

# Donegal Pass Community Forum



## Feasibility Study to Undertake Management of the Donegal Pass Community Centre

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Introduction**

The Donegall Pass Community Forum is the primary representative body for the inner city 'urban village' that is Donegall Pass, whose purpose is to facilitate and assist groups and agencies to further the regeneration of the Donegall Pass area and enhance the quality of life for all the people of the area.

The Forum has, over the last number of years, been requested by Belfast City Council to consider undertaking the management of the Donegall Pass Community Centre, which has been managed by Council since its construction in 2001. This request has been ongoing since the Centre's construction as the original aim was for a feasible community organisation to manage the facility rather than Council.

Until now the Forum had declined the possibility of undertaking the management of the Centre by way of letter to Council; however Belfast City Council has requested a formal study to be conducted to assess the feasibility of the potential of the Forum undertaking management responsibilities. As such the purpose of this report is to assess the feasibility of the Forum assuming management responsibility of the Centre from Belfast City Council.

### **Project Methodology**

The consultants and the Donegall Pass Community Forum devised and agreed a methodology to complete this study effectively. The study methodology included detailed consultation with a range of groups, organisations and individuals, extensive desktop research, as well as a benchmarking analysis of similar examples of best practice facility management by community organisations.

Specifically that took the form an initial consultation process with all the key groups, organisations and individuals across the community and voluntary and statutory sectors that impacted the Donegall Pass area. This consultation also incorporated feedback from the range of political groups / individuals whose constituency included the Donegall Pass area. A range of methods were used

to conduct this work including face-to-face interviews, telephone consultation and discussion meetings.

### **Research and Consultation Findings**

The scope of the study ensured that there were a range of findings and information generated upon which conclusions and recommendations could be drawn. The following box presents a summary of these findings:

- The majority of consultees responded positively in terms of the current provision and indicated that the service from the Centre presently in terms of staffing, cleanliness, appropriateness of accommodation and welcoming environment.
- 50% of respondents indicated that they would consider a nominal fee levied against any facility hire at the Centre, whereas, two respondents indicated that they would only be prepared to pay current rates.
- A number of comments focused on the perception that the Centre was underused by the local community and suggested that this was mainly due to a lack of promotional and marketing activity.
- Respondents indicated the Forum undertaking the management would encourage greater community usage and suggested that possibility of additional opening hours particularly at weekends may facilitate that.
- The vast majority of respondents indicated that this move would be positive for the community. This was qualified as the Forum could provide a greater understanding of community need, closer links to the community and the Forum have a good relationship with the community.
- Political consultation also highlighted a number of positive aspects including the experience, commitment to the community and representation of that community that the Forum could bring to the management of the Centre.
- Consensus was that this would be a benefit to the community and the majority of people would support the move.
- There were some comments that portrayed some scepticism in that this may bring about an increase in uses prices and that personalities may influence the Forum's ability to manage the Centre but generally this was viewed as a positive step.

## Ensuring a Quality Community Provision from the Centre

A range of information was presented that outlined the current situation at the Centre, which included:

- Current delivery from the Centre
- Current Support from Belfast City Council (Financial, Human and Physical Resources)

However, the main focus of this section outlined the key issues to consider in order to deliver a quality service. The following table outlines this information:

Key Issue	Description
Adequate Staffing	<p>To adequately cater for the needs and demands of the local community staffing at the Centre will need to be adequate both in terms of number and appropriately skilled / experienced.</p> <p>Both the potential opening hours and the range of activities that will likely be provided from the Centre will require a pool of staff that has the necessary skills and experience to deliver this service successfully. Undoubtedly there will be occasions where other dedicated staff will be required to deliver specific activities but due to the casual nature of this provision it is logical to suggest that these staff will be employed as and when required.</p>
Facility Maintenance and Upkeep	<p>Currently the Council provide a full support for the maintenance and upkeep of the building which according to the Centre's 2008 / 9 profit and loss accounts equates to approximately £3,725 per annum (including external cleaning, repairs, external security, operating supplies / consumables and licenses).</p> <p>It is important that the building is maintained appropriately both in terms of legislative requirements as well as a method of attracting and retaining users.</p>
Need Based Delivery	<p>As a truly community focused provider the Centre must aim to address community need. Regardless of who manages the facility it is a core principle that appropriate methods and activities are conducted to ascertain and quantify community need. The Forum already has a recognised feel of what the community need is given its community development role within the area.</p>
Adequate Insurances in Place	<p>Currently Council cover all directly managed facilities under its corporate insurance policy. Should management responsibility transfer to the Forum it will thus be its responsibility to insure the facility for all activity that is delivered from and in it. This again will require the Forum paying an additional premium and will be based on what the future delivery will be post the management change.</p>

Key Issue	Description
Income Generation	The Centre's pricing policy is obviously aligned to Belfast City Council's generic policy for all centres. This permits free usage to all groups / individuals who use the Centre for the benefit of the Community. This obviously has serious implications for any potential organisation wishing to undertake the management of the Centre and run as a commercially viable entity which has the capacity to sustain its delivery over the longer term.

### Management Options

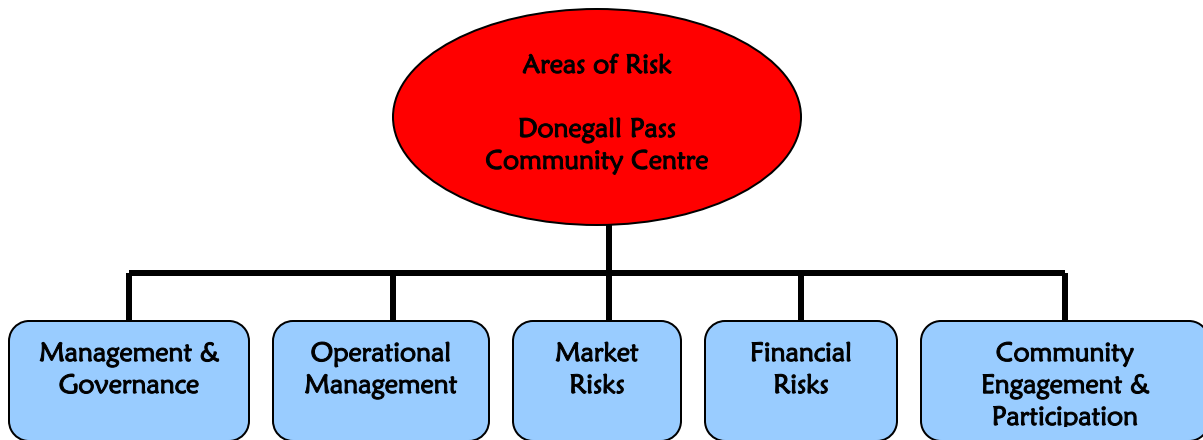
The Forum assisted by the consultants has given careful consideration to a range of potential options for the management of the Centre given the various connotations. These options are presented below:

1. **Status Quo: For Belfast City Council to continue to have the responsibility for the management of the Centre.**
2. **Status Quo for a period of a Year with Donegall Pass community Forum developing practical capacity / experience of Centre Management with a view to undertaking management from April 2011**
3. **Belfast City Council transferring Centre Management to the Forum without Revenue Support**
4. **Belfast City Council transferring Centre Management to the Forum with Revenue Support of £50,000 per annum**

### Risk Management

Given the implications of undertaking the management of the Centre there is potential for the Forum to experience a range of risks that could have a detrimental impact on the successful management and operations of the Centre.

The following areas of risk have been identified by the Forum and the consultants as part of the feasibility study process;



### Conclusions and Recommendations

To conclude the study a number of recommendations were outlined to present both the Council and the Forum with the required information upon which to base their decision regarding the management of the Centre. These recommendations are detailed below:

#### Recommendation 1

The DPCF should seek explore the possibility with Belfast City Council of conducting a 'period of transition' which would allow it to fully examine the practicalities of assuming the management of the Centre. This would allow it fully examine all aspects of management as well as build further its capacity to undertake the management successfully. This recommendation would see the Forum undertake the management of the Centre after a period of one year with the agreement of all parties.

#### Recommendation 2

The DPCF should seek to secure a revenue grant from Belfast City Council for in the region of £50,000 per annum over the short to medium term.



### Recommendation 3

The DPCF should explore all possibilities of securing maintenance and repair support from Council as an integral element of the overall revenue support package.

### Recommendation 4

The DPCF should allocate a dedicated resource to assist in securing public funding to support Centre provision and supplement facility hire income through public funding sources as part of specific programme delivery.

### Recommendation 5

The DPCF should examine all possibilities of programme and activity provision from the Centre should it undertake management responsibility.

# 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## 1.1 Introduction

The Donegall Pass Community Forum is a registered charity established in 1996 and is the primary representative body for the inner city 'urban village' that is Donegall Pass. In summary, the Forum's purpose is to facilitate and assist groups and agencies to further the regeneration of the Donegall Pass area and enhance the quality of life for all the people of the area.

Donegall Pass Community Centre is situated on Apsley Street in the Donegall Pass area of the City. The Centre was constructed in 2001 in a direct response to community need in the area and has provided much needed services and facility access to the entire community since then. Under the original terms of its development the responsibility of managing the Centre was undertaken by Belfast City Council, however this was viewed as a short term measure with the ultimate aim of transferring this management to the community.

To date, the community has not clearly evidenced the ability / capacity to undertake such a responsibility, however, under these terms Belfast City Council request an update of the community's status to do so on a biannual basis. Until now this request has been in the form of an informal query to the Donegall Pass Community Forum (DPCF) as the only recognised community organisation in the area, but the Council now wish to formally explore the feasibility of the DPCF to assume responsibility for such an undertaking.

To effectively conduct this work the DPCF has employed the services of Copius Consulting to conduct an independent feasibility study to fulfil the requirements placed upon it by Belfast City Council.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Feasibility Study

The purpose of this study is to test and assess the feasibility of the Donegall Pass Community Forum undertaking the management of the Donegall Pass Community Centre. Ultimately this study will make a number of recommendations which will allow the DPCF to make an informed decision regarding its ability to manage the Community Centre in place of Belfast City Council.

### **1.3 Background to the Donegall Pass Community Centre**

The Centre has been in existence since 2001 and was constructed as a direct response to substantial lobbying from the Community and local Political Representatives. The construction of the Centre was largely funded through Making Belfast Work with Belfast City Council making a 25% contribution to the overall project build costs of £244,500 for a 4,000 square foot building.

Initially the Centre was due to be a community managed facility however, due to political involvement and lobbying Belfast City Council agreed to manage the Centre with the proviso that it would be transferred to the community at some time in the very near future.

The Centre was officially opened by Lord Mayor Cllr Jim Rodgers in 2001 and has been the site of many positive achievements for the local Donegall Pass community ever since. However the Centre was the site of one major negative event when it was involved in the distribution of racist leaflets directed at the local Chinese population, who used the Centre extensively.

Belfast City Council's Community Services department facilitated a major mediation process aimed at resolving the issue and relations between the local community and the local Chinese community have been positive as a result. However, the Chinese Welfare Association developed a new Resource Centre close to Donegall Pass and subsequently usage of Centre from this population has reduced significantly. That said, members of the Chinese community continue to use the Centre, which is testament to its ability to bring people together and provide a truly community focused provision in the Donegall Pass area.

### **1.4 Background to the Donegall Pass Community Forum**

As outlined earlier the Forum's primary aim is to provide a platform for the regeneration of the area through a range of services and support provisions. AS such the Forum's core aims are to:

- Identify the key priorities for developing the area and prepare a strategy and action plan for addressing these priorities.
- Develop the Forum as an effective network for community groups and others working for the benefit of the area.
- Raise awareness of the needs of the community and attract investment and resources to meet those needs.

**“Our Vision for Donegall Pass is of an attractive, welcoming, vibrant and safe community, working together, celebrating the past, present and future.”**

In an effort to realise the overriding objectives embodied in the mission statement and the vision statement, Donegall Pass Community Forum aims to:

- 1 Tackle the problems of unemployment and increase employability through skills training;
- 2 Address inequalities in areas such as education and training, health and wellbeing, housing and the environment;
- 3 Promote the efficiency and effectiveness of charitable projects in the area of benefit by means of advice, education and training for the benefit of the public;
- 4 Provide and support programmes of education and training for adults in the area of benefit;
- 5 Deal with issues affecting children and young people;
- 6 Promote the regeneration of the area – economic, physical and social so that it becomes strong, safe, attractive and sustainable;
- 7 Promote road safety for the general protection and benefit of the inhabitants in the area of benefit;
- 8 Encourage and facilitate social inclusion;
- 9 Improve community relations, collaborate on the provision of and accessibility to shared spaces, and work in partnership with interface neighbours towards a shared future;
- 10 Identify the key priorities for developing the area and prepare a strategy and action plan for addressing these priorities;
- 11 Develop the Forum as an effective network for community groups and others working for the benefit of the area;
- 12 Raise awareness of the needs of the community and attract investment and resources to meet those needs.

## 1.5 Current Provision from the Community Centre

The Centre was developed in 2001 and has provided a variety of activities and facilities to the Donegall Pass community since its development. The Centre has provided this service through dedicated facilities and programming. The table below outlines the schedule of accommodation at the Centre:

Schedule of Accommodation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Large activity hall</li><li>• Small meeting room</li><li>• Kitchen</li><li>• Nursery /crèche room</li><li>• Waiting / TV area</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Office space (manager)</li><li>• Reception space / office</li><li>• Outdoor play area</li><li>• Small football pitch (grass)</li></ul>

The facilities are open to the community as outlined below:

**Monday – Thursday** 9am to 5pm and 6pm to 10pm  
**Friday** 9am to 4.30pm and 6pm to 9.30pm  
**Weekends** Available Upon Request \*

\* There is also allowance for casual opening hours upon request and dependent on individual requests and operational requirements at that particular time

## 1.6 Current Service Provision / Delivery from the Donegall Pass Community Forum

The DPCF has delivered a range of services and activities since its establishment in 1996. Initially the Forum was established to build the capacity of the community in the Donegall Pass area but this remit has developed significantly over the years to include for example, assistance in developing the physical infrastructure in the area for the benefit of the community, providing the community a voice to raise important local issues to relevant personnel / groups, as well as

provide a range of valuable services to a clearly deprived community (i.e. Life Line, advice and support etc).

This increased service provision has required the Forum to develop its own capacity to the extent where it now has a range of officers and personnel to deliver specific elements of work. The Forum's personnel structure is detailed in the following diagram:

## Donegall Pass Community Forum

### Office Bearers

Harry Todd (Chairperson)  
Michelle Bostock (Secretary)  
Derek Halligan (Treasurer)

### Members

Cllr Michael McGimpsey MLA  
Anne McAllister  
June Dougan  
Elizabeth Rodgers  
John Dean  
Julie Anne Scott  
Debbie McCurrie  
Valerie Best  
Henri Mohammad

### Staff

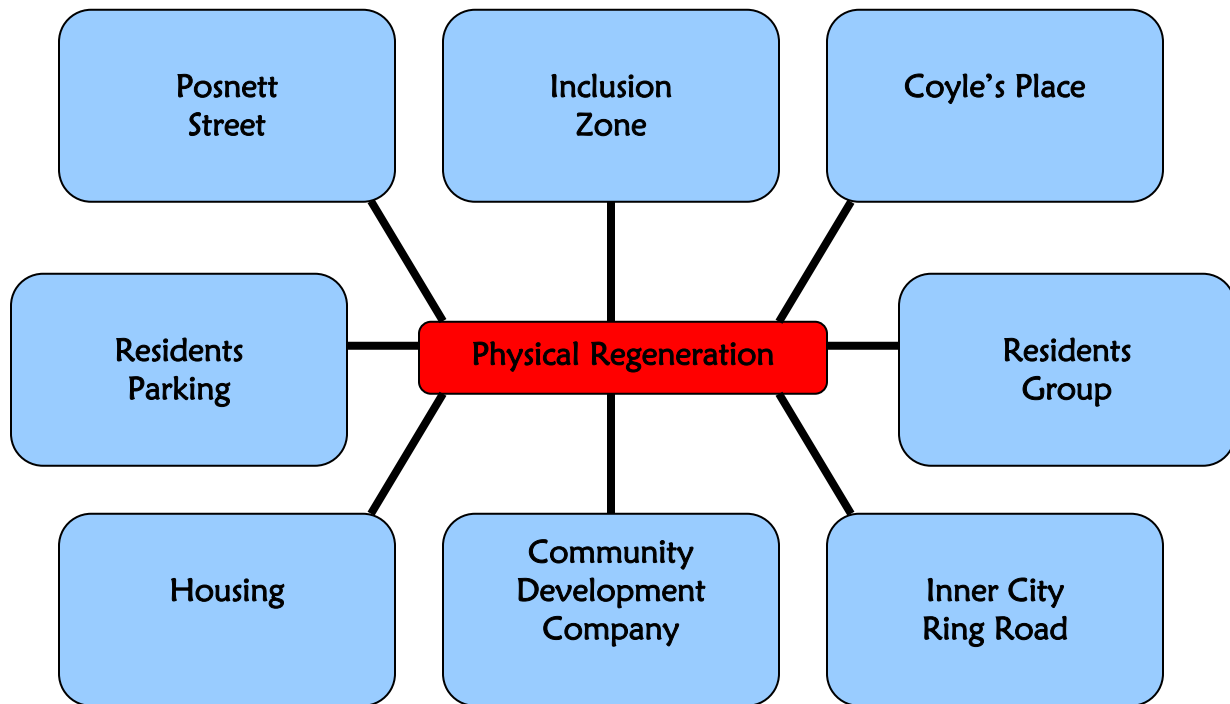
Elaine Mansfield (Forum Manager)  
Jim McKinley (Physical Regeneration)  
Pauline O'Neill (Finance / Admin)  
Ken Orr (Community Training/Education)  
Roisin Quine (Assisting Training)

The Forum delivers across a wide range of work areas some of which are outlined below:

- Physical Regeneration
- Training and Education
- Community Initiatives
- Community Services

To give a flavour of some of the specific work elements within each area the following diagrams summarise the Forum's extensive work programme:

### Physical Regeneration Work



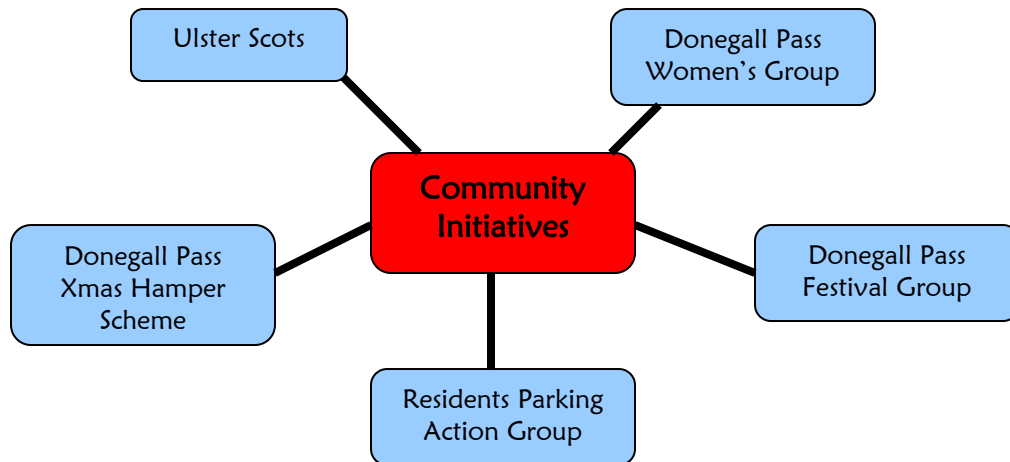
A brief explanation of each of these projects / activities can be found at appendix XX



### Community Focused Services



### Community Initiatives



## 1.7 Conclusion

The Donegall Pass Community Forum has been requested to complete a formal feasibility study to assess its capacity and ability to undertake the management of the Donegall Pass Community Centre. The Centre is an important provider of community services / activities to the relatively small population of Donegall Pass. It is imperative that these important community services continue to be provided to a standard and in a manner that befits the community. As such it is vital that the organisation responsible for the management has the required capacity and ability to undertake this role effectively. This study will assess the Donegall Pass Community Forum's suitability to successfully carryout such a role.

## **2 PROJECT METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The consultants and the Donegall Pass Community Forum devised and agreed a methodology to complete this study effectively. The study methodology included detailed consultation with a range of groups, organisations and individuals, extensive desktop research, as well as a benchmarking analysis of similar examples of best practice facility management by community organisations. The following sub sections will outline in detail the various processes involved in each of the methodological stages.

### **2.2 Proposed Methodology Themes**

The following table outlines the proposed methodology used to conduct all consultation activities with relevant groupings and individuals. This information is also complemented by a rationale for carrying out identified activities.

Area of Study	Proposed Study Activities	Rationale for Activities
Existing and Potential Users – Community and Voluntary Groups located within the Donegall Pass area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilised a detailed question / discussion structure</li> <li>• Telephone consultation</li> </ul>	Structured discussion outline used to ensure consistency and accuracy of information secured and sound feedback on nature of group, possible usage, expected payment charges and suggestions for operational management issues. Additionally, views were sought regarding the community perceptions of the Forum undertaking the management of the Centre.
Benchmarking Analysis with other Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilised structured discussion outline</li> <li>• Individual face to face interviews / meetings</li> <li>• Telephone consultation</li> </ul>	This method was used to assess and examine examples of best practice with regard to management of Community Facilities (previously owned and managed by Belfast City Council) by community organisations. This included Grosvenor Community Recreation Centre and Shaftesbury Recreation Centre managed by LORAG. Management personnel in these facilities were contacted to gather information regarding identification of issues related to managing facilities of this nature (i.e. operational, programming and expertise / experience etc), resource implications to undertake this responsibility (i.e. financial and staffing) as well as any advice or suggestions for anyone wishing to undertake this responsibility.
Political Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilised a detailed discussion structure based on consultation findings</li> <li>• Telephone consultation</li> </ul>	Feedback and opinion from all of the Political Representatives who cover the wider Donegall Pass area was an essential component of the consultation process and viewed as a means to provide important information and feedback in support or otherwise of the potential management transfer.
Donegall Pass Community Forum Management Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilised a detailed discussion structure based on consultation findings</li> <li>• Individual face to face interviews / meetings</li> <li>• Telephone consultation</li> </ul>	Structured discussion outline used to ensure consistency and accuracy of information secured and sound feedback on the Forum’s capacity to undertake the management of the Centre, any possible issues that may be foreseen, general views and comments regarding the proposal and suggestions for any potential operational management by the Forum.
Donegall Pass Community Forum Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual face to face interviews / meetings</li> <li>• Telephone consultation</li> </ul>	Ongoing meetings and updates regarding progress of the feasibility work as well as identification of potential management options for the Centre. This decision making input was based on initial findings and research conducted to date. This would allow the Forum to both input and inform all content of the feasibility study as well as secure their confirmation of work conducted.

## 2.3 Consulted Organisations

The following table outlines those organisations and individuals consulted as part of the consultation process:

Community & Voluntary Based Groups (Existing and Potential Users)	Statutory / Umbrella Organisations	Benchmarked Community Managed Facilities	Elected Representatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women’s Information Group</li> <li>• Donegall Pass Pensioners Group</li> <li>• Keep Fit Group</li> <li>• Donegall Pass Women’s Group</li> <li>• Arts Class</li> <li>• Donegall Pass Residents Group</li> <li>• Tai Chi Group</li> <li>• Surestart</li> <li>• Dance Group</li> <li>• Chinese Yoga Group</li> <li>• South Belfast Elim Church</li> <li>• Creative Writing Group</li> <li>• Dance Group</li> <li>• Somme Society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belfast City Council</li> <li>• South Belfast Highway to Health</li> <li>• Inner South Belfast Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership</li> <li>• GEMS NI</li> <li>• BELB</li> <li>• NIHE</li> <li>• South Belfast Lifestyle Forum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grosvenor Community Recreation Centre</li> <li>• Shaftesbury Recreation Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alasdair McDonnell</li> <li>• Alex Maskey</li> <li>• Anna Lo</li> <li>• Pat McCarthy</li> <li>• Michael McGimpsey</li> <li>• Peter O’Reilly</li> <li>• Christopher Stalford</li> <li>• Carmel Hanna</li> <li>• Jimmy Spratt</li> <li>• Bob Stoker</li> </ul>

## **2.4 Conclusion**

It was essential that the Donegall Pass Community Forum established a comprehensive method of conducting this study to ensure that all the relevant information was secured and included in the management decision making process. This would ensure the validity of the final report and overall buy in from local stakeholders and hence increasing the likelihood of the successful management transfer and responsibility. This section outlined the detailed methodology that was utilised to generate the required information. The Donegall Pass Community Forum feel that the methodology used went beyond what was required as a minimum to meet their needs.

## **3 RESEARCH AND CONSULTATION FINDINGS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The ability to secure all relevant information as a basis for any potential decision regarding the management of the Community Centre will ultimately be the strength of this feasibility study. Therefore a detailed research and consultation process has been conducted to ensure all the relevant information has been considered and provided in this document. This section will outline the findings of this research and consultation process, specifically looking at the potential future usage of the Centre (frequency and type), possible pricing policy and levied charges, general views and perceptions of the Forum's capacity to manage the Centre.

### **3.2 Research Findings**

#### **3.2.1 Review of all Proposed Belfast City Council Documentation**

##### *Sample Lease Agreement*

In summary this document basically sets out the parameters against which Belfast City Council will lease the Centre to the Donegall Pass Community Forum. At this stage the lease agreement is in draft format and does not have the specific information included that will ultimately influence a potential decision from the Forum with regard to any potential management of the Centre.

Specifically, this will outline arrangements such as:

- Term of lease
- Any financial arrangements between Council and Forum with regard to the Centre (i.e. rent)
- Building maintenance arrangements
- Usage stipulations
- Insurance Cover
- Provision within legislative requirements
- Dispute or Difference guidance

### *Funding Agreement for Community Managed Facilities*

The Council has the power to provide financial support to an organisation that will 'establish, maintain and manage recreational, social, physical and cultural facilities' in the Belfast City Council area. Under the terms of this agreement the Council will provide such an organisation an annual sum to maintain the facility over an agreed period of time. This agreement is obviously subject to a range of terms and conditions, will be subject to inflation rises as appropriate and will be payable in either one or two allocations based on the amount secured.

The Grant can only be used for the purposes of annual revenue costs associated with the operation of the facility and it is the responsibility of the managing organisation to ensure that all relevant criteria is complied throughout the period of Grant award.

A number of performance indicators are established to assess monitoring and reporting arrangements for the Grant award – some of which are outlined in the following box:

- 1. Adherence to DSD Good Governance principles and evidence of same to Council**
- 2. Annual report to Council in agreed form to include:**
  - a. Summary of organisation's financial position
  - b. Details of yearly profile and usage rates
  - c. The number of volunteers and hours generated annually
  - d. Details of any private, community, or other public sector sources levered during the year
- 3. Notification to Council in the event of any of the following:**
  - a. Threat to organisation's financial viability
  - b. Any deterioration in the organisation's financial position
- 4. Council have the right to:**
  - a. Inspect the premises and equipment used by the organisation
  - b. Discuss all aspects of the organisation's activities
  - c. Inspect all financial and other relevant records held by organisation
  - d. Attend AGM of the organisation



The Agreement also outlines in detail the circumstances that may lead to the Council ceasing further payments, some of which are outlined below:

1. Cessation of compliance with eligibility criteria by the organisation
2. Substantial failure by the organisation to meet performance indicators or failure to agree performance indicators
3. The financial viability of the organisation is no longer tenable
4. Application information is materially incomplete, incorrect or misleading
5. Failure of organisation to comply with its obligations in the agreement
6. Any part of the grant amount has been applied in an improper manner

Lastly the organisation has the responsibility of maintaining all financial and other records relevant to its funded activities in a secure place for minimum of three years from the date of the last receipt of grant payment.

### **3.2.2 Social Need and Disadvantage in the Donegall Pass area**

Donegall Pass is one of the most disadvantaged communities in Belfast and, indeed, Northern Ireland. It has some of the highest levels of unemployment, educational underachievement and ill health. Donegall Pass, part of Belfast's Shaftesbury Ward, is designated as having 'Core New TSN Status', has a 'Multiple Deprivation Score' of 14 and a 'Child Poverty Measure Score' of 16 (Source: Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure 2001). The area is, therefore, the fourteenth most deprived in Northern Ireland (out of a total of 566 electoral wards) and is well within the 'top' 2½% of indices of deprivation.

The Shaftesbury Ward demonstrates the highest levels of employment deprivation in the South Belfast Partnership Board area; it is ranked 12th in the Belfast City Council area and 25th out of the 566 Northern Ireland Wards. Its score indicates that over 21% of the population experience joblessness through unemployment, sickness or disability. Recent data indicate that the unemployment rate in the Donegall Pass stood at 6.12% significantly higher (+80%) than the South Belfast Parliamentary Constituency average of 3.4%. (*Vide* Appendix 1 of Queen's University's 'Donegall Pass: Towards a Sustainable Community', Final Report – June 2008.) Statistical data (*q.v.*) also reveal that 44.6% of Donegall Pass unemployed were classified as 'long

term unemployed' (**25.99% higher than the South Belfast PC average** of 35.4%); 49.16% of the community's population were classified, rather inelegantly, as 'economically inactive' (**33.95% higher than the South Belfast PC average** of 36.7%). DSD data, 2004 (*q.v.*) indicate that 34.28% of persons aged 18-59 years claimed Income Support (**328.5% higher than the South Belfast PC average** of 8%); 25.32% of persons in the age range 16-59 / 64 claimed Incapacity Benefit (**228.83% higher than the South Belfast PC average** of 7.7%); 41.2% of persons 16+ claimed Housing Benefit (**343.01% higher than the South Belfast PC average** of 9.3%).

Furthermore, the educational attainment of the working age population (16 to 74 year olds) in Donegall Pass is lower than that of Belfast LGD and Northern Ireland as a whole (*q.v.*, at Table 8). 54.71% of those from Donegall Pass have no qualifications compared to 41.82% for Belfast and 41.64% for Northern Ireland (**30.82% and 31.39% higher**, i.e., *worse*, respectively).

### 3.3 Consultation Findings

A range of consultation activities were conducted that generated a variety of information from which the study can be based. The following information is a summary of the findings of the consultation with community and voluntary sector groups (potential and existing users) and a range of statutory / umbrella organisations. The following table presents the information gained in response to specific questions and for ease of the reader the responses have been presented in bullet point form.

Question:	Response:
Current Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 hours (Monday) – throughout the year</li> <li>• 3 hours (Wednesday) – 18 weeks</li> <li>• 4 hours (Wednesday) – throughout the year</li> <li>• 3 – 4 times per annum (presentations)</li> <li>• 9am – 1pm (Monday to Friday) – throughout the year</li> <li>• 10am – 12pm (Tuesday) – throughout the year</li> <li>• Two week period per annum</li> </ul>
Pay for Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No payment currently (62.5%)</li> <li>• £1.60 p/h</li> <li>• £2.05 p/h</li> </ul>

Question:	Response:
<b>What do you think of the Current Provision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good</li> <li>• Friendly staff (25%)</li> <li>• Good facilities</li> <li>• Underused</li> <li>• Not ideal for dance activity</li> <li>• Meets our needs in terms of presentations</li> <li>• Centre staff very accommodating and provide everything that we need</li> <li>• Standards of cleanliness are always very high</li> <li>• Meets our needs in terms of an advice centre</li> </ul>
<b>Future Usage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No – (12.5%)</li> <li>• Yes – (87.5%)</li> </ul>
<b>What will Future Usage be?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 hours (Wednesday) – 18 weeks</li> <li>• 4 hours (Wednesday) – throughout the year</li> <li>• 9am – 1pm (Monday to Friday) – throughout the year</li> <li>• 10am – 12pm (Tuesday) – throughout the year</li> <li>• Two week period per annum &amp; additional activities throughout the year</li> </ul>
<b>What would you be willing to pay for usage in the future?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nominal fee - £5 - £10 (50%)</li> <li>• £1.60 p/h</li> <li>• £2.05 p/h</li> <li>• Small charge levied to participants who attend events (which goes to Centre) but not to organisation booking / delivering programme</li> </ul>
<b>Anything you would like to change regarding the future usage?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Happy with current position</li> <li>• Under used facilities – the Centre has many positive aspects</li> <li>• Additional opening hours – seems very busy so additional hours would be good</li> <li>• Very helpful staff</li> <li>• The only thing I would like to change is the storage issue but again realise that this would be difficult for those in charge, the building is what it is</li> <li>• The Centre is not seen as a place to use for the Community – needs to be promoted more to the community</li> <li>• I think this would be a good move for the Forum as it would generate more community usage of the Centre – the Centre is underused by the local community</li> </ul>
<b>Would Forum management be beneficial / positive for you?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Forum understand the needs of the community (37.5%)</li> <li>• Good relationship with the Forum</li> <li>• Sceptical as it might use it to make money – want price to stay the same</li> <li>• Not really but wouldn't want personalities coming into it and excluding groups</li> <li>• Could only be a positive move as it would give us a closer link to the community</li> <li>• It would also improve communication so that each group is aware of what the other is doing</li> <li>• We will be more informed as to the courses that are already available and therefore can signpost parents to these rather than duplicate activities</li> <li>• Yes as they are providing services locally</li> </ul>

Question:	Response:
Perceptions if the Forum undertook the Centre Management?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive development within the community (37.5%)</li> <li>• Will enable other groups to use the facility</li> <li>• No difference as long as it was made to work – should not be allowed to go under</li> <li>• I think most people would be content, you cant please all of the people all of the time and there will always be issues due to personal relationships etc but overall I think it will be well received</li> </ul>
Anyone better equipped?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No don't think so (37.5%)</li> <li>• No Forum are the only suitable organisation in the Pass to do it</li> </ul>
Is there anything that the Forum should be thinking about if it did undertake the management of the Centre?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better promotion of the facility particularly hall hire</li> <li>• Promotion to the local community</li> <li>• Maximise the facility in terms of the facilities available</li> <li>• Very busy at the minute – well utilised during opening times</li> <li>• Staffing</li> <li>• Financing</li> <li>• Facilities for young people (minor drugs problem in the area and the Centre could provide diversionary activities to assist to address this</li> <li>• I think they should look at hosting open days/drop in centres to make the community more aware of everything that is happening within the centre</li> <li>• Improved communication will help more people within the community get involved in activities and programmes</li> <li>• Need to think very clearly about how it is going to finance the management of the Centre</li> <li>• Should explore the possibility of developing a finance sub committee to assist and support the financial management of the Centre</li> </ul>
Other Comments?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better promotion of the facility particularly hall hire</li> <li>• If the Forum employed local staff it may be easier to build relationships and bridges in the community</li> <li>• I am a bit unsure of who certain individuals on the Committee represent</li> <li>• I am more than happy to support the Forum, change sometimes is not easy but often works out for the best</li> </ul>

### 3.3.1 Benchmarked Facilities

To place the potential management transfer on some context a number of facilities were identified as examples of best practice community managed facilities and as such were elements of each were benchmarked as part of this study. Roden Street Community Development Group who manage the old Grosvenor Recreation Centre and Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group (LORAG) who currently manage the Shaftesbury Recreation Centre are two such examples and the key points of these examples have been summarised in the following tables:

## Roden Street Community Development Group – Grosvenor Recreation Centre

Discussion Area	Response
Duration of Community Management role?	Since 1996
General comments regarding the Management agreement with BCC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At times there have been delays with payment draw down, due to requisition procedures</li> <li>• The relationship between the RSCDG and Council has been developed over many years – developed and strengthened with time</li> <li>• The RSCDG currently has a separate management agreement in place for the new 3G pitch</li> </ul>
Any issues that you experienced that may help DPCF?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential business use may conflict with community use – needs to be carefully managed</li> <li>• RSCDG has secured funding from a range of sources to support the Centre delivery (i.e. Social Services, DSD, BELB, Children in Need etc)</li> <li>• It has been easier to manage the Centre as a community organisation as opposed to Council (less restrictive)</li> </ul>
Is there anything you would change given your experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We underestimated the required level revenue grant from BCC</li> <li>• We should be more involved in Council Training (facility management)</li> <li>• The exact detail of the maintenance contract should clearly outlined (operational &amp; structural)</li> </ul>
Number of staff and how are they funded?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager (BRO)</li> <li>• Finance Officer (BRO)</li> <li>• Facility Manager (Big Lottery Fund)</li> <li>• Youth Club Worker (Tudor Trust, Dept of Foreign Affairs, BELB)</li> <li>• Surestart x3 (Surestart)</li> <li>• Playgroup (Surestart &amp; Children in Need)</li> <li>• After Schools (Surestart &amp; Voluntary Support)</li> <li>• Care Taker (Revenue Grant)</li> <li>• Community Service Placement Scheme</li> </ul>
Is there anything that the organisation was required to undertake the management?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a capacity building programme for Committee Members</li> <li>• Develop a range of best practice policies and procedures and implement stringently – implemented professional standards</li> <li>• Developed specific pricing policy that provided the basis for income generation</li> <li>• Drive to ensure that Management Committee members were active and committed to the longer term provision from the Centre</li> <li>• Drive to secure funding to support delivery (staff and programmes)</li> </ul>

## LORAG – Shaftesbury Recreation Centre

Discussion Area	Response
General comments regarding the Management agreement with BCC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have developed a good working relationship with BCC over the years with the staff being very easy to deal with</li> <li>• Need more support from Council development workers</li> <li>• Council need to participate more as a partner rather than in an observatory role</li> <li>• Just secured a further 25 year lease agreement</li> </ul>
Any issues that you experienced that may help DPCF?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The annual financial contribution secured from Belfast City Council is insufficient as it is based upon opening hours offered during BCC management of the facility</li> <li>• Opening hours are currently over double the 30 hours offered during BCC management of the facility</li> <li>• We have currently set up an advisory / steering sub committee with reps from local user groups, stakeholders and BCC to ensure further partner participation</li> </ul>
Is there anything you would change given your experience?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure a greater financial and partner commitment and contribution from BCC based upon future provision</li> </ul>
Number of staff and how are they funded?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 f/t &amp; 1 p/t after school worker (Surestart)</li> <li>• 1 f/t Centre Manager (LSP)</li> <li>• 2 p/t cleaners (Mixture of Income generated and BCC contribution)</li> <li>• Full Time Youth Worker (NIPA/ DSD)</li> <li>• 1 Caretaker p/t (Mixture of Income generated and BCC contribution)</li> </ul>
Brief outline of financial circumstances?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £56,000 contribution from BCC towards running costs and salaries (feel this should be £100,000).</li> <li>• £36,000 income generated through facility hire</li> </ul>
Is there anything that the organisation was required to undertake the management?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have a strong management committee and staff and resources sub committee in place</li> </ul>

### 3.3.2 Elected Representatives

Like any project of this nature it is important to secure opinion and feedback from elected representatives who have a remit which cover the Donegall Pass area. The following table outlines the Political Representatives that were consulted as part of the process as well as their feedback / comments.

Representative	Response / Comments
<p><b>Cllr Bob Stoker</b></p>	<p>Cllr Stoker indicated that there had been investment in the Forum in recent times to build the capacity of its individuals and personnel with the ultimate aim of undertaking the management of the facility in the longer term. This had resulted in greater understanding and capacity of the Forum in work areas such as community development, economic development etc. However, Cllr Stoker indicated that there may be issues for the Forum around confidence and the potential funding shortfall that may arise which could drastically impact provision.</p> <p>With regard to the Forum's involvement in other capital projects in the area (i.e. Coyle's Place, the Inclusion Zone etc) Cllr Stoker did not foresee that this would hinder its delivery but seen it as a positive step in that this would ensure there is a strategic coordination of the projects in the area. Additionally, as there are many different aspects and elements to the Forum's delivery it would be difficult to house the entire portfolio of provision in one building.</p> <p>Cllr felt that by the Forum undertaking the management of the Centre it may encourage greater usage from not only people who reside within the Donegall Pass area but also those from outside the catchment area, for example, the travel to work population. This may be facilitated by a greater flexibility in delivery and provision that a community organisation could bring to the management processes.</p> <p>As Cllr Stoker felt that the Forum was fully representative of the community it was indicated that it's ability to bring people together and encourage wider community involvement, across a range of issues, should be maximised</p>
<p><b>Cllr Alex Maskey (MLA)</b></p>	<p>Alex was very aware of the Forum and its work in the Donegall Pass area, given his attendance at numerous of its events as well as the Forum's involvement in the Coyle's Place project. Alex indicated that he believed that community management of the community centre was broadly speaking a good idea. Commenting that the Forum was a well established group who he believed worked well on behalf of the community and had a firm grasp of what the needs and demands of the area were. Alex indicated that he was impressed with the work of the Forum, that it was committed to the development of the Donegall Pass area as well as provided this service in an inclusive basis empowering the community.</p> <p>With regard to issues that the Forum may encounter with the management of the Centre Alex indicated that it would have to firstly want to undertake the management of the Centre and secondly clearly examine ways in which it could be done. He felt that the nature of the organisation would change in that there would be a greater focus on facility management and commercial focus in making it work financially. Additionally, Alex indicated that the Forum's ability to source and secure funding as a means of supplementing any short fall in Centre operating costs would be critical to the successful delivery. This fundraising would include all aspects of the Forum's delivery and may include income generation, programme delivery or support for delivery resources (i.e. staff etc).</p>

Representative	Response / Comments
<p><b>Cllr Alex Maskey (MLA)</b> cont'd</p>	<p>Alex concluded that the Forum appeared to have the necessary will, enthusiasm and relationships with a range of organisations, to successfully undertake the management of the Donegall Pass Community Centre and on the basis that he believes communities are better positioned to manage community facilities he would be supportive of any such venture.</p>
<p><b>Cllr Patrick McCarthy</b></p>	<p>Pat was very aware of the Forum and its delivery within the area. Indicated that it is vital that the community is at the core of this decision to manage the facility as they are the people who will feel the impacts of any potential transfer of management responsibility at the Centre. This is the only facility in the Donegall Pass area and any future management arrangements must meet the community needs as if any detrimental was to happen the consequences for the community would be significant.</p> <p>As such there needs to be some form of competency measures in place to assess the potential for any organisation to undertake the management of the Centre. Also, Pat indicated that he had concerns that this may create a precedent for other community organisations who may wish to undertake similar arrangements but may not have the necessary capacity to do so.</p> <p>Pat also raised some minor concerns regarding the capacity of the Forum to undertake the management of the Centre in that they may not have the necessary expertise / experience to manage the facility effectively from a facility management viewpoint. As such the Forum may need to have a plan in place to address this skills gaps / deficit.</p>
<p><b>Cllr Peter O'Reilly</b></p>	<p>Indicated that comment received by Cllr Pat McCarthy would suffice.</p>
<p><b>Cllr Christopher Stalford</b></p>	<p>Christopher indicated that he would be very supportive of any management transfer to the Forum in the context of Council reviewing its policy relating to community management of Council facilities. Christopher is very aware of the Forum and its delivery and views it as being capable of providing a very strong community focused service form the Centre. Christopher feels that the Forum has the full support / buy in from the community and is fully representative of the Donegall Pass community as well as more importantly demonstrated very clearly the ability to be fully inclusive. This is an important point as in the past there have been examples of groups undertaking the management of Council community facilities and excluding certain groups / individuals.</p> <p>Christopher indicated that the Forum would require a change in focus in terms of undertaking this move as it would have to have to a greater focus on facility management. This he feels would not be a major issue for the Forum as it has more than demonstrated its ability to adapt and mould its provision to meet community need.</p>



Representative	Response / Comments
<p><b>Cllr Christopher Stalford (cont'd)</b></p>	<p>This point is also supported with a further comment that the Forum will be required to make the Centre commercially viable and Christopher suggests the possibility of widening the range of activities provided from / at the Centre, coupled with the ability to source and secure public funding to support delivery will be critical to its success. Christopher feels the Forum has adequate capability to achieve this and has clearly demonstrated this in the past.</p> <p>This is not to say that Council should not provide the Forum with a revenue support in the short to medium term as Christopher feels that this would be a necessity and would enable the Forum to establish itself as a truly community focused facility provider in addition to its current diverse provision. Christopher also suggests that this support should be viewed as a short term measure only and that the Forum should aim for self sustainability in the medium to long term future.</p>
<p><b>Cllr Carmel Hanna (MLA)</b></p>	<p>Indicated that as she was retiring at the end of the year Carmel wouldn't want to commit to making comment on issues that would be relevant / related to post this time, and as such didn't wish to make comment.</p>
<p><b>Cllr Alasdair McDonnell (MLA)</b></p>	<p>Alasdair has had several dealings with the Forum over the last number of years, is familiar with most of what they do and what they have already delivered to their local community. Alasdair feels that the Forum has pro-actively built on their partnerships with the wider community to assist them in delivering support and changes to their community.</p> <p>Alasdair indicated that he has every confidence that the Forum has the right team in place to understand the local community needs and to deliver further changes and support to them. They are well informed and committed to improving their local area, and Alasdair feels that they have the support of the local community.</p> <p>Alasdair indicated that he does foresee any issues or problems in the Forum undertaking the management of the Centre. However, in relation to generating income, he believes, that like all local community organisations they may need additional help and guidance to ensure successful generation of income. This is not saying that they don't have the skills, but that they would benefit from some expert support in fundraising.</p> <p>Alasdair feels that the most obvious positive aspect of the Forum undertaking the management of the Centre is that the it has the knowledge and experience of the community's needs and wants, they would be able to prioritise and promote activities which will deliver improvements and services to the local community, and they will be in an excellent position to improve community confidence in themselves and their area.</p>

Representative	Response / Comments
Cllr Jimmy Spratt (MLA)	<p>Jimmy has been aware of the Forum for some time now and has been impressed with their plans for the area and the range of projects it has planned or ongoing at the minute. Jimmy believes the Forum has the necessary support and buy in from the community to make this project successful, but probably more importantly has the capacity to manage the Centre effectively and with the best interests of the community at heart.</p> <p>The plans allow for income generation particularly the hiring out of the conference rooms. The Forum definitely has a flexible approach to who will be able to use the Centre and this is its real strength. We fully support the Forum in their plans for the new Centre.</p>
Anna Lo (MLA)	<p>Anna indicated that the concept of a Community organisation managing a community facility is a logical and positive step, but feels that any organisation (not specifically the Forum) would have to possess the necessary expertise and experience to conduct this successfully. Specifically Anna indicated that this may include facility management, community relations, IT, hospitality etc. Anna also indicated that she would undoubtedly support this development if the necessary expertise and experience were in place and functional.</p> <p>Anna commented that the longer term sustainability of the Forum as an organisation may be an issue for consideration given its reliance on Public funding to employ staff and designated personnel to deliver various aspects of its provision. Anna qualified this statement commenting that the most important issue in this possible development must be the provision of services to the resident population of the Donegall Pass as a whole in the longer term as this is the only community facility in the Donegall Pass and any potential reduction in provision or facility access would have a seriously negative impact on the local community.</p> <p>Anna also indicated that there may be community perceptions that the Forum could show some bias towards certain sections of the community / individuals that may influence / deter people from participating at the Centre. This would need to be managed carefully and with due consideration should such instances arise.</p> <p>Overall Anna was positive that the concept was a good one but any organisation would be required to have the necessary skills, knowledge and expertise to carry out this role effectively.</p>
Cllr Michael McGimpsey (MLA)	

It should be noted that each of the contributors to comments in the above table concurred with the account as presented above prior to completion of the document.

### **3.4 Conclusions**

This section has clearly outlined the findings of this study report across a number of different areas and aspects. This has presented a depth of information which has been used to inform the process of assessing the feasibility of the Forum undertaking management of the Centre. Key information will be extracted from that which has been presented above and used in later sections of this report.

## **4 ENSURING A QUALITY COMMUNITY PROVISION FROM THE CENTRE**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Ultimately, the most important issue in the management of the Community Centre is the quality product offered to the Community. As such this must be the primary aim for all those involved in the delivery of services from the Centre. This section will examine what is delivered currently from the Centre and probably more importantly the resource implications of providing that service from the current management organisation, Belfast City Council. In addition, this section will also draw out the key issues that will be required to continue the delivery of quality service from the Centre in the longer term with a key focus on the benefits received by the community to the fore.

### **4.2 Current Provision**

This sub section will, based on consulted information and weekly booking activity for the Donegall Pass Community Centre, convey a picture of the present usage rates and the activities and services on offer at the facility presently.

It must be stated that the booking weekly activity sheets were a snapshot in time and do not portray a holistically accurate year long booking / activities programme although anecdotal evidence from the Centre staff (i.e. Centre Manager) indicates that this level of activity can be assumed to be common for the annual programme of activity.

The table below outlines the weekly activity programme:

Activity / Organisation	9 am	10 am	11 am	12 pm	1 pm	2 pm	3 pm	4 pm	5 pm	6 pm	7 pm	8 pm	9 pm
<b>Monday</b>													
Surestart	Yellow												
Surestart Stay & Play		Dark Blue											
Dancing Group				Dark Grey									
BELB Junior Youth Club										Cyan			
BELB Senior Youth Club												Olive Green	
Pensioners Club											Pink		
<b>Tuesday</b>													
Surestart	Yellow												
Ladies Arts and Crafts Club		Orange											
Chinese Luncheon Club		Brown											
Housing Executive		Grey											
Chinese English Language Group						Magenta							
Chinese Yoga						Purple							
<b>Wednesday</b>													
Surestart	Yellow												
Surestart Crèche					Light Orange								
After schools Club							Dark Green						
<b>Thursday</b>													
Surestart	Yellow												
AA Group			Light Green										
Active Communities Programme							Cyan						
SBYCFB – Learners Class											Blue		
Young Men & Young Women's Group											Maroon		
<b>Friday</b>													
Surestart	Yellow												
Bus to St George's Market		Bright Green											
Pensioners Lunch Club				Light Purple									
South Belfast Area Project											Yellow		
Drop in Centre for Teenagers											Red		

It should be noted that current booking / usage arrangements allow free usage of the facilities to all community and voluntary sector groups who do not generate income from their use of the Community Centre.

### **4.3 Current Support from Belfast City Council**

As a Council managed Community facility the Centre is entirely supported from Belfast City Council directly. This sub section will present all relevant information regarding the level and range of support required to adequately provide this service to the community. In addition information will be detailed that will aim to quantify this support, for example, financial support to provide adequately staffing provision or insurance cover.

#### **4.3.1 Financial Resources**

The following table provides a summarised breakdown of the Council's expenditure in delivering its services from the Centre for the year 2008 and 2009:

<b>Profit and loss accounts</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Salaries	30,191.19
Wages	48,113.12
Overtime	2,072.41
Employer NIC	5,609.55
Employer Superannuation	6,708.99
Agency Staff	8,646.56
Direct Employee Expenses	101,341.82
Training	25.00
Indirect Employee Expenses	25.00
Employee Related	101,366.82
Utility Costs	8,463.69
Rent	200.83
Repairs to Property	704.31
Cleaning of Buildings	196.65
Premises Related Insurance	816.12
Premises Related	10,381.60
Equipment Tools & Materials	1,536.72
Hired & Contracted Services	594.97
Licenses	1,564.79
Printing & Stationery	103.90
Postage & Telephone	1,724.14
Other Establishment Costs	4.27
Supplies & Services	5,528.79
Mileage & Parking	324.10
Hire of Transport & Heavy Plant	230.00
Transport Related	554.10
Subscriptions & Grants	42.55
Miscellaneous	42.55
Expenditure	124,302.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>124,302.34</b>

It is important to note that the information presented above gives a very clear indication of the Centre's running / operating costs, however, the evidence presented indicated that the income generated through centre usage for the same period was minimal / negligible.

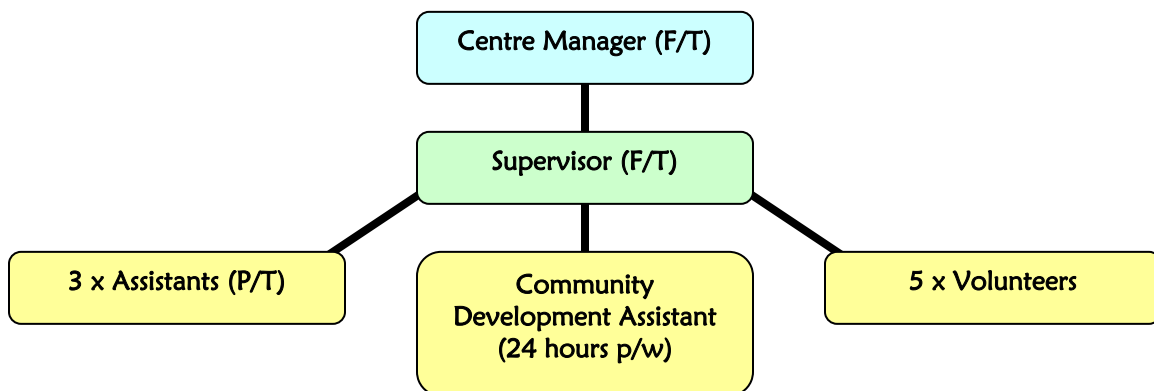
#### **4.3.2 Physical Resources**

Presently Belfast City Council provides all necessary cover and maintenance / repair provision for the Centre, which in terms of a financial contribution to the Centre's running costs equates to approximately £900 per annum (breakdown detailed above – section 4.3.1).

Additionally premises costs (based on 2008/9 accounts) equate to approximately £9,476.46 per annum which is detailed as Utility Costs, Cleaning of Buildings and Premises Related Insurances – detailed in the table in section 4.3.1.

#### 4.3.3 Human Resources

The Centre currently employs a number of staff to adequately provide its services and facilities throughout its provision periods. The diagram outlined below presents the current staffing levels at the Centre:



The Community **Centre Manager** has ultimate responsibility for the effective and efficient management of the facility, as well as the responsibility of achieving business related targets, operational and business planning.

The Community **Centre Supervisor's** (9am – 5pm) role focuses mainly on the operational management of the Centre, for example, ensuring the Centre meets Health and Safety regulations and is fit for use by the public.

Each of the three **Part Time Assistants** (1 x 9am – 1pm; 1 x 1pm – 5pm; and 1 x 6pm – 9pm) has the responsibility of managing the space for effective usage by user groups, for example, ensuring that equipment is available for users, catering requirements are fulfilled etc.

The **Community Development Assistant** is mainly utilised for programme based work and delivery in and from the Centre.

The **Volunteers** are used to assist and support employed staff to deliver an efficient and effective service to users, particularly during summer periods or programmes.



The costs of providing this level of staffing (with associated on costs) is approximately £101,340 per annum, based on the 2008/9 accounts.

**The Centre works to a tried and tested formula in that there are always 2 members of staff working during 9am – 5pm and one worker present in the evening (Monday – Friday).**

#### 4.4 Key Issues to Consider in Order to Deliver a Quality Service

It is imperative that any potential shift from Council management of the Centre is done so with the best interests of the community at its core as to do otherwise will only jeopardise the longer term delivery and provision to the people of Donegall Pass and surrounding areas. There are a number of key issues that need to be fully considered with regard to the management of and subsequent delivery from the Centre. These have been outlined below:

Key Issue	Description
Adequate Staffing	<p>To adequately cater for the needs and demands of the local community staffing at the Centre will need to be adequate both in terms of number and appropriately skilled / experienced.</p> <p>Both the potential opening hours and the range of activities that will likely be provided from the Centre will require a pool of staff that has the necessary skills and experience to deliver this service successfully. Undoubtedly there will be occasions where other dedicated staff will be required to deliver specific activities but due to the casual nature of this provision it is logical to suggest that these staff will be employed as and when required.</p>
Facility Maintenance and Upkeep	<p>Currently the Council provide a full support for the maintenance and upkeep of the building which according to the Centre's 2008 / 9 profit and loss accounts equates to approximately £3,725 per annum (including external cleaning, repairs, external security, operating supplies / consumables and licenses).</p> <p>It is important that the building is maintained appropriately both in terms of legislative requirements as well as a method of attracting and retaining users.</p>

Key Issue	Description
Need Based Delivery	As a truly community focused provider the Centre must aim to address community need. Regardless of who manages the facility it is a core principle that appropriate methods and activities are conducted to ascertain and quantify community need. The Forum already has a recognised feel of what the community need is given its community development role within the area.
Adequate Insurances in Place	Currently Council cover all directly managed facilities under its corporate insurance policy. Should management responsibility transfer to the Forum it will thus be its responsibility to insure the facility for all activity that is delivered from and in it. This again will require the Forum paying an additional premium and will be based on what the future delivery will be post the management change.
Income Generation	The Centre's pricing policy is obviously aligned to Belfast City Council's generic policy for all centres. This permits free usage to all groups / individuals who use the Centre for the benefit of the Community. This obviously has serious implications for any potential organisation wishing to undertake the management of the Centre and run as a commercially viable entity which has the capacity to sustain its delivery over the longer term.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

Understanding the practical requirements to ensure successful delivery from and at the Centre will be a critical component of the Forum's potential management of the Centre. Having detailed information with regard to the current circumstances / situation at the Centre will undoubtedly make that transition from Council to Community management as straightforward as possible.

## **5 MANAGEMENT OPTIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This section outlines in detail a range of options that will be considered as part of this study and will thus inform the Forum's decision making regarding the potential management transfer of the Centre.

### **5.2 Identification of Options for Potential Management of the Centre**

The Forum assisted by the consultants has given careful consideration to a range of potential options for the management of the Centre given the various connotations. These options are presented below:

- 1. Status Quo: For Belfast City Council to continue to have the responsibility for the management of the Centre.**
- 2. Status Quo for a period of a Year with Donegal Pass community Forum developing practical capacity / experience of Centre Management with a view to undertaking management from April 2011**
- 3. Belfast City Council transferring Centre Management to the Forum without Revenue Support**
- 4. Belfast City Council transferring Centre Management to the Forum with Revenue Support of £50,000 per annum**

### 5.3 Description of Options including Financial Summary

The following information will outline in detail a description of each of the identified options. Indicative financial information with regard to the implication of each option will be presented also.

#### Option 1

**Status Quo: For Belfast City Council to continue to have the responsibility of managing the Centre.**

This option will see the Council continue to manage the Centre as it does currently. This is presented as a comparator option as a basis to assess all other options. As when the Centre was constructed this would only be a short term measure with a view to transfer management to an appropriate community organisation when it is suitable to do so.

This option will have financial impact on the Forum and its delivery.

#### Option 2

**Belfast City Council transferring Centre Management to the Forum without Revenue Support**

This option would see the Forum undertaking the management of the Centre at an agreed date between both parties with no revenue support from Council. As such the Forum would be required to income generate and ensure the Centre is commercially viable from the very outset of its management responsibilities.

Accounts for 2008 – 9 period show that the Centre did not generate any income for the year and that the running costs totalled over £124,000. This scenario, if presented to the Forum, would undoubtedly provide a significant if not impossible challenge for the Forum to sustain and as such would not be considered as a viable option.

### Option 3

#### Belfast City Council transferring Centre Management to the Forum with Revenue Support of £50,000 per annum

This option would see the Forum undertake the management of the Centre with the financial support of Council through a revenue grant of approximately £50,000 per annum. The support of a revenue grant (of varying levels) from Council has been standard practice for organisations undertaking management responsibilities at other centres across the City.

The rationale for the levy of a revenue grant at £50,000 is again based on the Centre's accounts for the year 2008/9 and its lack of demonstrable income. Even with this level of financial support and the potential to reduce operating costs as a community organisation (estimated to be approximately £100,000) this would still present a formidable challenge to the Forum, particularly in the early period after the management transfer.

If the Forum was to undertake the management of the Centre it would also be eligible to secure / apply for a number of other Belfast City Council grants which could support delivery from a financial perspective. This includes:

Funding Agreement		Application Based Grants	
Title	Amount	Title	Amount
Projects	£500	Capacity Building	£25,000 - £30,000
Summer Scheme	£2,500 - £3,000	Advice Grants	
Community Chest	£100 (OAP) £100 (Children)		

The financial support eligible through the funding agreement is provided as part of a written agreement between the facility management organisation and Belfast City Council as a means of developing and delivering sustained activities on an annual basis. This funding is almost automatic based on need and desire to provide services to the community.

The financial support which is eligible to the Forum on an application basis is not guaranteed.

Even if the Forum was to secure all of the funding listed above it would still be faced with a deficit of approximately £20,000 per annum, with no other demonstrable sources of income, particularly in the early stages of the undertaking Centre management responsibility.

The consultants have calculated an approximate figure of potential income which could be generated based on consultation (frequency of use and possible pricing charges) with existing and potential users; the Centre could expect to generate income in the region of £8,500 - £9,000 per annum should they undertake the management of the Centre.

#### Option 4

The provision of a 'transition period' of one year which will allow Donegall Pass Community Forum to develop its practical capacity / experience of Centre Management with a view to undertaking management from April 2011 with adequate revenue support.

This option would see the Council continuing to manage the facility for a period of a year with the Forum developing its practical experience of undertaking the management from April 2011, should the conditions be suitable to all parties. The rationale for the presentation of this option is that the Centre did not show any income for the 2008/9 financial year. As such this 'transition period' would allow all parties to improve the financial circumstances of the Centre with a view to making a better informed decision post prior to any transfer of management.

This would see the Forum get a firm grasp of practical management of the facility by, for example, essentially shadowing the current facility manager or a designated period of the working week, or some similar arrangement. This would not only allow the Forum to further develop its practical capacity to manage the Centre but also to fully understand the practicalities of Centre management at first hand. This would thus allow it to be fully aware of the implications of the managing the Centre.

Additionally, this period could also be used as a means to change certain arrangements that will make easy the transfer of management to the Forum, for example, the implementation of a new community friendly pricing policy which encourages payment from all organisations at a agreed rate or the Forum could begin to source and secure funding as a means to generate income for the Centre.

This option would have no direct financial impact for the Forum apart from the provision of a staff member who's time will be utilised for Centre business in line with agreed activities, for example, production and submission of funding applications, events / activity delivery and shadowing the current Centre Manager.

#### **5.4 Conclusions**

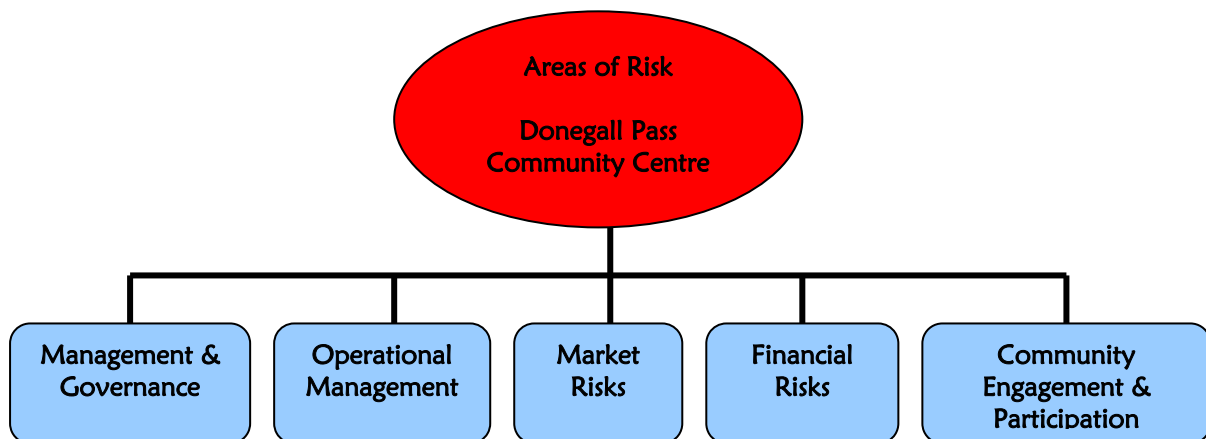
The section has presented some very pertinent information in relation to the possible options for the future management arrangements at the Centre linked to the potential of the Centre undertaking the management. At this stage it is difficult to fully investigate the financial implications of the options above, particularly options 3 and 4, but the information presented is suffice to inform future decision making by both the Forum and Council.

## 6 RISK MANAGEMENT

### 6.1 Main Risks and Uncertainties Facing the Donegall Pass Community Forum

The Donegall Pass Community Forum is in the process of assessing its potential to undertake the management of the Donegall Pass Community Centre. Given the implications of undertaking such a move there is potential to experience a range of risks that could have a detrimental impact on the successful management and operations of the Centre.

The following areas of risk have been identified by the Forum and the consultants as part of the feasibility study process;



Each of the risk areas identified in the diagram above is dissected and presented in the following sub sections. The risk analysis section will describe each type of risk, provide details on its likely probability / impact, highlight the existing controls in place, suggest additional best practice controls that will need to be put in place, and identify the individual / partner / organisation that will be tasked with putting the control in place.

This risk analysis section is also supported by a SWOT analysis for the Forum.



## 6.2 Management and Governance Risks

Management and Governance Risks					
Description	Impact	Probability	Existing Controls	Actions Required	Lead Responsibility
Representative Committee Members withdrawing from their Voluntary Positions	High	Low – Medium	Committee Members currently agree to a term of office when accepting a position.	The Forum to develop codes of conduct, roles, responsibilities and requirements that must be presented and agreed to be each Committee Member	Donegall Pass Community Forum (DPCF)
Conflict emerging within the Committee as a result of differing partner interests / agendas	High	Low	Decisions are currently discussed and agreed at Committee Meetings between Committee members	DPCF will explore the possibility of securing the involvement of an independent individual to sit on the Management Committee	DPCF
Upon undertaking the management of the Centre the Committee's role becoming contaminated with operational issues	High	Low – Medium	Committee members currently influence and provide practical assistance to DPCF upon request	Clear lines of demarcation between Operational Staff and Committee members agreed and adhered to through design of monthly meeting agendas	DPCF Committee Chair Committee Members
Belfast City Council's role in the future Governance structure to be contaminated by Centre operational issues	High	Low – Medium	BCC currently manage all operational issues at the Centre	DPCF to devise and implement clearly defined roles and responsibilities to all Committee Members and key partners	DPCF Committee Chair
The capacity for Donegall Pass Community Forum to successfully deliver their proposed outcomes for the Centre	High	Low - Medium	DPCF has a very experienced Staff complement and Committee membership and will undertake to add sufficient facility management / operations staff should it undertake the management of the Centre	Key Committee members to assume responsibility for overseeing specific elements of the Centre delivery through sub committee structures	DPCF Committee Members

### 6.3 Operational Management Risks

Operational Management Risks					
Description	Impact	Probability	Existing Controls	Actions Required	Lead Responsibility
Failure to Recruit Suitable Staff	Medium – High	Low – Medium	DPCF will operate recruitment processes in line with best practice local authority / funder guidelines	To review all recruitment processes in line with best practice and implement appropriate recommendations	DPCF Committee Members
Lack of adherence to Best Practice Policy and procedure standards	Medium – High	Low	Centre currently utilises BCC policy and procedure guidance	To conduct review of all policy and procedural guidance based on management change and implement all appropriate recommendations based for the benefit of the community provision	DPCF Committee Members Centre staff
Lack of ability to attract, secure and effectively manage volunteers as a means of supporting delivery from the Centre under new community management structures	High	Medium	BCC currently utilise a number of volunteers based on best practice guidance from appropriate organisations	DPCF to utilise the professional support and guidance (i.e. Volunteer Development Agency) to manage all volunteer support and delivery from the site	DPCF Committee Members
Dependency of new Centre staff on existing DPCF leading to potential issues relating to DPCF delivery	High	Low – Medium	No controls in place currently	DPCF to develop and implement clear roles and responsibilities for all Centre and Forum staff with regard to the new management arrangements at the Centre	DPCF Committee Members New Centre Staff
Failure of Centre staff to continually monitor and evolve in line with changes in the Community need / demand	Medium	Low – Medium	Centre currently has effective feedback processes in place to ascertain community need	Development of twice annual protocol for Centre staff to consult with the local community and implementing relevant findings and subsequently provision through appropriate structures	Centre staff DPCF Committee Members
General Building and Maintenance Risks	Medium	Low – Medium	Ongoing building and maintenance management protocols have been prepared for the Centre through current BCC management processes	Continuation and implementation all of relevant policy and procedures	DPCF Committee Members Centre Staff

## 6.4 Market Risks

Market Risks					
Description	Impact	Probability	Existing Controls	Actions Required	Lead Responsibility
Not enough of community groups / individuals using the Centre	Medium – High	Low	A varied range of community and voluntary sector groups currently use the Centre	A high profile launch of the potential community management arrangement conducted to highlight change of Centre circumstances (i.e. possible change in opening hours, methods of usage etc)	DPCF Committee Members Centre staff
Provision not reflective of the ever changing needs of local community	Medium – High	Low – Medium	BCC currently undertake regular community consultation to assess demand and need in the area	Development of annual consultation exercises conducted to quantify community need in the area - relevant findings analysed and services amended as appropriate	DPCF Committee Members Centre staff
The new management arrangements and subsequent provision displacing some of the existing community provision locally	Medium	Medium	No control in place currently	The Centre is currently the only community focused facility in the area which aims to provide something for all sections of the community – DPCF to conduct analysis of any future facility provision	DPCF
The impact of negative perceptions of the local Donegall Pass area on usage of the Centre	High	Medium – High	The Centre (BCC) has in recent times made a conscious effort to present an inclusive environment and inviting environment for all sections of the local community	The Forum will develop and implement best practice policies and procedures related to inclusivity. All staff will receive adequate training and guidance with respect to implementation	DPCF Committee Members Centre Staff

## 6.5 Financial Risks

Financial Risks					
Description	Impact	Probability	Existing Controls	Actions Required	Lead Responsibility
Failure for DPCF to secure the necessary public funding to support delivery	High	Medium	DPCF has considerable experience of raising public funding to support its existing provision (linked to programme and staffing funding)	To ensure that a dedicated resource is allocated to securing funding to support Centre provision – this resource will be allocated 3 months prior to any Centre Management transfer.	DPCF Committee Members
Failure of DPCF to generate sufficient income to sustain the delivery from the Centre	High	Medium - High	Centre currently does not levy a fee to users who provide a service to the community and voluntary sector groups (on a non commercial basis)	DPCF to develop and implement a community friendly pricing policy that allows it to generate income, provide a value for money community focused service, based on benchmarking analysis of similar facilities in the locality	DPCF
Failure of DPCF to secure an appropriate level of revenue support from BCC to sustain the short to medium future of the Centre delivery	High	Low – Medium	Centre is currently totally supported financially by BCC and BCC also make a £5,000 contribution to the office costs for the Forum at Grove House	DPCF to agree an appropriate level of revenue support from BCC (including agreed maintenance and repairs support) as an integral element of any potential community management arrangement over a agreed period of time	DPCF BCC
Large unforeseen rises in core overhead costs (such as heat and light) over the first 5 years of operation	High	Low – Medium	DPCF staff currently undertake effective and efficient budgeting and financial planning in relation to financial management it provision	DPCF staff to implement a process of continuous scanning of market and updating of monthly, quarterly and annual budgets as changes in the market place take effect	DPCF Centre Staff
Failure of DPCF to deposit enough reserves in Trust for acceptable capital lifecycle costs.	Medium	Low – Medium	Experience of individuals on Committee / Staffing structure will ensure robust business planning and financial controlling in relation to financial management of the centre	Continual review of lifecycle financial requirements as a result of usage in the building and application of these changes to annual budgets and financial controls	DPCF Centre Staff

## 6.6 Community Engagement and Participation Risks

Youth Engagement and Participation Risks					
Description	Impact	Probability	Existing Controls	Actions Required	Lead Responsibility
Lack of representation of community on the Forum Committee	Medium – High	Low - Medium	DPCF has worked tirelessly to establish a fully representative Forum in recent times	To review representation of community on the Forum on annual basis and allow appropriate opportunity for new members to be elected onto Forum	DPCF Committee Members
Perceived access / neutrality of the location for all sections of the local community and other users	High	Medium	The Centre (BCC) has in recent times made a conscious effort to present an inclusive environment and inviting environment for all sections of the local community	The Forum will develop and implement best practice policies and procedures related to inclusivity. All staff will receive adequate training and guidance with respect to implementation	DPCF Committee Members
Centre provision not reflective of the Needs of Community resulting from lack of ongoing representational consultation	Medium – High	Medium	The Centre currently provide numerous feedback opportunities (formal and informal) from users	Development of annual consultation exercises conducted to quantify community need in the area - relevant findings analysed and services amended as appropriate	DPCF Committee Members Centre Staff
Unrealistic expectations of community	Medium	Medium	The Forum currently has no formal mechanism in place to manage expectations of delivery	To develop formal communication processes with the local community regarding Centre provision	DPCF Committee Members Centre Staff
The Forum becoming ineffective	High	Low	DPCF meet formally on a monthly basis and be facilitated by DPCF staff	DPCF to conduct regular review and evaluations of Forum delivery and make recommendations for future delivery	DPCF Committee Members Centre Staff

## 6.7 SWOT Analysis

The Donegall Pass Community Forum is a strong, vastly experienced community organisation that is fully focused on the delivery of quality services of the local population of the Donegall Pass area of the City. The potential management of the Centre by the Forum has much strength, but by default, it also has weaknesses and will experience specific opportunities and threats along the way. The following table is a summary of this potential developments strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Experience and Mix of Committee Members</li><li>• A fully representative Forum established and operational</li><li>• A dedicated staffing complement that is fully committed to the provision of quality services and activities to the local community</li><li>• The ability of the Forum to coordinate provision across the area through a number of projects and programmes</li><li>• The DPCF has great awareness and knowledge of community need in the area</li><li>• The DPCF has a clearly demonstrable track record of providing community services in the area</li><li>• The DPCF has a proven track record of securing public funding to subsidise and support delivery</li><li>• Established providers already delivering activity at the Centre</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No facility management experience within existing Forum staffing complement</li><li>• The possibility of undertaking the management of a facility that does not have a true representation of the income generating potential from its delivery</li><li>• Unconfirmed support from BCC post transfer</li></ul>

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential social impact of the project in the Donegall Pass area</li> <li>• To provide a greater flexibility of provision to the local community</li> <li>• Potential to become truly community focused Centre delivered by members of the community</li> <li>• The lack of alternative community facility provision locally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of experience of potential commercial focus of the Centre</li> <li>• Current review of BCC's community management of Council facilities being undertaken</li> <li>• Any potential staff overhead could have longer term sustainability issues.</li> </ul>

## 6.8 Conclusions

This section has clearly identified the risks associated to the potential management transfer of the Community Centre to the Donegall Pass Community Forum. This demonstrates the thoroughness that the Forum is prepared to go into as a means of examining all possibilities and eventualities should it undertake the management. More significantly it shows that the Forum have developed a mitigation strategy to address and minimise the potential impact of each of the risks should they arise. This will undoubtedly encourage and provide comfort to Belfast City Council should the Centre management transfer to the Forum.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 7.1 Summary of Findings

Section 3 of this report has outlined in detail the findings of the consultation exercises conducted. This sub section will present some of the key findings of that consultation:

#### **Comments regarding the Current Provision**

The majority of consultees responded positively in terms of the current provision and indicated that the service from the Centre presently in terms of staffing, cleanliness, appropriateness of accommodation and welcoming environment.

Only one respondent answered negatively however, this comment specifically focused on the requirements of this respondent's activity rather than any aspect of the Centre that could be altered

#### **Possible Usage Charges**

50% of respondents indicated that they would consider a nominal fee levied against any facility hire at the Centre, whereas, two respondents indicated that they would only be prepared to pay current rates.

One respondent suggested that for events and activities a fee should be levied to the participant rather than the organising group (on the basis that it was a community and voluntary sector group).

#### **Possible Changes for the Forum regarding Future Usage**

A number of comments focused on the perception that the Centre was underused by the local community and suggested that this was mainly due to a lack of promotional and marketing activity.

This was tempered with comments that indicated the Forum undertaking the management would encourage greater community usage and suggested that possibility of additional opening hours particularly at weekends may facilitate that.



### **Positive Aspects of the Potential Forum Management**

The vast majority of respondents indicated that this move would be positive for the community. This was qualified as the Forum could provide a greater understanding of community need, closer links to the community and the Forum have a good relationship with the community.

The political consultation also highlighted a number of positive aspects including the experience, commitment to the community and representation of that community that the Forum could bring to the management of the Centre.

### **Perceptions of the Forum Undertaking the Centre Management**

Overall consensus was that this would be a benefit to the community and the majority of people would support the move. Specifically this focused on the enabling more groups to use the facility, this would be viewed as a positive development within the community and that it made little difference as the main concern would be that it undertook the management successfully.

There were some comments that portrayed some scepticism in that this may bring about an increase in uses prices and that personalities may influence the Forum's ability to manage the Centre but generally this was viewed as a positive step.

## **7.2 List of Recommendations for Future Delivery**

This sub section will present a number of key recommendations, and supporting rationale, that have been concluded based on the findings of the consultation and the subsequent development of this study. These recommendations are intended to present the Donegall Pass Community Forum and Belfast City Council with all the necessary information upon which to base their decision regarding the management of the Centre. The section also details a timeframe for possible implementation of each recommendation which should again be given careful consideration by both organisations.

### Recommendation 1

The DPCF should seek explore the possibility with Belfast City Council of conducting a 'period of transition' which would allow it to fully examine the practicalities of assuming the management of the Centre. This would allow it fully examine all aspects of management as well as build further its capacity to undertake the management successfully. This recommendation would see the Forum undertake the management of the Centre after a period of one year with the agreement of all parties.

The rationale for this recommendation is that it would be difficult for the Forum to fully ascertain the impact of its undertaking, particularly with regard to the financial implications, given the lack of evidence related to the Centre's potential to generate income. This assessment is based on figures obtained from Council for the 2008-9 accounting period.

This transition period of one year would allow the Forum to carry out a number of exercises / activities that would allow it to fully assess the practicalities of undertaking the management of the Centre with the ultimate aim of progressing with the management transfer post the period. Some of the exercises / activities may include:

- Potentially making a number of funding submissions to secure funds as a means of delivering a range of programmes / events at the Centre thus ensuring facility hire revenue
- Deliver an innovative event (s) that test the potential to expand the scope of provision from the Centre
- A member of the Forum staff to shadow the existing Centre manager to increase and improve knowledge and understanding of practical management requirements at the Centre
- Conducting a detailed assessment of the financial implications of the transfer towards the end of the transfer period

It is aimed that at the end of this period the Forum will be fully aware of what the management of the Centre entails and full implications of its potential management of it.

### **Recommendation 2**

**The DPCF should seek to secure a revenue grant from Belfast City Council for in the region of £50,000 per annum over the short to medium term.**

This type of financial support will be essential in allowing the Forum to 'find its feet' with regard to the management of the Centre and providing that initial safety net as a means of assisting the Forum to establish itself as a successful managing agent.

The provision of a revenue grant is common practice throughout the City with a range of community organisations securing this support from Council. However, it is essential that given the Centre's financial circumstances and inability to prove income generation potential against a backdrop of £124,000 operating costs, it is critical that the Forum secure the maximum amount in the early stages of its support. This will ensure that the Forum has the best possible opportunity to make its management of the Centre a success.

### **Recommendation 3**

**The DPCF should explore all possibilities of securing maintenance and repair support from Council as an integral element of the overall revenue support package.**

Consultation with benchmarked examples indicated that to reduce the likelihood of any confusion / potential grey areas it was advised that all information relating to the scope and detail of maintenance and repair cover provided by Belfast City Council should be outlined specifically to the Centre and itemise the entire cover (i.e. structural, operational and legislative requirements). In addition to ensuring that the Forum was clear in terms of what was covered and what was not under maintenance and repair support, it would also allow the Forum to adequately plan ahead with respect to future capital maintenance, upgrade and renewal of capital aspects of the building.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**The DPCF should allocate a dedicated resource to assist in securing public funding to support Centre provision and supplement facility hire income through public funding sources as part of specific programme delivery.**

In securing public funding to deliver programmes and activities from the site, the Centre can raise much needed facility hire income without levying a cost to the local community. This programme delivery will ultimately meet the needs of the community, the funder and simultaneously raise funds for the Centre.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**The DPCF should examine all possibilities of programme and activity provision from the Centre should it undertake management responsibility.**

The delivery of a wider scope of activities and programmes from the Centre which is currently not being provided will be a critical avenue of potential income generation that hasn't fully been explored. The flexibility of management that a community organisation can bring to the Centre will allow a greater range of activities to be delivered at and from the site ultimately benefitting the community to a greater degree.

### **7.3 Conclusions**

It is clear from the information presented in this study that Belfast City Council wish to transfer management of the Centre to the Donegall Pass Community Forum as per original agreement when the building was constructed. This Study has presented the findings of an independent review of the current position with regard to the possibility of the Forum undertaking the management of the Centre.

# Appendix 1

## Regeneration Work Project / Activity Description

## **Regeneration Work**

### Posnett Street

The Forum is actively lobbying to have housing build on the site. Recently the Social Development Minister visited the site and has engaged her Housing Officials to explore the options.

### Housing

The Forum is a member of the South Belfast Area Housing Network and has an active relationship with the district office. It continues to lobby for better living conditions for all its residents.

### Residents Parking

The Forum has taken a leading role in opposing the Governments proposal to force an unsatisfactory Residents Parking Scheme to the area. It will continue to lobby for an agreed scheme.

### Residents

The Residents Group continue to look at all forms of problems that beset the area and seek ways to address these.

### Inclusion Zone

The Forum has received monies from Belfast City Council and a feasibility study has been conducted. Recently the old building has been demolished. The Forum will continue to seek funding for a capital build and also lobby the Belfast Education and Library Board for the empty ground.

### Coyle's Place

The Forum, in Partnership with the Markets Development Association and Lower Ormeau Residents Action Group, has received funding to help purchase the Coyles Place building. Currently there is downfall of £200,000 and we will continue to explore all avenues to find this downfall. Funding has been secured for a project worker who will drive the project forward.

### Community Development Company

The Development Company recently held a Strategic Planning day in the Park Avenue Hotel. Following this it is in a much more clearer position regarding its role and responsibilities and will actively seek to play a greater role in the life of the community.

### Inner City Ring Road

The Forum is Aware that the proposed Inner City Ring Road is now back on the Governments agenda. While the public are being told that a consultation process is currently underway no one from the affected communities, including Donegall Pass, has been approached. The Forum is monitoring this process and will make sure that this road does not proceed without meaningful consultation with the community.