



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Development Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Establishment of Steering Groups / Working Groups</b>
<b>Date:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Mr. Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer (ext. 3470)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Mr. Barry Flynn, Democratic Services Officer (ext. 6312)

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.0	<p>Members will recall that the Committee, at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> June, agreed to defer consideration of the establishment of Working and Steering Groups to enable a revised report to be submitted. This was due to concerns raised regarding the demands that the membership of such Groups would make on Elected Members. It should be borne in mind that, since the Committee has agreed to meet on a twice monthly basis, there now exists an opportunity for it to examine matters in detail which previously would have been considered the Working Groups. In revising the previous report, it is evident that Working Groups should only be re-established if they adhere strictly to the following principles:</p>
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working Groups should be established only if they are considered to be essential for the achievement of effective and efficient decision-making;</li><li>• such Working Groups should be appointed only for a fixed-term and for a specific purpose;</li><li>• the Groups would not have decision-making powers but rather would produce a report with recommendations for consideration by the appointing Committee;</li><li>• after the Working Group has fulfilled its remit it would cease to exist; and</li><li>• Working Groups should be formed on the basis of All-Party representation with nominees sought from the Party Group leaders.</li></ul>

2.0	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	<p>The range of Working and Steering Groups which had been established during the previous Council term ceased to exist on 5<sup>th</sup> May, coinciding with the Local Government Elections.</p> <p>Should the principles for the establishment of Groups be applied, then the numbers can be downsized accordingly. A re-assessment is set out hereunder:</p>
2.2	<p><b><u>2012 Events Working Group</u></b></p> <p>The remit of this Working Group is to formulate and oversee a programme of activities to mark 2012 as an international year of significance for the city. Next year will see the Council host a series of keynote events which will provide an opportunity to showcase Belfast as a premier tourist destination. These events will coincide with the London 2012 Olympic Games and the centenary of the sinking of the Titanic. All these activities will provide a significant level of international profile and cultural focus for the City and Northern Ireland. Previous membership consisted of the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman (or their nominees), together with one representative from each of the Political Party Groupings on the Council.</p>
2.3	<p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>Given that the year 2012 will be of specific importance to the City, it is recommended that this Group be re-established and that it meet on an ad hoc basis, until the end of 2012, under the guidance of the Director of Development.</p>
2.4	<p><b><u>Digital NI 2020 Strategy Working Group</u></b></p> <p>This Group was established in April, 2011 to manage and explore the opportunities and challenges for the Council arising from the Digital NI 2020 Strategy. Its remit is to engage with a number of key stakeholders and bodies in the development of new initiatives which would be of benefit to the Council arising from the Strategy. Whilst this Group did not meet prior to the election it had been anticipated that the Committee would be represented by the Chairman, the Deputy Chairman, together with one representative from each Political Party not represented by the aforementioned members.</p>
2.5	<p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>Since the suggested lifespan for this Group is for a period of eight years, it is perhaps unfeasible to establish a Working Group for this purpose. Therefore, it is suggested that this project be led by officers within the Department and that periodic progress reports be submitted to the Committee.</p>
2.6	<p><b><u>Titanic Quarter Working Group</u></b></p> <p>The purpose of this Working Group is to oversee the Council's contribution to the Titanic Quarter Memorandum Of Understanding and the ongoing development of the Titanic Quarter. The group will help establish an agreed programme of activity aimed at engaging all local communities throughout Belfast.</p>

	<p>Membership consists of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Committee (or their nominees), together with one representative from each Political Party not represented by the aforementioned Members.</p>
2.7	<p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>Since the Titanic brand is vital to the City's tourist industry it is recommended that this Group be re-established and that it meet on an ad hoc basis in 2011 / 2012 under the guidance of the Director of Development.</p>
2.8	<p><b><u>Tourism Forum</u></b></p> <p>The Tourism Forum was established in April 2011 to oversee the implementation of the Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework. Its role is to provide regular feedback to the Development Committee; to prioritise and co-ordinate the delivery of tourism projects and to monitor and review the effectiveness of the Tourism Framework. Membership of the Forum is comprised of key stakeholders from throughout the City representing the tourist industry. The Council has an overarching role in co-ordinating this Forum and ensuring that it</p>
2.9	<p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>The Forum has a specific remit, viz., to oversee the Belfast Integrated Strategic Tourism Framework. It is recommended that the Forum be re-established and that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman (or their nominees) represent the Committee. Minutes from the meetings of the Forum would be submitted periodically for the Committee's information.</p>
2.10	<p><b><u>Sister Cities Nashville Steering Group</u></b></p> <p>The remit of this working group is to agree and monitor the implementation of an annual action plan to strengthen the relationship between Belfast and Nashville. Its membership includes representatives from Tourism Ireland, the United States Consulate, the BBC, the Ulster Historical Foundation, the Ulster-Scots Heritage Society, the Queen's University of Belfast and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. In November, 2010 the Development Committee agreed to increase membership of the Group to include, in addition to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Committee, one representative from each Political Party not represented by the aforementioned Members.</p>
2.11	<p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>It is recommended that this Group be re-established and that it meet on an ad hoc basis during 2011 / 2012 under the guidance of Director of Development</p>
2.12	<p><b><u>RISE Steering Group (Broadway Junction Sculpture)</u></b></p> <p>The Rise Steering Group was established to oversee the development of the public art at Broadway Roundabout. It includes representatives from the Department for Regional Development Roads Service, together with local community and political representatives.</p>

2.13	<p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>Given that the project is almost complete, it is recommended that this Steering Group is not re-established and that the Committee, if necessary, consider any outstanding matters relating to the project.</p>
2.14	<p><b><u>Lisburn Road Public Art Steering Group</u></b></p> <p>The Development Committee, at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> April, agreed to establish a Steering Group to oversee the development of two pieces of public art at vacant sites on the Lisburn Road – with potentially other areas of the City included at a later date. The remit of the group was to oversee the appointment of an artist to produce suitable art pieces for the proposed sites.</p> <p>At the meeting of the Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> June, the view was expressed that the project did not require the establishment of a formalised Working Group.</p>
2.15	<p><b><u>Recommendation</u></b></p> <p>It is recommended that this Group is not re-established and that the project is led by officers within the Department on the understanding that the Elected Members for the Balmoral District Electoral Area be updated on an ongoing basis.</p>

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	None

<b>4.0</b>	<b>Equality Implications</b>
4.1	None

<b>5.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
5.1	The Committee is requested to consider the recommendations as outlined within the report.

<b>6.0</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
6.1	The Democratic Services Officer will oversee the any decisions which the Committee might wish to take.