



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	SNAP City Places
Date:	16 January 2008
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Relevant Background Information

The Strategic Neighbourhood Action Programme was established in April 2007 to develop the necessary policies and procedures to enable BCC to more accurately target its service delivery within well-defined geographical areas across the city, in other words, 'City Places'.

Over the past nine months the SNAP team has undertaken work to design the neighbourhood boundaries. At the beginning of the Neighbourhood Boundary Design process, a range of guiding principles were established which can be detailed as follows:

- **Universal Coverage** - The composite of the SNAP districts must encompass every household in the local government district.
- **Alignment with District Electoral Areas** – City Places should align to the DEA's thus matching the model to the Council's existing areas for political representation.
- **Alignment to existing administrative tracts** – To ensure statistical robustness, the boundaries must reflect those existing administrative tracts.
- **Equal population proportionality** – To ensure equality of service delivery throughout Belfast the district must encompass an equivalent proportion of population. A minimum of 10 and a maximum of 25 with an average population size of 18,000.
- **Optimal number of SNAP districts** – the number of districts must be cost and time efficient whilst conducive to effective delivery of Council services.
- **Acknowledgement of existing neighbourhood structures** – The boundaries must be supportive of existing local area structures e.g. NR areas in order to alleviate duplication of effort.
- **Similar Needs** – each City Place should reflect areas of similar need as characterised by similar socio-economic and demographic variables.
- **City Centre** - The city centre should be included as a distinct City Place to reflect Council's own policy priority in this area.

Key Issues

Following the development of the Guiding Principles a methodology was developed using the amalgamation of Census Output Areas (with an average of just 300 people living in each) to create larger geographical units that will enable data to be easily collated.

Four Options were identified using this process and each was examined in terms of compatibility with the previously established guiding principles. Please see **Appendix 1** for a list of Options.

A series of cross party briefings were held in September and the Options Paper was presented to the October meeting of the Development Committee which recommend Option 1 as the preferred City Places model. This decision was deferred at the full Council meeting and at the November meeting of the Development Committee it was agreed that a cross-party working group would be held to discuss key issues that had been identified with the model.

This meeting was held on 12 December 2007, a presentation was given on the methodology that was applied in developing the City Places. Members were also advised that the City Places areas would be primarily used to gather information about differing issues and priorities at smaller geographical areas and that service delivery could be implemented at an individual city place level or through an aggregation of a range of city places depending on needs.

Further discussion took place around the need for flexibility within each of the boundary areas to best meet service delivery needs. It was agreed that this could be achieved within the current Option 1 framework as each of the City Places can be aggregated to ensure that they meet the service delivery needs of areas.

At the workshop Members agreed to adopt Option 1 as the preferred City Places model providing that flexibility would be incorporated into boundaries to for service delivery.

Resource Implications

Human Resources

Co-ordinated by the SNAP team

Recommendations

- To note the report
- To adopt Option 1 as the City Places model

Key to Abbreviations

COA – Census Output Area

Documents Attached

Appendix 1- Defining City Places paper

Appendix 1