

From the Deputy Secretary
Jenny Pyper

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT		
DATE	07/02/2012	
REF.	D035/12	
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John McGrillen
Director of Development
Belfast City Council
Cecil Ward Building
Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8BP

3 February 2012

Dear John

REVIEW OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT / INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES IN BELFAST

Thank you for your letter of 23 January 2012 reporting on the outcome of the 13 December BCC Development Committee, and advising that the Committee had requested representation from two elected members on the Community Development / Infrastructure programme Project Steering Group to allow for political oversight of the work. I understand that you had suggested to Committee that a Political Reference Group / Members Working Group would be a more appropriate mechanism for Councillors involvement however they dismissed this option.

The involvement of both elected members and officers in project work of this nature is highly unusual. A more usual arrangement is the one that we had already agreed with our Minister i.e. regular updates at key intervals and final decisions resting with him. We had expected this arrangement to be mirrored by the City Council.

It is my view that a Political Reference Group, as you originally suggested, would be a much more appropriate mechanism to ensure that elected members of council are properly and meaningfully involved.

Having briefed the Minister on this matter, he has asked me to inform you that he would like the Development Committee to reconsider its position with regard to establishing a Political Reference Group, rather than including elected members in the operational project group discussions.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Notwithstanding a satisfactory resolution to this issue I suggest that the Working Group continue to progress with programme development. Colleagues in Belfast Regeneration Office are happy to work with you to suggest a draft Terms of Reference for a Political Reference Group if that would be helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Pyper', written in a cursive style.

JENNY PYPER

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