	£250,751
Option 3c:	40% Industrial/Business 40% Residential 20% Other	£20,542,066	£27,557,472	-£7,015,406

2.10 The Feasibility Study concluded that due to the high acquisition and high clearance costs, proposals without a high residential element would not be viable. Furthermore, as indicated by the “*Value to Cost Balance*” in Table 1, the study concluded that funding would be required to secure the viability of industrial uses on the site.

2.11 Deliverability and Funding

The Feasibility Study argues that the ability to deliver the various options is dependent upon addressing acquisition and pre-development costs as well as any future remediation costs. In this regard, residential development is considered feasible in the short term, whereas it is suggested that employment/industry can only be considered as a medium to long term objective if both a demand for the site and funding is secured.

2.12 In relation to funding, a number of potential sources were identified such as Invest NI and Belfast City Council. It was

noted that the availability of funding from these sources is unlikely due to existing commitments to other projects.

3 Recommendations

3.1 The Committee is asked to note the report.”

The author of the Study, Mr. T. Quinn, answered a range of Members' questions. He pointed out that the formal adoption of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan had had a significant influence upon the findings of the Study. He pointed out that the financial viability of each of the options should be considered in addition to the planning-related factors which had been outlined. Given the high costs which would be incurred in the acquisition and clearance of the site, any proposals for development which did not include a significant residential element would be unlikely to be financially viable.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided and agreed that the report would be submitted to the Council's Town Planning Committee for its information.

Campaign for Attracting Audiences and Participation in the Arts

The Committee agreed to defer, to its meeting in October, consideration of the above-mentioned report to enable further information to be provided in respect of the proposed costs to the Council in partaking in the campaign.

Music Laureate Proposal

The Committee agreed to provide funding in the sum of £7,500, to match fund the sum provided by the Arts Council for Northern Ireland, to enable the appointment of a Music Laureate for Belfast for 2014/2015. It was noted that the Director would undertake to investigate the feasibility of the Music Laureate delivering a number of outreach activities to local schools and community groups.

Community Oil Buying Clubs Pilot Project - Update

The Director provided an update regarding the establishment of Community Oil Buying Clubs, a project which the Committee had endorsed at its meeting in June. He reported that officers from the Department, together with representatives of a range of statutory bodies and agencies, had developed a '*practical guide for setting up a club*', which was aimed particularly at community groups and workers within Belfast. It was pointed out that the public launch of that guide would take place in the City Hall on Tuesday 28th October, and that all Members of the Committee would be invited to attend.

Noted.

Chairman