



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Services Committee
Subject:	Parks and Leisure Improvement Programme - Parks and Leisure Portfolio Management
Date:	10 March 2011
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Rose Crozier, Head of Parks and Leisure

1	Relevant Background Information
	<p>In November 2008, the Local Government Auditor noted that the Council had identified the governance of major projects such as Connswater Community Greenway and the new cemetery as a key risk for the organisation. Such projects run financial risks of millions of pounds, through various factors, such as ill-defined decision making processes and paths, an aggressively litigious procurement environment as well as the normal risks to physical projects such as time, cost and specification underperformance.</p> <p>The need for Council to work increasingly with partners in delivering such projects, e.g. Crusaders/Newington Sports Village, Tommy Patton/Blanchflower development and potential North, South, East and West projects etc., only adds to the above risk and ultimately to the Council's reputation and credibility.</p> <p>Consequently a review examining the current arrangements in the council for managing major projects was carried out by Drivers Jonas who made a number of recommendations for improvement which were presented to COMT in April 2010.</p> <p>The key issues identified included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The current governance arrangements for major projects are fragmented across the council and this is due to the responsibility for projects resting across different departments and committees;• The skills which the organisation requires to make major projects work currently resides across at least three departments;• The role of the Strategic Policy and Resource Committee in relation

- to project governance needs to be clarified and strengthened;
- The officer with whom overall responsibility rests for a particular project is not always clear;
- There is a lack of coherence in dealing with external parties;
- New governance arrangements are needed to ensure the most effective use of limited resources; and
- Clearer roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for major projects need to be established.

Consequently Drivers Jonas made a number of recommendations which are in line with the recommended government best practice guidance known as “Office of Government Commerce Portfolio, Programme and Project Management Best Practice (P3O)”.

The key recommendations of the review are as follows:

- The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee should have overall responsibility for the allocation of resources to major projects;
- COMT should provide officer oversight for all major projects;
- Every major project should have a named responsible officer as a client;
- The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, COMT and responsible officers should be supported by a director who has the relevant project management skills to ensure delivery;
- This Director should be supported by a team with project/programme management expertise;
- The team should be a source of good practice for all projects across the council; and
- The adoption of Gateway risk rating to identify and categorise major projects risk status should be introduced.

2 Key Issues

Current Situation

The Parks and Leisure Department is currently undergoing a restructuring exercise as part of the Parks and Leisure Improvement Programme.

One aspect of the Improvement Programme is to create a more joined-up approach to service delivery not just across the Parks and Leisure Services but also in respect of the Parks and Leisure Department working collaboratively across other Council sections and departments.

As such, Committee in August 2010 approved a revised, more integrated Parks and Leisure Development Strand structure and the report also advised Members that the current role of the Principal Parks and Cemeteries Services Development Manager would be examined to assess

if it could be utilised to deliver a more joined-up approach to capital and land projects across the Department and between the Project Management Unit and Estates located in the Property and Projects Department.

As the Parks and Leisure Department is currently the busiest across the council in terms of capital projects it is placed at greater risk with regard to the issues raised in the Drivers Jonas report.

The Principal Parks and Cemeteries Services Development Manager currently acts as the "Project Sponsor" within the newly developed Gates Process for the vast majority of capital projects across both Parks and Leisure services.

However, concerns have been raised by the Director of Parks and Leisure Services, the Portfolio Director and the Portfolio Office citing the potential risk to the development of Parks and Leisure projects due to the current workload of the Principal Parks and Cemeteries Services Development Manager. There are also related concerns that the Strategic Outline Cases (SOC's) are not robust enough, not outcome focused and not strategically aligned due to the level of scrutiny required which is not currently possible due to the pressures of the Principal Parks and Cemeteries Services Development Manager managing the Parks Development Strand coupled with the time required to complete and manage the SOC's.

In order to address these concerns, and minimise the risks involved, there is a requirement to have a dedicated focus on the management of Parks and Leisure projects and SOC's. As the responsibility currently lies with the Principal Parks and Cemeteries Services Development Manager it is proposed to transfer the postholder into a role of a Departmental Portfolio Manager (Parks and Leisure).

The role of Departmental Portfolio Manager will be to provide a strategic overview/support of the programmes and projects within Parks and Leisure. This role will provide support to projects/programmes within the department ensuring alignment with Parks and Leisure objectives, strategies and policies. They will provide support to the Director and Head of Parks and Leisure acting on their behalf when required.

Key responsibilities are:

- Work with the Director, Head of Parks & Leisure, Project Sponsors and the Project Managers and teams to define and implement the governance structures.
- Implement the corporate strategies for the effective planning, monitoring and delivery of the programme/projects, provided by the Portfolio Office in Property and Projects.
- Assure the overall integrity and coherence of the portfolio/programmes.
- Support the Director in proposing programmes and projects for inclusion in the portfolio/programme.
- Maintain close relationships between other business initiatives that

	<p>are currently underway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an ongoing health check of the portfolio/programmes through working with the Portfolio Office ensuring the programme and projects continue to meet with strategic objectives. • Provide appropriate management reports to the Director of Parks and Leisure and the Departmental Management Team. • Establish access to policy and strategic information for all programmes/projects. • Keep abreast of potential policy changes or initiatives that will inform projects and programmes. • Report project progress through the Strategic Programme Manager/Portfolio Office. • Ensure utilisation of organisation-wide tools, training and consulting in PPM. • Carry out capacity planning in respect of delivery. • Participate, when appropriate, in the BCC Gate process • Facilitate programme or project start-up. • Support knowledge management and sharing with and between projects. • Act as Project Sponsor when required. • Represent the Director/Head of Parks and Leisure in project/programme and asset related matters – as required.
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3	<p>Resource Implications</p> <p><u>Human Resources</u> Corporate Human Resources have been closely involved in the development of this new role and the implementation will be in accordance with BCC HR policies and procedures.</p> <p>The current Principal Parks and Cemeteries Services Development Manager has also been consulted with extensively and has agreed to the change of role.</p> <p>There will be a need to change reporting line of staff currently reporting to the Principal Parks and Cemeteries Services Development Manager and it is intended that this is covered in the review of Parks and Leisure Development functions. In the interim officers will report to the Head of Parks and Leisure.</p> <p>Committee is asked to note that all parties, including trade unions, have been consulted throughout this process to date and are in agreement with the recommendations contained in the review thus presenting a joint agreed position.</p> <p><u>Financial Implications</u> The recommendations within this report can be implemented at nil cost.</p>
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4	Equality Implications
	There are no equality implications.

5	Recommendations
	Members are asked to agree to the new role detailed within this report.

6	Decision Tracking
	The responsible officer for overseeing the implementation of the recommendations will be the Head of Parks and Leisure.

7	Key to Abbreviations
	SOC's – Strategic Outline Cases PPM – Programme and Project Management

8	Documents Attached
	None