

Extract from minutes of –

MEETING OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

17th JUNE, 2014

**“Belfast City Centre Management
Additional Funding Requests”**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 14th January, it had agreed to provide funding in the sum of £190,000 to Belfast City Centre Management (BCCM) as the Council’s contribution towards its running costs for 2014/2015. It was reported that the Board of BCCM had since undertaken a review of the salaries of its staff and had adopted the NJC scales, a measure which had resulted in a shortfall of £30,000 in salary costs for £2014/2015. Accordingly, the Director reported that a request for financial assistance for 50% of the shortfall, that is, £15,000, had been received from BCCM.

In addition to the aforementioned request, the Director reminded the Committee that BCCM had been one of six successful applicants selected by the Department for Social Development to oversee a pilot Business Improvement District (BID) project. He reported that BCCM had requested also that the Council consider making a contribution towards the employment of a Development Manager to oversee the implementation of that project. The total cost of employing the Development Manager, over an 18 month period, would be £90,000 and the Council had been requested to consider providing 50% of that cost.

In respect of the request by BCCM for a contribution towards meeting the re-evaluated staff salary costs, Members expressed concern that the Council, should it accede to the request, would be creating a precedent which could encourage further organisations to submit one-off requests for funding. The point was made that employees within the public sector had been subject to pay freezes in recent years and BCCM should have anticipated the extra costs and incorporated them within their original request for annual funding. Therefore, it would be inappropriate for the Council to meet the request as submitted.

Regarding the request for funding for to employ a Business Manager for the BID pilot project, the Committee noted that the Department for Social Development had agreed to contribute a sum of £45,000 towards the post. Accordingly, the Council would be required to provide funding of £15,000 in 2014/2015, with a further amount of £30,000 being allocated within the Council’s 2015/2016 budget to support the project.

After discussion, it was

Moved by Alderman Ekin,
Seconded by Alderman Webb and

Resolved - That the Committee agrees not to accede to the request for £15,000 from BCCM to meet the increase in costs of staff salaries; but agrees to provide funding in the sum of £45,000, over a two-year period, to meet the costs associated with the employment of a Business Manager to oversee that organisation’s BID pilot project.”