

**CITY CENTRE ALL-PARTY MEMBERS WORKING
GROUP**

Terms of Reference

August 2022

DRAFT

1. Introduction

The city centre plays a pivotal role in the growth of Belfast and the entire region. It is one of the most social and economic strategic places in Northern Ireland, where investment impact can be maximised, where rates are generated and where momentum can be built to support inclusive growth in the surrounding neighbourhoods. Given the important role of the city centre as a centre for commerce, hub for investment, culture, tourism, learning and employment it is felt that a City Centre All-Party Members Working Group could help to ensure it can continue to perform these important roles for the benefit of all areas of the city to derive the benefits.

The council has four Area Working Groups (AWGs) to facilitate local area-based engagement and discussion. The city's administrative boundaries, to which councillors are elected, are not co-terminus with any city centre area. The successful delivery of our growth ambitions for the city requires the need to address challenges of the city centre collaboratively with public and private sector partners. Having the right physical, digital and social infrastructure in place is essential for creating the physical capacity for people to live, work and visit the city and delivering on our shared longer-term ambitions for the city, as outlined in the Belfast Agenda. Underpinning the successful delivery of regeneration and development projects and creating the right city infrastructure is the ability to attract investment. This requires collaborative working with city partners to attract investment and ensure we create the right physical and built environment required to support a sustainable, inclusive city.

2. Role and Responsibilities

The overarching role of the City Centre All-Party Members Working Group will be to identify and prioritise issues and opportunities to address specific needs with the aim of regenerating and improving the vibrancy of the city centre, linked to the council's growth aspirations and the Community Planning Partnership – City Development Board including the Future City Centre Leadership Group (Appendix 1 Governance).

3. Terms of Reference

Specifically, the City Centre All-Party Members Working Group will:

- Act as a reference panel for the wider development and regeneration of city centre;
- Collectively identify opportunities and challenges and prioritise actions, partnership working and investment opportunities which may be subsequently brought forward via the Councils Committee processes;

- Consider the city-centre dimension of key strategic plans and projects such as the Belfast Agenda, A Bolder Vision, cultural strategy, tourism plan etc – including developing a sustainable and inclusive city centre which will attract a residential population, retain and attract talent and inclusive investment;
- Consider the Clean Green Inclusive & Safe Action Plan;
- Consider the future of the city centre's nightlife and the immediate challenges posed in the city between 6pm and 6am in collaboration with relevant partners to drive forward a vibrant, diverse and sustainable nightlife to support the objectives of the Belfast Agenda including encouraging city centre living and creating a vibrant, well – connected environment for people to enjoy;
- Take an innovative, evidence-based approach to providing advice to inform and enhance policy, interventions, delivery of services, projects and plans;
- Consider city-centre issues as referred by relevant Council committees;
- Participate in and facilitate engagement and communications activities associated with connected communities;
- Promote city centre knowledge and understanding;
- Build trust and strengthen relationships with external agencies/stakeholders, residents, community representatives and the wider communities, businesses, development community to deliver improved Council services;
- Collate and consider best practice from other cities and local authorities from the UK, Ireland and internationally; and
- Whilst not having a decision-making function, it will make recommendations and report to the City Growth & Regeneration (CG&R) Committee, People & Communities Committee and the Strategic Policy and Resources (SP&R) Committee on a regular basis through reports and minutes of meetings.

4. Membership

The City Centre All-Policy Working Group will comprise of Party Leaders or their nominees.

5. Chairperson

In line with the SP&R Committee decision on 19th August 2016, a Chairperson will be appointed on an annual basis. This item of business will be placed on the agenda for the first meeting of each Working Group following the Annual Council meeting each year.

6. Reporting Mechanism

In keeping with its advisory role, the Working Group will provide recommendations to committees on relevant items. Unless specifically sought from a specific committee, recommendations made by the Working Group will be subject to ratification by the SP&R Committee.

The City Centre Coordination Group – a core Internal Officer Group will coordinate and share information across the 6 pillars of the Future City Centre (FCC) Programme (Appendix 2 FCC Pillars). The group will be an internal cross departmental city centre coordination forum.

7. Frequency of meetings

The City Centre All-Party Working Group will meet on a quarterly basis unless otherwise required.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1: City Centre Governance

Appendix 2: Future City Centre Programme Pillars