Review of Working Groups

Audit and Risk Panel

Statement of Purpose

1 The Audit and Risk Panel is a key component of Belfast City Council's corporate governance arrangements. It provides an independent and high-level focus on the audit, assurance and reporting arrangements that underpin good governance and financial standards.

2 The purpose of the Audit and Risk Panel is to provide independent assurance to those charged with governance (Members and senior management) on the adequacy of the risk management framework and the internal control environment. It provides independent review of the council's governance, risk management and control frameworks and oversees the financial reporting and annual governance processes. It will provide an independent scrutiny of the council's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it exposes the council to risk and weakens the control environment. It oversees internal audit and external audit, helping to ensure efficient and effective assurance arrangements are in place.

The full details of the terms of Reference are set out in appendix 4 to item 2a

Membership

One representative of each of the six Party Groups plus one independent Member.

Budget and Transformation Panel

Terms of Reference

- To provide political support in terms of party groupings and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for the delivery of the Council's efficiency and transformation agenda.
- To scrutinise the alignment of the Council's efficiency and transformation agenda to corporate priorities.
- To support the development and implementation of the Council's efficiency and transformation programme.
- To hold officers to account for the delivery of an agreed efficiency and transformation programme.
- To track and monitor the achievement of agreed financial savings.
- To provide oversight of the Council's finances.

It is suggested that the Panel would also oversee the Member Capacity Building Programme over the Shadow Period.

Membership

The Chairman of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee and each of the six Party Group Leaders (or their nominees).

Diversity Working Group

Terms of Reference for the Group:

- to consider historic centenaries and commemorations which the Council might wish to consider marking over the next decade;

- to establish a core set of principles to be applied in considering those centenaries and in identifying appropriate events to be commemorated;

- to consider what actions the Council might wish to take itself, carry out with others or support the celebrations of others in the marking of those centenaries;

- to give consideration to how a budget might be developed to support any actions agreed;

- to make recommendations to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee regarding the issues above; and

- to explore the possibility of developing a Council strategy on diversity.

Membership

Two Members from each of the six Party Groups.

Good Relations Partnership

Terms of Reference

- to promote equality of opportunity in the discharge of the Council's responsibilities, taking into account the needs of persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation, of men and women generally, of persons with a disability and persons without and of persons with dependants and persons without;

- to promote tolerance and understanding throughout the City by providing support, including the equitable use of available budgets, for appropriate initiatives which celebrate the cultural diversity of Belfast;

- to promote good relations between people of different religious and political beliefs and different racial groups in every aspect of Council activities; and

- to use the Council's influence as a democratically elected body, providing civic leadership to the City, to promote good relations throughout society.

Membership

One representative of each of the six Party Groups plus 16 independent Members.

Party Leaders' Forum

<u>Terms of Reference</u>

- There are not any formal terms of reference for this Group. However, it generally acts as a sounding board for discussion amongst the Party Groups on a more informal basis. The Group has, in the past, been facilitated by Jon Huish and is not regularly attended by Council Officers.

<u>Membership</u>

6 Party Group Leaders.