



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Review of Public Administration Update
<b>Date:</b>	Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> October, 2008
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Mr Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kevin Heaney, Strategic Planning and Policy Officer (Ext. 6202)

1.0	<b><u>RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION</u></b>
1.1	The Review of Public Administration (RPA) process is starting to pick up pace. Legislation is now being drafted, delivery structures established and active consideration being given to the transitional arrangements to be put in place to support local government reform within Northern Ireland. Members will note that there have been a number of developments in regard to the RPA since the last update provided to Committee at its meeting in September 2008.
2.0	<b><u>KEY ISSUES</u></b>
2.1	Members will accept that the challenge ahead cannot be underestimated and ensuring that the Council is engaged within the process is paramount to ensuring that the best interests of the citizen, the Council and wider local government sector is pursued throughout the process.
2.2	<b>Update on Strategic Leadership Board</b>
2.2.1	The RPA Strategic Leadership Board last met on 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2008. The work of the Policy Development Panels had been discussed and the Project Initiation Documents for each PDP presented for approval (a copy of which is attached at Appendix 1).
2.3	<b>Update on Policy Development Panels</b>
2.3.1	The three Policy Development Panels are now been established and meeting on a regular basis to discuss issues in regard to <u>governance, community planning, central-local government relations, service delivery and structural reform</u> . <u>It is important to note that the Council is actively engaged, at both elected Member and officer level, within each of the PDPs and inform the ongoing debate and discussions.</u>
2.3.2	PDP A (Governance, Community Planning, Central-Local Government Relations) are currently developing proposals on high level governance arrangements for the new Councils including considering issues in relation to decision-making structures, proportionality, standards, codes of conduct, oversight and transparency. PDP A is also developing proposals for the introduction of a Council led community planning process which will draw upon the experience and lessons learnt from other jurisdictions. In addition, the issue of the future relationship between central and local government within Northern Ireland is being considered by PDP A.
2.3.3	As part of its work, PDP B (Service Delivery) is developing a draft Customer Service strategy, draft IS Strategy and will be examining the potential requirements for an appropriate Performance Management Strategy. A series of sub-groups have been established to take these issues forward and, again, the Council is actively engaged within these groups to ensure, as is reasonably possible, alignment with the Councils own improvement activities.
2.3.4	PDP C (Structural Reform) has established 4 sub-groups to take forward issues in relation to Human Resources; capacity building; finance and estates; regional and sub-regional design. Consideration of the transfer of functions will be taken forward by PDP C.

2.3.5	It would be the intention that the proposals emerging from the PDPs will be combined into a consultation document expected to be issued in Spring 2009. In the interim, Members will kept updated on emerging proposals and political direction sought on the key issues.
2.4	<b>Transitional Arrangements</b>
2.4.1	At the 3 <sup>rd</sup> October meeting of the RPA Strategic Leadership Board (SLB), the Joint NILGA/DoE Secretariat presented a discussion paper (copy of which is attached at Appendix 2) outlining both the pro's and con's of introducing a 'Shadow Period'. The alternative is to form Statutory Transition Committees with the powers to make decisions and lay the necessary foundations prior to the new elected Councils assuming power. The Transition Committees would be supported by a Transition Management Team which comprising of a representative balance of the senior management team of the merging Councils.
2.4.2	To date, the Environment Minister has been minded to introduce Statutory Transition Committees, however, following discussions at the RPA SLB meeting on 3 <sup>rd</sup> October regarding the potential introduction of Shadow Councils; the Minister is actively re-examining his position regarding transitional arrangements. The question of whether a transition period takes place <u>before</u> or <u>after</u> the new Councils being elected is also under considered by the Minister and the SLB. It is anticipated that the Minister will provide further clarity on transitional arrangements by the end of October / early November.
2.4.3	If agreed, the establishment of Statutory Transitional Committees would require legislation changes. It is intended that this would be taken forward under the auspices of the Local Government (Contracts) Bill to be introduced in July 2009.
2.5	<b><u>Belfast as a 'Continuing Authority'</u></b>
2.5.1	Belfast City Council will be one of few local government bodies that will provide a degree of continuity through the RPA process. In fact, the recent recommendations published by the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner, Mr Dick McKenzie CB, regarding the proposed new Local Government District Boundaries would only result in a 20% increase in the population and geographical scale of Belfast. Under the proposals the Belfast electorate will increase by 32,000 (20%), making a total electorate of 190,000 and bringing the population of the City up to 318,000 (a separate report on the Review of Local Government Boundaries in Northern Ireland will be discussed next on the agenda). Furthermore, the proposed transfer of additional functions to local government would result in a less than 20% increase in the Council's budget.
2.5.2	Accordingly, whilst the Council recognises the need for transitional arrangements to be established to support orderly conversion to the new local government structure within Northern Ireland, for the process of managing change, there may be a case for Belfast to be designated as a 'Continuing Authority' and be given responsibility for establishing and managing its own transition process.
2.5.3	Members will note that a position paper is currently being prepared which will set out proposals, for Members consideration, regarding the feasibility of Belfast City Council being designated as a 'Continuing Authority' and the potential implications for the Council in terms of the transition process. A detailed report will be submitted, for the consideration of Members, to the November Committee meeting.
2.6	<b>Regional Implementation Co-ordinating Group</b>
2.6.1	A Regional Implementation Co-ordinating Group will be established to support the RPA transitional process. This Group will provide advice and detailed guidance to the RPA Strategic Leadership Board and Transitional Committees (if established) on implementation and transitional matters.
2.6.2	It is proposed that the group would be chaired by Paul Simpson, the Deputy Secretary of the DOE, and comprise of senior officials from transferring function Departments, 3 local government Chief Executives and a number of other key officials as required e.g. Local Government Staff Commission, NILGA etc.
2.6.3	Members will note that SOLACE has nominated Belfast City Council as one of the 3 local government Chief Executives to be represented on this group.

2.7	<b>Resources</b>
2.7.1	Resourcing the local government structural reform process has been identified as a priority area by the RPA Strategic Leadership Board and consideration of the issue is being taken forward by Policy Development Panel C 'Structural Reform' through the development of a strategic business case. An assignment brief is currently being finalised to employ consultants to assist with the development of this work with a deadline for reporting back set for 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2009.
2.7.2	Members will note that PriceWaterhouseCoopers, as part of the report " <i>Practical Approach to the Implementation of Successful Change Programme in Local Government</i> " prepared for SOLACE (a copy of which had been circulated previously to Members at Committee in September), estimated that the transitional implementation structures could cost in excess of £4-£8million.
2.8	<b>Statement of Principles to underpin the transfer of functions</b>
2.8.1	The Statement of Principles (copy of which is attached at Appendix 3) developed by NILGA, supported by officials from Belfast City Council, has been endorsed by the Strategic Leadership Board and subsequently the Environment Minister has written to Ministerial colleagues to request that they agree to apply the principles in considering the transfer of functions to local government.
2.9	<b>Severance Scheme for Elected members and Co-Option</b>
2.9.1	The National Association of Councillors met recently with the Environment Minister to lobby for a severance package for councillors to be made available in 2009. The Minister had agreed to consider this issue and has asked officials to examine the possibility of including the power to make a severance scheme in the Local Government (Contracts) Bill which is to be brought in by July 2009 rather than the Local Government (Finance) Bill.
2.9.2	The Minister has indicated that the <u>details</u> of a proposed severance scheme for Councillors will be issued for consultation by the end of the year. The Minister has also indicated that the Secretary of State will introduce legislation allowing co-option onto Councils simultaneously to the enactment of the severance scheme legislation.

### 3.0 Resource Implications

Whilst there is clearly substantial Human Resource and financial implications attached the Council's ongoing involvement and management of the RPA change process, it will be difficult to quantify until a detailed programme of work is put in place.

### 4.0 Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of this report

### Documents Attached

Appendix 1	PDPs Project Initiation Documents
Appendix 2	DoE/NILGA Joint Secretariat discussion paper on pros and cons of introducing a Shadow Period
Appendix 3	NILGA Statement of Principles for the Transfer of Functions

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**LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM PROGRAMME**

**GOVERNANCE - COMMUNITY PLANNING -  
CENTRAL/LOCAL RELATIONS PROJECT**

**PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introductory Note**

1.1.1 This Project Initiation Document (PID) will give Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations), and as required by the Terms of Reference, the Strategic Leadership Board, the assurance that the project has established:

- clear terms of reference;
- an adequate management structure;
- that sufficient planning has taken place; and,
- that sufficient resources can be made available.

### **1.2 Purpose**

1.2.1 The purpose of this document is to put in place firm foundations for the project by:

- setting out the aims and objectives of the project,
- defining the scope of the project;
- setting out the activities, resources, responsibilities and outputs required to facilitate the completion of the project; and,
- setting out the management structure for the project.

The PID will be the baseline against which Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) and the Strategic Leadership Board can monitor progress and make decisions.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 The decisions on the future shape of local government announced by the Minister of the Environment on 31 March 2007, following the review of the local government aspects of the Review of Public Administration, represents a significant change management programme for local government. The Minister has agreed that the implementation of the overall programme will be managed at strategic level by the Strategic Leadership Board supported by three Policy Development Panels comprising elected members advised by senior local government officers and senior departmental officials.

2.2 The Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations Policy Development Panel has been tasked with the development of recommendations on policy and implementation proposals in relation to governance, a council led community planning process, and relations between central and local government.

### **3. PROJECT DEFINITION**

#### **3.1 Project Objectives**

- 3.1.1 Whilst there is the potential for the thinking on aspects of one policy area to impinge on the other areas the nature of these work strands is such that it precludes the definition of a single clear high level policy objective or strategic deliverable. Rather each of the strands will need to be viewed as an individual project stream within the overall programme of work for the Panel, with its own specific strategic deliverable, and its own management Terms of Reference.

##### Governance

- 3.1.2 The policy objective in relation to governance is the development of arrangements with appropriate checks and balances that are designed mindful of the need to ensure effective and inclusive local democracy, to protect the rights of minorities, to prevent any direct or indirect discrimination, and to promote the need of equality of opportunity, that will operate in the new councils following their creation in 2011. These would include arrangements to allocate Council Chairs, Deputy Chairs and positions on Council committees and to facilitate cross community decision making. The aim of the new council governance arrangements is to ensure the protection of the rights of all people in Northern Ireland, and provide for fair, transparent and efficient decision making.
- 3.1.3 In the context of this strategic policy objective the management Terms of Reference for this project are defined as:

‘To bring forward proposals for governance arrangements that provide for effective, efficient and transparent decision making by Councils, with appropriate checks and balances, taking account of Councils additional service delivery and community planning responsibilities.’

##### Community Planning

- 3.1.4 The essence of Community Planning is a recognition that the needs of individuals and communities – if they are to be addressed successfully – must be addressed collectively, not separately. The policy objective for this strand is the development of an effective statute-based community planning process, led and facilitated by local councils, that enhances civic leadership and that allows local councils, working in partnership with all sectors, to be at the heart of the provision of high quality, efficient services that respond to the needs of people and communities and which continuously improve over time.
- 3.1.5 The management Terms of Reference for this strand are defined as :

‘To bring forward proposals to effect the implementation of the duty of “Community Planning” and a power of “Well Being” to district councils in Northern Ireland, recognising local diversity and the need to devise approaches suited to local circumstances’.

## Central / Local Relations

3.1.6 The policy objective is the development of appropriate mechanisms to provide for the optimum partnership between central and local government in carrying out their separate but inter-related functions in the provision of efficient and effective citizen centred services.

3.1.7 To guide this project the following management Terms of Reference have been defined:

‘To develop the framework to underpin the formalisation of relations between the Northern Ireland Executive and local government on matters of mutual interest and concern.’

### **3.2 Method of Approach**

3.2.1 The overall project, and the individual work strands, will be managed using the PRINCE2 (Projects in Controlled Environment) standards and associated project controls, in line with best practice for projects in the public sector.

3.2.2 The project will consist of a number of stages as follows:

Stage 1	Preparation of the Project Initiation Document
Stage 2	The development of policy proposals on the three workstrands
Stage 3	The development of arrangements for the piloting of the community planning process
Stage 4	The development of guidance to underpin the operationalisation of the policy proposals
Stage 5	Reviewing the policy proposals in the context of responses to the public consultation process
Stage 6	Post Project Review

3.2.3 The timeframe for the development of the policy proposals to inform the preparation of legislative provisions is constrained by the requirement to have the legislation enacted prior to the creation of the new councils and the timetable for the passage of the legislation through the Northern Ireland Assembly. Accordingly the proposals must be developed by early November 2008. Guidance also needs to be developed and agreed prior to the creation of the new councils in 2011.

### **3.3 Project Scope**

3.3.1 As indicated earlier in this document this project will bring forward proposals for the governance arrangements for the new councils; the framework and foundation guidance for the council led community planning process; and proposals for the formalisation of the relationship between central and local government. It is an integral element of the overall programme for the reform and modernisation of local government.



- 3.3.2 A preliminary examination of the issues to be addressed within the individual work strands suggests that the project will interface with the work of the other Policy Development Panels. For example, arrangements for the assessment of community planning, and the creation, in the future, of Local Area Agreements will be interlinked with the development of Performance Management frameworks. The extent of interfaces with other projects will become clearer as the detailed work progresses and these will be managed accordingly to minimise risks to the successful delivery of the project.

### **3.4 Project Deliverables / Outputs**

- 3.4.1 In meeting the project's objectives the Policy Development Panel will be required to deliver a number of key outputs as follows:

Stage 2 – policy proposals for consideration by the Minister of the Environment on:

- statutory governance arrangements, which meet the agreed requirements;
- a statutory framework for the community planning process and the 'Power of Wellbeing'; and,
- the formalisation of relations between central and local government.

Stage 3 – the development of a framework, and the selection criteria, for the establishment of a number of pilot projects to develop and test the detailed working aspects of the community planning process. The operation of these pilots will inform the development of statutory guidance to support the practical outworking of the overarching framework.

Stage 4 – the delivery of the necessary detailed guidance to support the operationalisation of the new governance arrangements, the community planning process, and the relationship between central and local government.

- 3.4.2 Descriptions of the project outputs are attached at Annexes A - G of this document.

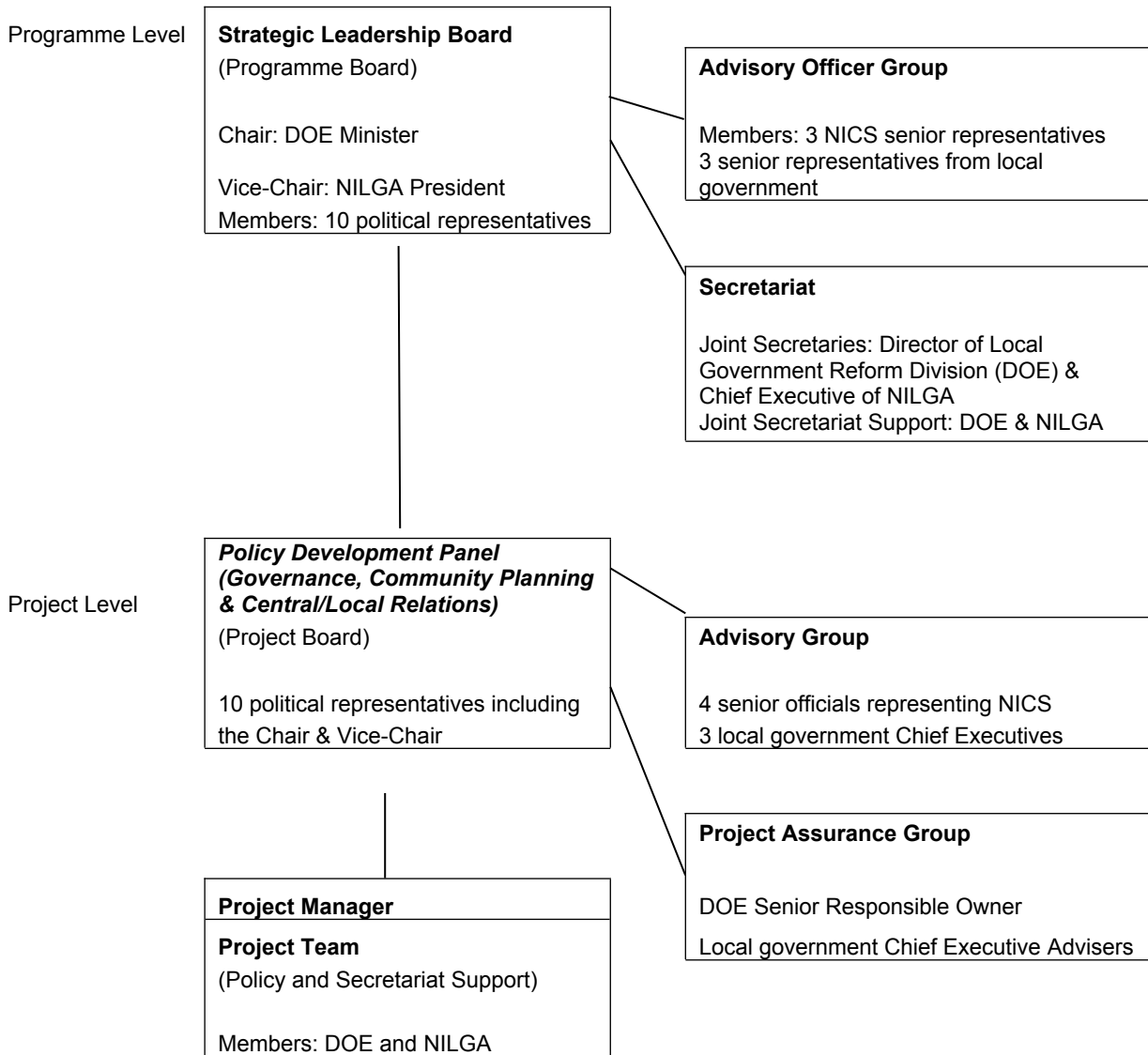
### **3.5 Interfaces**

- 3.5.1 The project management team within the Local Government Policy Division of DOE will meet on a regular basis with officers from NILGA, local government Chief Officer advisors to the Panel, and senior colleagues in Departments to advance the work of the Panel in line with the agreed timetable.
- 3.5.2 The project manager will also meet on a regular basis with the Senior Responsible Owner, the Programme Manager, and the project managers supporting the other two Policy Development Panels to consider and develop proposals for the handling of interlinked issues. Any such proposals will be submitted to the Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) for consideration and agreement.
- 3.5.3 It will be important for the elected members of the Panel to seek and articulate the views of their political parties on the work strands being taken forward as part of the project. The Chair of the Panel will also report and seek the views of the Strategic Leadership Board at its regular meetings during the project.

### 3.6 Project Filing Structure

3.6.1 All papers produced to inform the deliberations of the Policy Development Panel, and those to support its efficient and effective operation will be filed in accordance with the Department of the Environment’s records management procedures.

## 4. PROJECT ORGANISATION



## **5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **5.1 Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) - (Project Board)**

5.1.1 Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) is accountable for the success of the project and has responsibility and authority to make decisions on the management of the project and the commitment of resources to it. The Panel manages by exception, delegating the day to day running of the project and the development of material for consideration by the Panel to the Project Manager. The main responsibilities of the Panel are:

- review and approve the PID;
- agree with the Project Manager their responsibilities and objectives;
- agree project and stage tolerances; and
- authorise commitment of project resources.

5.1.2 As the project progresses:

- guide the project ensuring it remains within specified constraints;
- authorise the start of each phase;
- review and approve plans;
- management of risks identified at plan approval stages;
- approval of changes; and
- ensure compliance with policy direction from the Strategic Leadership Board.

5.1.3 At the end of the project:

- assure that all products have been delivered;
- assure all acceptance criteria have been met;
- approve End Project Report;
- authorise Project Closure; and,
- approve Project Evaluation Review.

### **5.2 The Project Manager**

5.2.1 The Project Manager has the delegated authority to run the project on a day to day basis on behalf of the Policy Development Panel within the agreed constraints. The main responsibilities of the Project Manager are:

- to deliver agreed products to required specification and quality according to the planned timetable, and within any approved expenditure limits;
- direct and motivate the project team;
- project manage and plan all stages of the project;
- agree delegations and project assurance roles;
- prepare project, stage and exception plans and agree with the Policy Development Panel;
- manage business and project risks (includes contingency planning);
- produce the Project Initiation Document;
- liaise with members of associated projects or programmes;
- monitor progress, expenditure, resources, initiation of corrective action;
- keep the Policy Development Panel informed of deviations in plans and associated action (Change Control) – any changes to be approved by the Panel;
- preparation of highlight reports for the PDP;
- liaise with PDP to assure the direction and integrity of the project;
- prepare End Project Report;

- identify and obtain support and advice necessary for the management, planning and control of the project; and,
- responsibility for project administration.

### 5.3 Project Assurance Group

5.3.1 Project Assurance has responsibility for independent monitoring of all aspects of the project's performance and products. Specific responsibilities of Project Assurance are to:

- assure the Panel members needs and expectations are being met or managed;
- assure that risks are being controlled;
- keep the project in line with the agreed Project Plan;
- inform the project of any changes caused by external events; and
- ensure adherence to quality assurance standards.

## 6. PROJECT PERSONNEL

### 6.1 Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Function</b>
Cllr Joanne Bunting	Elected Member	Project Chair
Cllr Sean Begley	Elected Member	Vice-Chair
James Hutchinson	DOE	Senior Responsible Owner

### 6.2 Project Manager and Project Team

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Team Role</b>
John Murphy	DOE	Project Manager
Nora Winder	NILGA	Lead local government Officer
Damian McKeivitt	DOE	
Lynn McCracken	DOE	
Sinead Kelly	NILGA	

### 6.3 Project Assurance

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Position</b>
James Hutchinson	DOE	Senior Responsible Owner
Liam Hannaway	NILGA	Lead Local Government Chief Executive
John Briggs	NILGA	
Ashley Boreland	NILGA	Chief Executive SLB link

## 7. PROJECT TOLERANCES

7.1.1 Given the constraints outlined above in relation to the timetable for the passage of the legislation through the Assembly and the associated preparatory stages the first phase of the project must be completed as set out in the programme plan. There is therefore only very limited tolerance within this phase. This relates to the potential rescheduling, within a few days, of any postponed meetings. The exceptions to this are the meeting to agree the emerging proposals for submission to the Strategic Leadership Board, and the discussion on the final proposals.

7.1.2 There is greater flexibility on reaching agreement on proposals during subsequent stage when guidance is being developed and the community planning pilots are being taken forward. The limiting factor is the timetable for the introduction of the Bill and the laying of any associated subordinate legislation in the Assembly to meet the operative date for the commencement of the legislative provisions.

## 8. PROJECT CONTROLS

8.1.1 Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) assumes overall responsibility for the control of the project and will receive information from the Project Manager (and the Assurance Group) to enable it to fulfil this role.

8.1.2 The major controls for Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) are:

- Project Initiation – to ensure that, before resources are committed to the project, everything involved in the project has been agreed: project objectives, roles and responsibilities, project scope and boundary, project controls. A Project Initiation meeting will be held to agree this PID and give approval to move to the next stage.
- End Stage Assessment – Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) only commits to one stage of work at a time. This assessment approves the work to date and provides authority to proceed to the next stage.

- Highlight (dashboard) Reports – provided by the Project Manager to Policy Development Panel (Governance, Community Planning & Central/Local Relations) on a regular basis to report progress during a stage. The Highlight Reports for this project will be produced monthly and will contain details of progress to date, achievements in the current period and achievements expected in the next period, details of actual or potential problems and suggestions for their resolution.
- Exception Reports – notification by the Project Manager to the Project Board that the stage or project plan will deviate outside tolerance limits. This details the problem, outlines the available options and identifies the recommended option.
- Mid-Stage Assessment – this assessment is held between the PDP and the Project Manager after an Exception Report or a significant milestone to determine how the project will proceed.
- Project Closure – the PDP formally closes the project, confirming that it has been completed.

8.1.3 The Panel will report progress to the Strategic Leadership Board on a regular basis through the submission of Highlight Reports.

## **9. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

9.1.1 A Communications Plan will be developed that links with the Communications Strategy that has been developed for the overall reform and modernisation programme. This will ensure that the sector and other interested stakeholders are kept informed of developments, through the regular NILGA updates, the DOE website, and the joint DOE / NILGA Newsletter.

## **10. QUALITY PLAN**

10.1.1 The quality requirement for this project is the production of clear comprehensive project outputs on a timely basis. The Quality Review process will check to identify any errors, omissions, misunderstandings, ambiguity, and non-compliance with the overarching policy direction set out in the Minister of the Environment's Statement to the Northern Ireland Assembly on 31 March 2008 on the future shape of local government.

10.1.2 A Quality Management System to be used in the project will be developed for endorsement by the Panel. This will include the following elements:

- a set of standards to be applied to the production of project outputs;
- a quality assurance procedure for all outputs;
- procedures to facilitate project issues;
- procedures to facilitate change control; and,
- the implementation of a consistent structured document management system for selected outputs produced by the project.

## **11. INITIAL PROJECT PLAN**

11.1.1 A high level Project Plan outlining the main stages of the Project has been included at Annex H.

## **12. INITIAL RISK LOG**

12.1.1 A detailed Risk Log and a strategy for managing the risks will be developed for endorsement by the Panel and the Strategic Leadership Board. An initial appraisal suggests that the key risks will relate to the following issues:

- the timescale for the development of policy proposals;
- availability of elected members to engage in the project;
- availability of project team personnel;
- continuity of personnel as the project progresses;
- availability of financial resources to fund any required research / consultancy support;
- effective engagement by councils in the community planning pilots;
- effective engagement by departments and other key sectors in the community planning pilots; and,
- availability of funding to support community planning pilots.

## **PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

**Workstream: Governance**

**Product: Policy Proposals**

### **1. Product Purpose**

To detail policy proposals for governance arrangements that provide for effective, efficient and transparent decision making by Councils with appropriate checks and balances.

### **2. Composition**

The proposals will cover issues including:

- decision making structures
- proportionality
- checks and balances
- standards
- transparency
- citizen engagement.

### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing desk research and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

### **7. External Dependencies**

None exist as the process has been internalised through the direct involvement of elected members and council officers.



## PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

### Workstream: Community Planning

### Product: Policy Proposals

#### 1. Product Purpose

To articulate policy proposals for the overarching framework for the council led community planning process and the associated 'Power of Wellbeing'

#### 2. Composition

The proposals will cover the following issues:

- a definition of community planning
- structures and models
- the duty on councils
- the duty on government departments and other specified bodies
- reporting arrangements
- the provision of guidance
- the establishment of bodies
- legislative provisions for a 'Power of Wellbeing'

#### 3. Format / Presentation

A formal structured report.

#### 4. Derivation

The report will be produced referencing desk research and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

#### 5. Responsibility

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

#### 6. Quality

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

#### 7. External Dependencies

None exist as the process has been internalised through the direct involvement of elected members and council officers.

## PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

**Workstream: Central / Local Relations**

**Product: Policy Proposals**

### **1. Product Purpose**

To articulate policy proposals for the formalisation of relations between central and local government.

### **2. Composition**

The proposals will cover the establishment of any proposed structure(s), their membership and remit.

### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing desk research and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

### **7. External Dependencies**

None exist as the process has been internalised through the direct involvement of elected members and council officers.

## **ANNEX D**

### **PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

**Workstream: Governance**

**Product: Draft Guidance**

#### **1. Product Purpose**

To support the operationalisation of the governance arrangements through the provision of subordinate legislation or guidance.

#### **2. Composition**

The draft guidance may cover such issues as:

- outline corporate governance structures and arrangements
- a Standing Orders framework
- a Constitution / Citizen Contract framework

#### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

#### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing desk research and engagement with the sector, and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

#### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

#### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

#### **7. External Dependencies**

None identified at this stage.

## **ANNEX E**

### **PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

#### **Workstream: Community Planning**

#### **Product: Programme of Community Planning Pilots**

##### **1. Product Purpose**

To provide a framework for the piloting of the community planning process that will inform the preparation of subordinate legislation and guidance to underpin the operation of the process when the new councils are established.

##### **2. Composition**

The proposals will cover the:

- identification of need for appropriate subordinate legislation.
- identification of other bodies to be specified in subordinate legislation.
- development of statutory guidance.
- testing various processes and methodologies for consultation and engagement in the community planning process.
- production of an agreed Community Plan.
- development of monitoring and reporting arrangements.
- evaluation of Pilot Programme.
- identification of capacity building needs across all sectors.

##### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

##### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing the work of the Taskforce Sub-group and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

##### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

##### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

##### **7. External Dependencies**

None identified at this stage.

## **ANNEX F**

### **PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

**Workstream: Central / Local Relations**

**Product: Draft Concordat**

#### **1. Product Purpose**

To set out proposals on a framework to underpin the effective relations between central and local government.

#### **2. Composition**

The proposals will cover such issues as:

- a framework for working arrangements between central and local government on matters in which they have a mutual interest;
- arrangements for administrative co-operation and exchange of information

#### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

#### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

#### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

#### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

#### **7. External Dependencies**

None identified

## **ANNEX G**

### **PRODUCT DESCRIPTION**

#### **Workstream: Community Planning**

#### **Product: Draft Guidance**

##### **1. Product Purpose**

To support the operationalisation of the community planning process.

##### **2. Composition**

##### **3. Format / Presentation**

A formal structured report.

##### **4. Derivation**

The report will be produced referencing the analysis of the outcomes of the community planning pilots and the views articulated by Policy Development Panel members.

##### **5. Responsibility**

The Project Team will prepare the report for consideration and approval by the Policy Development Panel.

##### **6. Quality**

The report will be subject to a formal Quality Review by members of the Quality Assurance Group.

##### **7. External Dependencies**

## ANNEX H

### PROJECT PLAN

<b>Period</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Jul – Oct '08	Develop policy proposals on <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• governance arrangements,</li><li>• the community planning process, and</li><li>• central / local relations.</li></ul>
Nov '08	Submit policy proposals to the Strategic Leadership Board
Nov '08 – Mar '09	Development of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• framework and criteria for Community Planning pilots</li><li>• Concordat to underpin formalisation of central / local relations</li><li>• Guidance on governance arrangements</li></ul>
Apr '09	Consider responses to consultation on policy proposals  Recommendations on any amendments submitted to the Strategic Leadership Board  Commencement of initial planning for community planning pilots
May – Jun '09	Finalise arrangements for community planning pilots
Jul '09 – Jun '10	Monitor community planning pilots and address issues that emerge.
Jul '10 – Sep '10	Evaluate outcomes from community planning pilots
Oct '10 – Nov '10	Develop and refine community planning Statutory Guidance proposals.

**SLB Paper 44b/2008**

**DRAFT**

**Policy Development Panel B**

**Service Delivery**

**Project Initiation Document**



## **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This document is the Project Initiation Document (PID) for Policy Development Panel B (Service Delivery). The purpose of this document is to:-,

- define the scope of the project;
- set out the aims and objectives;
- identify the major end products to be delivered;
- detail the activities and resources required to ensure the successful completion of the project;
- specify the management structure for the project; and
- outline the key responsibilities within the project.

This PID will be the baseline against which Policy Development Panel B can monitor progress and make decisions.

## **2 BACKGROUND**

2.1 Decisions on the future shape of local government were announced by the Minister of the Environment on 31 March 2007, following the review of the local government aspects of the Review of Public Administration (RPA). The decisions taken include the rationalisation of the current configuration of 26 local councils to create 11 new council areas and the transfer of a range of functions from central to local government.

2.2 The Minister has agreed that the implementation of this change programme will be managed at a strategic level by the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) supported by three Policy Development Panels (PDPs), comprising elected members supported by senior local and central government officials and joint secretariat (DOE/NILGA). PDP B has been charged with the development of recommendations on policy and implementation proposals in relation to Service Delivery issues. The work will cover three main strands, namely:-

- Customer Service Delivery;
- Improvement and Modernisation of Services (including IS Strategy, Shared Services Strategy, e-government); and
- Performance Management.

It is proposed that three working groups be established, to assist in the development of the necessary high level strategies and the lower level policies and implementation plans to support these various Work Strands. More detail on the work of these strands will follow.

2.3 Some of the work of the Panel overlaps significantly with the current work carried out through NILGA's e-Government Working Group, e.g. the development of the IS Strategy and piloting of specific applications e.g. mobile working, GIS applications. Close relations therefore will be maintained with this group by the Improvement and Modernisation Working Group.

## **3. PROJECT DEFINITION**

### **Strategic Aim**

3.1 The overall aim of the project is:-

“To lead the development of recommendations on policy and implementation proposals for agreement by SLB in relation to:-

- Customer Service Delivery;
- Improvement and Modernisation including Information Systems, e-government, Shared Services; and
- Performance Management.”

### **Key Objectives**

3.2 The key objectives of the Panel are:-

- to develop appropriate high level strategies for the relevant areas ensuring appropriate consultation throughout the sector and undertaking of relevant impact assessments;
- to pilot suitable approaches and systems to support the strategies developed for implementation across the sector; and
- to develop appropriate proposals for implementation of the proposals across the sector.

### **Project Scope**

3.3 It is expected that the work will interface very closely with the work of other Panels e.g. Performance Management proposals will need to take account of the work undertaken by Panel A on Governance and the work on Transferring Functions undertaken by Panel C will need to be taken into account in the development of the Customer Service Strategy and the IS and Shared Services Strategies.

### **Dependencies**

3.4 The success of the project will be dependent on the timely delivery of the end products identified. Key dependencies will include the following:-

- the commitment of Panel B and the relevant working group members;
- the maintenance of effective communication channels;
- sufficient identification of the key activities required to deliver the end products;
- accurate assessment of timescales and costs;
- identification and acquisition of the necessary staff resources for the project team and the various working groups;
- availability of the necessary expertise to the working groups; and
- securing the necessary financial resources for external consultancy as and when required.
- Involvement of transferring function Departments (as appropriate).

### **Managing Interfaces**

3.5 The Project Manager (John Price, Local Government Policy Division of DOE) will meet on a regular basis with Sheena Mairs, (Director of Improvement NILGA) the local

government Chief Officer advisors to the Panel and the Chairs of the Working Groups to advance the work of the Panel in line with the agreed timetable.

- 3.6 The Project Manager will also meet on a regular basis with the Senior Responsible Owner, the Programme Manager, the Project Manager supporting Policy Development Panels A & C to consider and develop proposals for the handling of interlinked issues. Any such proposals will be submitted to PDP B for agreement.
- 3.7 It will be important for the elected members of the PDP B to seek and articulate the views of local government on the Work Strands being taken forward as part of the project. The Chair of the PDP B will also report and seek the views of the SLB at regular checkpoints in the project.

### **Method of Approach**

- 3.8 The overall project and the individual Work Strands will be managed using the PRINCE 2 (Projects in Controlled Environment) standards tailored appropriately to the scope and size of the project.
- 3.9 The project will consist of a number of stages as follows:-
- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| Stage 1 | Preparation and Agreement of the Project Initiation Document   |
| Stage 2 | Establishment of Working Groups  |
| Stage 3 | Development and Agreement of Individual Work Strand Proposals  |
| Stage 4 | Completion of work by Working Groups and sign off by Project Board (this may be completed on staged basis) |
| Stage 5 | Submission of policy proposals, including options and recommendations to the SLB                           |
| Stage 6 | Post Project Review  |

### **Project Deliverables/Products**

- 3.10 The project will deliver the following end products:-
- a **Customer Service Strategy** for the local government sector which will provide guidelines and principles to assist individual councils to formulate their own Customer Service Strategies to provide citizens with high quality services in an efficient and effective manner;
  - an **Information Systems Strategy** for the sector which will:-
    - identify the current systems and processes in operation within the 26 councils and the Transferring function Departments;
    - will provide a road map to assist in the Transition to the 11 council structure; and
    - include proposals for increased use of ICT across the sector building on shared knowledge and best practice from within local and central government.
  - a **Shared Services Strategy** to identify in conjunction with Panel C, the potential for delivery of services on a common basis across councils on a cluster and regional basis so increasing efficiency;

- **Performance Management** legislative proposals and a framework which will facilitate appropriate assessment of the performance of councils both internally and externally.

### **Project Filing Structure**

- 3.14 All papers produced to inform the deliberations of PDP B and those to support its efficient and effective operation will be filed in accordance with the Department of the Environment's records management procedures.

## **4. PROJECT ORGANISATION STRUCTURE**

### **Policy Development Panel B- (Project Board)**

- 4.1 PDP B will be accountable for the success of the project and has responsibility and authority to make decisions and provide commitment of resources to the project. The Panel will manage by exception, delegating the day to day running of the project and the development of material for consideration by the Panel to the Project Manager.

The main responsibilities of PDP B are to:-

- review and approve the PID and High Level Project Plan;
  - agree roles and responsibilities of the Project Managers and Project Team;
  - agree project and stage tolerances; and
  - authorise commitment of project resources.
- 4.3 As the project progresses PDP B will:-
- guide the project ensuring it remains within specified constraints;
  - authorise the start of each phase;
  - review and approve plans;
  - manage the risks identified at plan approval stages;
  - approve all changes; and
  - ensure compliance with directives.
- 4.4 At the end of the project PDP B will:-
- assure that all products have been delivered;
  - assure all acceptance criteria have been met;
  - approve End Project Report;
  - authorise Project Closure; and,
  - approve Project Evaluation Review.

### **The Project Manager**

- 4.5 The Project Manager has the delegated authority to run the project on a day to day basis on behalf of PDP B and within the agreed constraints. The Project Manager through the joint secretariat, will:-
- ensure that the 3 Work Strands deliver the agreed products to required specification and quality according to the planned timetable, and within budget;
  - direct and motivate both the project team and the Work Strand teams;
  - project manage and plan all stages of the project;
  - agree delegations and project assurance roles;

- prepare project, stage and exception plans and agree with the Project Board;
- manage business and project risks (includes contingency planning);
- produce the PID;
- liaise with members of associated projects or programmes;
- monitor progress, expenditure, resources, initiation of corrective action;
- keep PDP B informed of deviations in plans and associated action (Change Control);
- prepare highlight reports for PDP B;
- liaise with PDP B to assure the direction and integrity of the project;
- prepare End Project Report;
- identify and obtain support and advice necessary for the management, planning and control of the project; and,
- take responsibility for project administration.

### **Project Assurance Group**

4.6 Project Assurance has responsibility for independent monitoring of all aspects of the project's performance and products. Specific responsibilities of Project Assurance are to:-

- assure the Panel members' needs and expectations are being met or managed;
- assure that risks are being controlled;
- keep the project in line with the agreed Project Plan;
- inform the project of any changes caused by external events; and
- ensure adherence to quality assurance standards.

## **5. PROJECT PERSONNEL**

### **5.1 Policy Development Panel B – Project Board**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Function</b>
Cllr Helen Quigley	Elected Member	Project Chair
Cllr Eddie Rea	Elected Member	Vice-Chair
Cllr Janice Austin	Elected Member	
Cllr Dermot Curran	Elected Member	
Cllr Gordon Dunne	Elected Member	
Cllr Tony Hill	Elected Member	
Cllr Sean Kerr	Elected Member	
Cllr Alan McDowell	Elected Member	
Cllr Michelle McIlveen	Elected Member	
Cllr Bob Stoker	Elected Member	

### **5.2 Project Manager and Project Team**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Team Role</b>
John Price	DOE	Project Manager
Sheena Mairs	NILGA	NILGA Lead Official
Angela Fitzpatrick	DOE	
Lorcan O'Kane	DOE	
Damien Deane	DOE	
Simon Sloan	DOE	
Sarah Connor	NILGA	

AN Other	NILGA	
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The Project Team will be supported on the various work streams by council officials in the 3 Working Groups.

### 5.3 Project Assurance

Name	Organisation	Position
Ian Maye	DOE	Director, Local Govt Policy
Danny McSorley	Omagh District Council	Lead Chief Executive
Trevor Martin	Belfast City Council	
Bill McCluggage	DID, DFP	
Jim Wilkinson	DOE Planning	
Barry Jordan	DRD	
Sharon Gallagher	DSD	
Paul McAllister	DCAL	
Phil Rodgers	DETI	
David Barr	DARD	

## 6. PROJECT TOLERANCES

6.1 The recommendations of PDP B will have some bearing on the formulation of proposals of the other PDPs. There is, therefore, only limited tolerance within the overall project.

**(DN: What are the recognised Project Tolerances? The Working Groups will have to examine the dependencies between the various Panels and take these into account when drawing up the project timescales.)**

## 7. PROJECT CONTROLS

7.1 PDP B assumes overall responsibility for the control of the project and will receive information from the Project Manager (and the Assurance Group) to enable it to fulfil this role.

7.2 The major controls for PDP B are:

- **Project Initiation** – to ensure that, before resources are committed to the project, everything involved in the project has been agreed: project objectives, roles and responsibilities, project scope and boundary, project controls. A Project Initiation meeting will be held to agree this PID and give approval to move to the next stage.
- **End Stage Assessment** – PDP B only commits to one stage of work at a time. This assessment approves the work to date and provides authority to proceed to the next stage.
- **Highlight Reports** – will be provided by the Project Manager to PDP B on a regular basis to report progress during a stage. The Highlight Reports for this project will be produced monthly and will contain details of progress to date on each of the various strands, achievements in the current period and achievements expected in the next period, details of actual or potential problems and suggestions for their resolution.

- **Exception Reports** – notification by the Project Manager to PDP B that the stage or project plan will deviate outside tolerance limits. This details the problem, outlines the available options and identifies the recommended option.
- **Mid-Stage Assessment** – this assessment is held between PDP B and the Project Manager after an Exception Report or a significant milestone to determine how the project will proceed.
- **Project Closure** – the PDP B formally closes the project, confirming that it has been completed.

7.3 PDP B will report progress to the SLB on a regular basis through the submission of Highlight Reports.

## 8. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

8.1 A Communications Plan, embracing the 3 projects within the remit of PDP B, will be developed that links with the Communications Strategy of the overall Reform and Modernisation programme. This will ensure that the sector and other interested stakeholders are kept informed of developments through the regular NILGA updates, the DOE website and the joint DOE/NILGA Newsletter.

## 9. QUALITY PLAN

9.1 The quality requirement for this project is the production of clear comprehensive project outputs on a timely basis. The Quality Review process will check to identify any errors, omissions, misunderstandings, ambiguity, and non-compliance with the overarching policy direction set out in the Minister of the Environment's Statement to the Northern Ireland Assembly on 31 March 2008 on the future shape of local government.

9.2 A Quality Management System to be used in the project will be developed for endorsement by the Panel. This will include the following elements:-

- a set of standards to be applied to the production of project outputs;
- a quality assurance procedure for all outputs;
- procedures to facilitate project issues;
- procedures to facilitate change control; and,
- the implementation of a consistent structured document management system for selected outputs produced by the project.

## 10. INITIAL PROJECT PLAN

10.1 A high level Project Plan outlining the main stages of the Project will follow.

## 11. INITIAL RISK LOG

11.1 A detailed Risk Log and a strategy for managing the risks will be developed for endorsement by the PDP B and the SLB. An initial appraisal suggests that the key risks will relate to the following issues:-

- availability of elected members to engage in the project;

- availability of project team personnel with experience in the relevant areas;
- continuity of personnel as the project progresses;
- availability of financial resources to fund any identified requirements; and
- effective engagement with departments and other key bodies.

**SLB Paper 44c/2008**

**DRAFT**

## **Policy Development Panel C (Structural Reform)**



**Project Initiation Document for approval by the  
Strategic Leadership Board**

## **INTRODUCTION**

1.2 This Project Initiation Document (PID) will give the Strategic Leadership Board, the assurance that PDP C (Structural Reform) has established:

- clear Terms of Reference;
- an adequate management structure;
- that sufficient planning has taken place; and
- that sufficient resources are in place to take the project forward.

## **2. PURPOSE**

2.3 The purpose of this document is to put in place firm foundations for Panel C by:

- setting out the aims and objectives of the project;
- defining the scope of the project;
- setting out the activities, resources, responsibilities and outputs required to facilitate the completion of the project; and
- setting out the management structure for the project.

2.2 This PID will be the baseline against which the Strategic Leadership Board can monitor progress and make decisions.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

3.1 The local government proposals of the previous Direct Rule administration were reviewed by the Executive and the outcome was announced on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008, by the Minister of the Environment. The decisions taken include the rationalisation of the current configuration of 26 council areas to create 11 new council areas and the transfer of a range of functions from central to local government. This is due to take place in 2011.

3.2 Taskforce structures have been developed to help manage and integrate the implementation stage of the local government reform programme. The top tier of the structure is the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) which is the key driver of the reform process. This is chaired by the Minister of the Environment (Mr Sammy Wilson MP MLA) with the President of NILGA (Alderman Arnold Hatch) as Vice Chair and membership includes elected representatives of each of the five main political parties. The SLB is supported by three Policy Development Panels (PDPs), also comprising elected representatives along with central and local government advisors which have been charged with developing the policy and implementation proposals necessary to ensure the smooth transition of the new councils in 2011. PDP C (Structural Reform) proposals are subject to the approval of the Strategic Leadership Board with recommendations being taken forward by the Regional Transitional Co-operating Group in conjunction with Transition Committees representing the 11 groupings of existing councils which will form the proposed new local authorities.

3.3 SLB has charged Panel C with the development of recommendations on policy and implementation proposals in relation to 6 structural reform work strands. These embrace Human Resources, Capacity Building, Finance, Estates, Transfer of Functions and Service Delivery (ie on a Regional/Sub Regional basis).

- 3.4 At the inaugural meeting of Panel C, on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008, it was agreed that working groups should be established, as and when required, to assist in the development of policy and implementation for each of these work strands or projects.
- 3.5 It was further agreed that some of the work strands naturally interlinked and for this reason should be taken forward on the basis of 4 projects listed below:
- Strategic Business Case (embracing local government structural reform)
  - Human Resources
  - Finance/Estates
  - Capacity Building
- 3.6 The Strategic Business Case project will be taken forward by way of a consultancy assignment. Phase 1 of the assignment, which is the responsibility of PDP C, will provide a cost benefit analysis of future service delivery options and models. Phase 2 of the assignment, which is the responsibility of SLB, will provide a full cost benefit analysis of local government restructuring in its entirety.
- 3.7 The other 3 projects taken forward mainly by internal working groups comprising central and local government officers.

#### **4. PROJECT DEFINITION**

##### **Project Objectives and Terms of Reference**

- 4.1 The management Terms of Reference of Panel C (Structural Reform) are defined as:-

“To lead the development of policy, for the structural reform work strands of the local government modernisation programme, to facilitate the effective and smooth transition from the current configuration of 26 council areas to the 11 new council areas which are to be in place in 2011. These structural reform work stands embrace Human Resources, Capacity Building, Finance, Estates, Regional and Sub Regional Design (Service Delivery) and the Transfer of Functions from central to local government.”

It will be the responsibility of Panel C to:-

- lead the development of policy, including timescales and resources, and to agree that programme with the Strategic Leadership Board;
- ensure that the programme of work remains on track and report regularly to the Strategic Leadership Board on progress;
- present recommendations on policy and implementation proposals to the Strategic Leadership Board for agreement;
- ensure that policy proposals are subject to consultation and the relevant impact assessments;
- ensure that requests to Strategic Leadership Board for financial resources are supported by an appropriate business case;
- commission task and finish projects on key work areas; and develop, where appropriate, proposals for local pilots in specific geographic areas.

##### **Method of Approach**

- 4.2 The work of PDP C will be managed using the PRINCE 2 (Projects in Controlled Environment) standards and associated project controls, in line with best practice for projects in the public sector.

A key priority of Panel C will be to develop a Project Plan/Programme for SLB approval (see Annex 1) setting out how it proposes to take the project forward. It is envisaged, however, that the project will consist of a number of stages:

Stage 1	Preparation of PID and approval by SLB
Stage 2	Establishment of working group and consultancy assignment teams
Stage 3	Delivery of options and recommendations to Panel C by working group/consultant teams
Stage 4	Policy proposals, including options and recommendations, made to the SLB
Stage 5	Post Project Review

### **Project Scope**

- 4.3 It is envisaged that the scope of the Panel will embrace consideration of a range of key issues in each of the work strands.

### **Project Deliverables/Products**

- 4.4 There are two key themes to the work that will need to be taken forward by Panel C:-
- the development of policy proposals for consideration by the Strategic Leadership Board and ultimately the Minister which will form the basis for the primary legislative proposals for the reorganisation of local government; and,
  - the development of proposals for subordinate legislation, guidance (both statutory and non-statutory), pilot schemes where appropriate, etc to underpin the effective operationalisation of the primary legislative provisions.
- 4.5 Within each of these thematic areas there are a number of tasks that will need to be taken forward, both sequentially and in parallel, if the timetable for reform and modernisation programme, including the passage of the required primary legislation through the Assembly, is to be achieved. It is currently envisaged that most of the legislative provision, relating to the work strands for which Panel C has been charged, will be encompassed in the Local Government (Reorganisation) Bill.

### **Managing Interfaces**

- 4.6 The PDP C project management team within the Local Government Policy Division of DOE will meet on a regular basis with officers from NILGA, local government Chief Officer advisors to Panel C, and senior colleagues in Departments to advance the work of the Panel in line with the agreed timetable.
- 4.7 The PDP C Project Manager will also meet on a regular basis with the Senior Responsible Owner, the Programme Manager, and the project managers supporting Policy Development Panels A & B to consider and develop proposals for the handling of interlinked issues. Any such proposals will be submitted to Panel C for agreement.

- 4.8 It will be important for the elected members of Panel C to seek and articulate the views of local government on the work strands being taken forward as part of the project. The Chair of the Panel will also report and seek the views of the Strategic Leadership Board at regular checkpoints in the project.

### **Project Filing Structure**

- 4.9 All papers produced to inform the deliberations of Panel C and those to support its efficient and effective operation will be filed in accordance with the Department of the Environment's records management procedures.

## **5 PROJECT ORGANISATION**

### **PROGRAMME AND PROJECT ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**

- 5.1 The diagram attached at Annex 2 sets out the overall programme structure.

## **6 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Policy Development Panel C (Project Board)**

- 6.1 Following approval of this PID by the Strategic Leadership Board, Panel C will be accountable for the success of the overall project. It will have responsibility and authority to make decisions in relation to the management of the project and provide commitment of resources to the project. The Panel will manage by exception, delegating the day to day running of the project to the Project Manager. The main responsibilities of the Panel will be to:
- review and seek SLB approval for this PID;
  - agree responsibilities and objectives with the Project Manager;
  - agree project and stage tolerances; and
  - authorise commitment of project resources following SLB approval.
- 6.2 As the project progresses:
- guide the project ensuring it remains within specified constraints;
  - authorise the start of each phase;
  - review and approve plans;
  - management of risks identified at plan approval stages;
  - approval of changes; and
  - ensure compliance with policy direction from the SLB.
- 6.3 At the end of the project:
- ensure that all products have been delivered;
  - ensure all acceptance criteria have been met;
  - provide End Project Report for SLB consideration;
  - authorise Project Closure following SLB approval; and
  - provide Project Evaluation Review for SLB consideration.

## The Project Manager

6.4 The Project Manager will have the delegated authority to run the project on a day to day basis on behalf of Panel C within the agreed constraints. The main responsibilities of the Project Manager will be to:

- deliver agreed products to required specification and quality according to the planned timetable, and within budget;
- direct and motivate the project team;
- project manage and plan all stages of the project;
- agree delegations and project assurance roles;
- prepare project, stage and exception plans and agree with the Project Board;
- manage business and project risks (includes contingency planning);
- produce PIDs for Work Groups;
- liaise with members of associated projects or programmes;
- monitor progress, expenditure, resources, initiation of corrective action;
- keep PDP C informed of deviations in plans and associated action (Change Control);
- prepare highlight reports for the PDP;
- liaise with PDP to assure the direction and integrity of the project;
- prepare End Project Report;
- identify and obtain support and advice necessary for the management, planning and control of the project; and
- take responsibility for project administration.

## Project Assurance Group

6.5 Project Assurance will have responsibility for independent monitoring of all aspects of the project's performance and products. Specific responsibilities of Project Assurance will be to:

- ensure the Panel members' needs and expectations are being met or managed;
- ensure that risks are being controlled;
- keep the project in line with agreed Project Plan;
- inform the project of any changes caused by external events; and
- ensure adherence to quality assurance standards.

## 7 PROJECT PERSONNEL

### Policy Development Panel C – Project Board

7.1

Name	Organisation	Function
Ald. Arnold Hatch (UUP)	Elected Member	Project Chair
Cllr Myreve Chambers (DUP)	Elected Member	Vice-Chair
Cllr Mairead O'Dowd (SF)	Elected Member	
Cllr Seamus Doyle (SDLP)	Elected Member	
Cllr Marion Smith (UUP)	Elected Member	
Cllr Alan Lawther (All)	Elected Member	
Cllr Sean McPeake (SF)	Elected Member	

Cllr Gary Stokes (SDLP)	Elected Member	
Cllr Anne Wilson (All)	Elected Member	
Cllr Clive McFarland (DUP)	Elected Member	

### **Project Manager and Project Team**

7.2 Following approval of this PID by SLB, the Project Manager (Brenda Mooney) will have the delegated authority to run the project on a day to day basis on behalf of Panel C within the agreed constraints. The Project Team will be a joint secretariat comprised of officers from DOE and NILGA.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Function</b>
Brenda Mooney	DOE	Project Manager
Nora Winder	NILGA	Lead Officer NILGA
Speers Charters	DOE	
Helen Richmond	NILGA	
Sinead Kelly	NILGA	
Michael McKeown	DOE	
Gail Downey	DOE	

### **Project Assurance**

7.3 Project assurance will be provided by the officers outlined below:-

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Position</b>
Ian Maye	DOE	Director, LG Policy
Tom McCall	LG Advisor	Chief Executive
David McCammick	LG Advisor	Chief Executive
Philip Irwin	DFP	
Barry Jordan	DRD	
Jim Wilkinson	DOE Planning	
Sharon Gallagher	DSD	
Michael Daly	DFP	
Grace Nesbitt	DFP	

## **8 PROJECT TOLERANCES**

8.1 The recommendations of PDP C will have a very significant bearing on the formulation of proposals of the other PDPs. There is, therefore, only limited tolerance within the overall project.

## **9 PROJECT CONTROLS**

9.1 Following approval by SLB, Panel C will have overall responsibility for the work strands within the project and will receive information from the Project Manager (and the Assurance Group) to enable it to fulfil this role. It will include checkpoint meetings, highlight reports, exceptions plans, stage authorisation and change control procedures, etc.

9.2 The major controls for Panel C will be:-

- Project Initiation – to ensure that, before significant resources are committed to the project, everything involved in the project has been agreed: project objectives, roles and responsibilities, project scope and boundary, project controls. Following approval by SLB, Panel C can move to the next stage.
- End Stage Assessment – SLB only commits to one stage of work at a time. This assessment approves the work to date and provides authority to proceed to the next stage.
- Highlight (dashboard) Reports – provided by Panel C to the SLB on a regular basis to report progress during a stage. The Highlight Reports for this project will be produced monthly and will contain details of progress to date, achievements in the current period and achievements expected in the next period, details of actual or potential problems and suggestions for their resolution.
- Exception Reports – notification by Panel C to the SLB that the stage or project plan will deviate outside tolerance limits. This details the problem, outlines the available options and identifies the recommended option.
- Mid-Stage Assessment – this assessment is held between the PDP and the Project Manager after an Exception Report or a significant milestone to determine how the project will proceed.
- Project Closure – Panel C formally closes the project following approval from SLB.

## **10 COMMUNICATION PLAN**

- 10.1 A Communications Plan, embracing the 4 projects within the remit of Panel C, will be developed that links with the Communications Strategy of the overall reform and modernisation programme. This will ensure that the sector and other interested stakeholders are kept informed of developments through the regular NILGA updates, the DOE website and the joint DOE/NILGA Newsletter.

## **11 QUALITY PLAN**

- 11.1 The quality requirement for this project is the production of clear comprehensive project outputs on a timely basis. The Quality Review process will check to identify any errors, omissions, misunderstandings, ambiguity, and non-compliance with the overarching policy direction set out in the Minister of the Environment's Statement to the Northern Ireland Assembly on 31 March 2008 on the future shape of local government.
- 11.2 The Quality Management System to be used in the project is composed of the following elements:
- a set of standards to be applied to the production of project products;
  - a quality assurance procedure for all products;
  - a set of procedures to facilitate project issues;
  - a set of procedures to facilitate change control; and
  - the implementation of a consistent structured document management system for selected outputs produced by the project.

## **12 INITIAL RISK LOG**



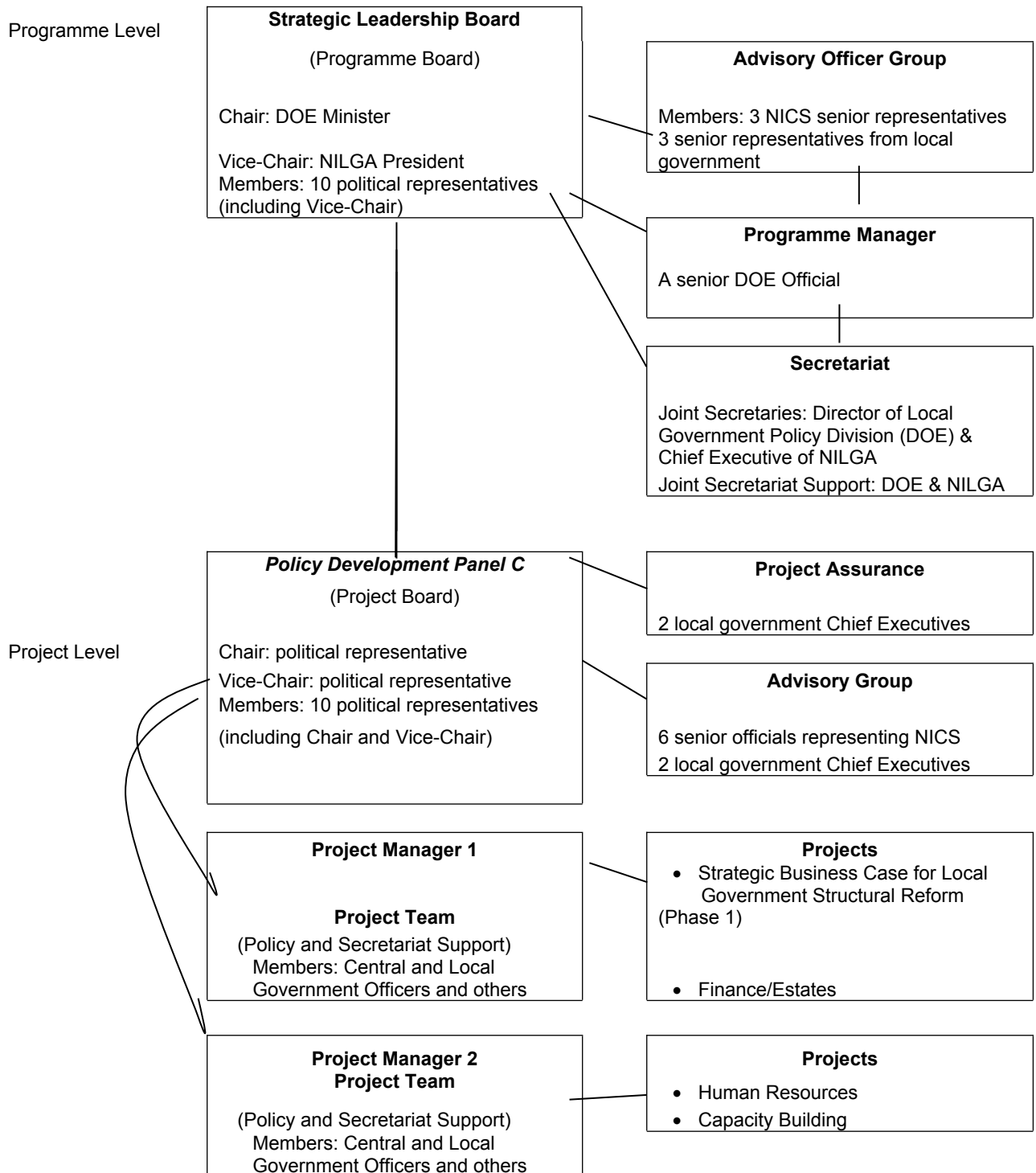
12.1 A detailed Risk Log and a strategy for managing the risks will be developed for endorsement by the Strategic Leadership Board. An initial appraisal suggests that the key risks will relate to the following issues:-

- availability of elected members to engage in the project;
- availability of project team personnel with experience of various work strands
- continuity of personnel as the project progresses;
- availability of financial resources to fund any identified requirements; and effective engagement with departments and other key bodies.

## PROJECT PLAN / PROGRAMME

Timescale	Key Work Item
September 2008	<p><i>Preparation of Project Initiation Document for SLB approval and securing team resources</i></p> <p><i>Identification of current position in relation to work strands and the scope of work group/ consultancy teams' programmes</i></p>
October 2008	<p><i>Commence Strategic Business Case for the restructuring of local government.</i></p> <p><i>Phase 1 – Evaluation of service delivery organisational models</i></p> <p><i>Phase 2 – Evaluation of the overall Strategic Business Case</i></p> <p><i>Identification of any primary legislation requirement for 6 work strands</i></p>
February 2009	<p><i>Consideration of Strategic Business Case Phase 1 Report</i></p>
Ongoing	<p><i>Preparation and presentation of Working Group reports to SLB outlining issues, analysis and recommendations</i></p>

**PROGRAMME AND PROJECT ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**



## Appendix 2

### STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP BOARD MEETING – 3 October 2008

#### Discussion Paper on Local Government Reorganisation: Shadow Period

##### Joint Secretariat Paper

**Summary:** Discussion Paper on whether there should be a shadow period, to inform the Minister's decision

**Action Required:** For discussion

- 1.
- 2.

### 3. Introduction

1. At the Strategic Leadership Board meeting of 3 September the Minister asked for a paper to be prepared on the implications of the reorganisation being taken forward with a shadow period or in the absence of a shadow period. He also indicated that the views of political parties are needed on this issue as soon as possible.
2. This paper has been prepared for discussion by the Strategic Leadership Board at its meeting on 3 October to enable the Minister to take views before making a decision on whether the new councils will operate in shadow form for a period before assuming full power and responsibility. Any decision by the Minister will require Executive support.

### 4. Background

3. On 13 March 2008, the Executive agreed to implement the local government aspects of the Review of Public Administration by adopting the 11b model set out in the RPA Further Consultation of March 2005.

4. In her announcement to the Assembly on 31 March 2008, Arlene Foster, then Minister of the Environment, stated that she had not yet taken a definitive view in relation to shadow councils. She also announced that she intended to ask the Secretary of State to postpone the next round of local government elections (due in 2009) to 2011, when members would be elected to the new councils.
5. On 15 April, Minister Foster wrote to the Secretary of State, asking him to indicate whether he would be prepared to postpone the next round of local government elections to 2011. This would see the term of office for serving councillors extended by two years. The Secretary of State agreed to the postponement of the elections to May 2011 as an exceptional but justified step in the circumstances.

#### **What is meant by “shadow period”?**

6. The term “shadow period” refers to the period from the date of elections to the new district councils until the date when those councils assume full powers and responsibilities. The newly elected council, acting in shadow form, would work towards planning and developing the policies that would shape the direction of the new council before it became fully operational.

#### **Should there be a shadow period?**

7. A decision is needed as to whether the new councils will operate in shadow form alongside the existing councils for a period following the elections in 2011. This decision is crucial in shaping the implementation structures and transitional arrangements for the reorganisation of local government and will have an impact on the powers and responsibilities of the Transition Committees. The precise roles, responsibilities and powers of those committees will flow from the decision on whether there should be a shadow period. The decision may also impact on the case for putting in place early severance arrangements for councillors in advance of the elections to the new councils.
8. The issue of whether there should be a shadow period was raised at a meeting of the Strategic Leadership Board (SLB) held on 2 April 2008. At this meeting,

the SLB also commissioned a paper on options for transitional arrangements and early guidelines for transitional committees. The resulting paper (SLB Paper 32/2008) identified that any transition vehicle would have to have:

- “the legal ability to make decisions”; and
- “the democratic right to make decisions”.

9. A Transition Arrangements Working Group – including representatives from the Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA), the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and the Department – was established to produce and report on detailed proposals for transition structures.
10. The paper which was prepared by the Transition Arrangements Working Group (SLB Paper 39/08) for the 3 September meeting of the SLB assumed that the new councils established in 2011 would not operate in shadow form, but noted that further direction on this matter was required. As a result of the discussion on this paper, the SLB agreed that the Department should produce a paper on shadow periods.
11. The issue of whether there will be a shadow period has been raised in meetings between officials and local government representatives, both elected and officer. Members of the Environment Committee, at its meeting on 18 September 2008, also asked whether a definitive view had been taken on whether there would be a post-election shadow period.

### **Pros and Cons**

12. Annex A sets out the pros and cons for reorganisation without a shadow period whilst Annex B sets out the pros and cons for reorganisation with a shadow period.
13. Irrespective of the preferred option, there are at least two key decisions that must be made and acted upon before the new councils come fully into operation:
  - appointment of a clerk of council and, ideally, creation of and appointments to the senior management structure; and

- development of a service delivery plan to enable calculation of rates for the next financial year.
14. Continuity and quality of service delivery by local government must remain a priority during the changeover from 26 to 11 councils.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

15. That:
- the views of political parties are canvassed as a matter of urgency to help inform the debate at the SLB meeting on 3 October;
  - the issue is discussed at the meeting of 3 October to enable the Minister to take a view before making a decision on whether or not there should be a shadow period and to enable him to take the matter to the Executive at the earliest opportunity.

**New councils come into operation without a shadow period**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1. Members elected to the new councils will come into office on the fourth day after polling day, in accordance with Part III of the Electoral Law (Northern Ireland) Act 1962.
- 1.2. The council will assume full powers and responsibilities from that date, and will be accountable for service delivery.
- 1.3. The political make-up and identity of individual members comprising the new council, operating on behalf of a new local government district, will not be known until immediately before the new councils are established.
- 1.4. Transition committees will have to make important decisions (e.g. the appointment of clerk and senior managers, service delivery plan, rates, etc) on behalf of the incoming councils.

**2. Potential advantages of this approach**

- 2.1. The process of reorganising local government, which has already taken a considerable amount of time, will not be further delayed as the new councils will assume immediate responsibility for the delivery of services and carrying out of functions.
- 2.2. There will be a clean break between the roles and responsibilities of the old and new councils – this will mean less confusion for the citizen concerning the body responsible for delivering services after the elections in 2011.
- 2.3. It will position the new councils to provide civic leadership and take responsibility for the delivery of services, including those functions transferring from central government, to the public immediately following the election to that council, and enable councils to focus immediately on shaping their communities.
- 2.4. There will be financial savings from not having to pay for two sets of local government bodies and two sets of councillors simultaneously.
- 2.5. Questions over whether separate central government funding would be required for the shadow period will not arise.
- 2.6. The new Assembly and councils will start together – a fresh political canvas for Northern Ireland.

**3. Potential disadvantages of this approach**



- 3.1. New councils may not accept the draft management structures, transfer schemes and service delivery plans prepared by transition committees. Resources could therefore be wasted if the new councils reject the draft arrangements, and have to undo work already undertaken under these arrangements.
- 3.2. The timetable for achieving full operation of new councils is very tight, with no leeway to take account of external influences (eg political, economic, social, technological, legislative and environmental). Transition committees may have to devote resources to engage in contingency planning activities, which may not be feasible or practicable in the time available.
- 3.3. The Local Government Taskforce Human Resources Sub-group – which submitted its report in June 2006 – advised strongly against an approach that would require interim management structures and transfer schemes.
- 3.4. Elections to councils and the Assembly will run simultaneously in May 2011. There is a risk of the new administration allocating different resources to local government, which will require different budgeting by councils. Therefore, budget decisions for full service delivery by the new councils cannot be finalised until the new administration agrees to the budget allocation for local government.
- 3.5. Calculation of rates for 2011-12 will be problematic, covering two systems of local government, with rates for the greater part of the year being struck by the old councils on behalf of the new, based on assumed budgets that might not be honoured by the new administration, and on draft service delivery plans that might not be accepted by the new council.
- 3.6. There is the risk of a governance mismatch between representatives of old councils on transition committees (subject to old governance rules) making decisions on behalf of councils that would require additional controls, consents, checks and balances etc under the new governance regime.
- 3.7. The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities has advised that issues and problems arising from workforce transfers are difficult to address without the benefit of a shadow period.
- 3.8. There may be an increased risk of failure (actual or perceived) at go-live date – new councils starting out under a cloud.
- 3.9. Transition committees with enhanced functions and powers will require substantial funding.
- 3.10. Although transition committees could be given statutory authority to appoint Chief Executives Designate and other Directors Designate, such appointments may not be accepted by the new councils. The implications of the rejection of some or all of these appointments would be costly, and highly detrimental to the new councils in the early stages of their existence.

3.11. By giving transition committees such powers in statute, supported by Transition Management Teams (non-statutory), it could be argued that the Executive has created a pre-election shadow authority in all but name.

## **New councils come into operation with a shadow period**

### **1. Summary**

- 1.1. If the new councils are to operate in shadow form alongside the existing councils for an initial period, legislative provision will be needed enabling members of the existing 26 councils to remain in office until the new council structure is adopted. This would be a matter for the Secretary of State.
- 1.2. As the shadow councils are, essentially, the new councils waiting to take over, they will have the democratic right to make decisions that will determine the direction taken.
- 1.3. It will be the Department's responsibility to make legislation regarding the respective powers and functions of the new councils and the outgoing councils during the shadow period.
- 1.4. Looking at other administrations within the United Kingdom, the Local Government Changes for England Regulations 1994 (the 1994 Regulations) are regulations of general application and make incidental, consequential, transitional and supplementary provision for local authorities undergoing structural change.
- 1.5. The Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) Regulations 2008, made under section 14 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, make further provision for shadow councils.
- 1.6. Although the provisions of these regulations could not be applied in their entirety to Northern Ireland, some of the areas covered indicate the possible functions and responsibilities of shadow councils in 2011.
- 1.7. The appointment of the Clerk will be one of the first duties undertaken by the shadow councils.
- 1.8. Business needs require the Clerk to be in place as early as possible. A shadow period that permits the new councils to appoint Clerks and work together on the service delivery plan will in turn support effective management and service delivery once the new councils come fully into operation.
- 1.9. If management decisions remain the responsibility of the new councils, transition committees will be able to focus on the essential spadework of gathering information on assets, liabilities, staff etc, to be passed on to the new council at the start of the shadow period.

### **2. Potential advantages of this approach**

- 2.1. The new councils will have the democratic right as well as the statutory authority to make decisions concerning the new local government district.
- 2.2. The new councils will have ownership of key decisions concerning the appointment of the Chief Executive and management team. This will remove the need for

additional appointments (eg “Chief Executive Designate”) to cover the period prior to elections and the commencement of the new councils.

- 2.3. A shadow period will help provide clarity and separation of roles, with transition committees gathering and sorting information (eg human resources, financial position, contracts, assets/estate/fleet for first day brief), and with making arrangements for the first meeting of the new council, but leaving executive decisions to the new council.
- 2.4. Depending on the length of the shadow period, calculation of rates for 2011-12 may prove less complicated than if reorganisation takes place towards the end of May 2011.
- 2.5. Efficiency may be improved, as the new council will not have to spend time debating and resolving to accept or reject the business plans prepared by the transition committee.
- 2.6. Differences in the political make-up and direction of old and new councils will have less of an impact, as the decision-making responsibilities of the old regarding the new will have been minimised.
- 2.7. The new council will be best placed to identify the social and organisational needs of the district, which may differ from those of their predecessor, and will be able to take the necessary action.
- 2.8. Service delivery plans devised by councils during the shadow period will be developed in the context of the budget for local government allocated by the newly elected Assembly.
- 2.9. During the shadow period, the new councils will be able to respond to changes (eg political, economic, social, technological, legislative and environmental) in the external environment.
- 2.10. New councils will be able to liaise directly with departments concerning the functions transferring from central government.
- 2.11. Members will be able to agree upon the name and headquarters of the council before coming fully into operation, allowing for effective corporate branding from the outset.
- 2.12. A shadow period supports strong business planning by the individuals (elected members and officers) who will implement the plans on behalf of the new council.
- 2.13. The decisions on (for example) staffing structures made by the new council are more likely to be final and sustainable, even if the decisions are made at a later date than if taken by transition committees.
- 2.14. The discrete activities of information-gathering (by transition committees) and decision-making (by the new councils) will be kept apart. This encourages complete and impartial information gathering, not influenced or limited by desired outcomes.
- 2.15. Business-based decisions will have the authority and support of the new council, reducing the need for interim plans and revisions.

- 2.16. Wherever appropriate, staff and officers in existing councils continue to be employed by those councils for the purpose of service delivery throughout the shadow period. This may relieve some immediate concerns among the workforce, as employment will be secure for an additional period before transferring to the new councils.
- 2.17. Standard practice in other jurisdictions:
- Wales (legislation effective from 5 July 1994, new local authorities effective 1 April 2006)
  - Scotland (legislation effective from 8 November 1994, affecting new local authorities established on or after 1 April 1996)
  - England (continuous restructuring on a local basis through local implementation orders or structural change orders).
- 2.18. During meetings and discussions, officials from Great Britain have emphasised the benefits of including a shadow period as part of the reorganisation process, and have expressed surprise that a shadow period for Northern Ireland should be under question.
- 2.19. Pressure for immediate delivery by the new councils of day to day frontline services will be relieved. With the old councils retaining the dominant role in service delivery throughout the shadow period, the new councils will be able to focus on strategy and planning for future service delivery and the development of the new council.

### **3. Potential disadvantages of this approach**

- 3.1. The Secretary of State agreed to postpone local government elections due in 2009 by 2 years – “an exceptional but necessary step in the circumstances”. The Secretary of State has not been asked to extend the term of office for existing council members beyond this and may be unwilling to do so.
- 3.2. The right to free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot is enshrined in Article 3 of the First Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights. Although the electorate will have a voice in 2011, the “old” councillors elected in 2005 remain in office until 2012. The longer the period of postponement / extension, the greater the risk of challenge under the Human Rights Act 1998 on the basis that democratic rights have not been observed.
- 3.3. Depending on the number of councillors availing of the proposed severance scheme, casual vacancies on the old councils may be filled through co-option by members who have never faced the public vote, and who are lacking in experience of local government. Extending the life of the old councils during a shadow period will also extend the period in which they will operate under inexperienced members.
- 3.4. There is a risk of a loss of momentum in the process of reorganisation: there is still a substantial amount of work that needs to be done, and the deadlines are still very challenging.
- 3.5. This approach will prolong the period of uncertainty for officers and staff in councils before the final position is established.
- 3.6. Some councils may already be working towards an end date of May 2011, tailoring forward business plans accordingly.

- 3.7. The obvious costs of running two sets of councils simultaneously will attract criticism, even though neither set of councils would be delivering the full range of services or discharging the full range of functions.
- 3.8. Based on a shadow period that comes to an end on 1 April 2012, almost 10 years will have passed since the abolition of the current 26 councils was first mooted.
- 3.9. There may be some confusion among members of the public, being unsure of which council to approach for assistance and advice.

### DELIVERING ON THE REVIEW OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

#### CREATING STRONG LOCAL GOVERNMENT

#### A Paper Outlining a local Government Preferred Approach

August 2008

##### Context

1. The Review of Public Administration (RPA) initiated by the devolved Assembly was announced in September 2002. It was subsequently overseen by direct rule Ministers from October 2002 until May 2006, when devolution was restored. In July 06, the then Minister for the Environment, Arlene Foster MLA, initiated a further Review of the Local Government Aspects of the Review of Public Administration.
2. Arlene Foster MLA announced the outcome of the review to the Assembly on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2007. The key elements of the final decisions were:-
  - the rationalisation in the number of local authorities in Northern Ireland from 26 to 11, to be effective from May 2011
  - the transfer of a range of functions from central to local government including planning, regeneration, public realm aspects of local roads, and some minor economic development, tourism and housing related functions
  - the creation of new Community Planning and Wellbeing Powers for Local Government
  - Statutory Governance arrangements
  - A clear indication that the strengthening of local government would be “*a process and not an event*” and that a further review would be carried out 12 months after the new councils become operational
  - Central and Local Government to work in partnership to deliver the Programme for Government and the vision for local government
4. In the announcement the Minister set out a vision for Local Government.

*“Our vision for local government is therefore one of a strong, dynamic local government creating communities that are vibrant, healthy, prosperous, safe, sustainable and have the needs of all citizens at their core. Central to the vision is the provision of high quality, efficient services that respond to the needs of people and continuously improve over time. That vision resonates with the Executive’s Programme for Government and the strategic priorities contained within it. It also reflects the strong desire that central and local government should work in partnership to deliver the Programme for Government and the vision for local government.”*
5. The **vision** articulated in the announcement is consonant with the vision outlined by NILGA at its conference on 16/17 February 2006. This vision recognises the requirement that

citizens' needs need to be at the centre of delivering public services. It further recognises the need to integrate public services both to serve the public more effectively and to provide better value for money. Finally it recognised that for community planning to work local government, central government, statutory agencies and the voluntary community and private sector will have to build relationships and **common cause** on what they are trying to achieve.

6. In the context of the discussion about the future relationship between central and local government and the transfer of functions from central government to local government it is important to note the principles underpinning the Review.
  - (1) **Subsidiarity** – the need to balance the efficiency of regional service delivery against local democracy and local responsiveness;
  - (2) **Equality and Good Relations** – in terms of service delivery, diversity and employment, the governance of organisations including the Councils and the embracement of principles set out in A Shared Future – The Framework for Good Relations;
  - (3) **Common Boundaries** – experience elsewhere demonstrates that people can understand public services better when they are delivered in common boundaries which also make it much easier for organisations to deliver real joined-up services; and
  - (4) **Strong Local Government** – all the Review consultations saw people strongly in support of local government as the centrepiece in service delivery and local democracy.
7. The RPA is now reaching the critical stage of implementation where functions will be transferred from central government to local government. It is essential that there is a common understanding across central government on the purpose and vision underpinning the transfer of functions to local government. Local Government now calls upon the Minister and Executive Colleagues **agree a set of principles to firmly set the context in which the implementation work for the transfer of functions should be approached.**
8. Such a statement of principles will serve to ensure that both central and local government are working in partnership to a common vision and that the transfer of functions takes place in an environment of trust, mutual regard and the common cause of providing integrated public services meeting the needs of our citizens. NILGA therefore requests the Minister of the Environment in line with the specified vision to endorse the principles set out below and to seek agreement from Ministerial colleagues to inform the manner in which the Departments and local government approach the work of implementing the transfer of functions to local government.
9. The purpose of the transfer of functions to local government is to create a strong local government having direct control over local services which are delivered in a manner responsive to local needs. Such services must be provided fairly and equitably and in a manner which ensures value for money. Community planning is the mechanism through which the aim of integrated public services responsive to the needs of local communities will be pursued. This will require both central and local government to look at the manner in which services are delivered at the moment and the manner in which resources are allocated.
10. The common aim of both central and local government is to work in partnership to create sustainable, safe and fair communities that live in attractive places and enjoy effective public services and a good quality of life. Such communities will also be economically



successful and socially cohesive with an appreciation of the rights and responsibilities of people from all backgrounds, providing opportunities for business and individuals to thrive in a sustainable manner.

### **Local Government Requests**

11. **Local government therefore requests the Minister of the Environment to endorse the following set of principles and to seek agreement from Ministerial colleagues to agree the statement of principles and subsequently ensure that Government Departments adhere to these principles when transferring functions to local government.**

**Local Government feel the following statement of principles to guide the work would be appropriate.**

- (1) The transfer of functions to local government will be governed by the vision and guiding principles set out in the Ministers speech, as reiterated above in paragraphs 2-6 above.**
- (2) To build and sustain the trust that will create the relationships to deliver community planning, the transfer of functions must take place in an open and transparent manner. This will require the Departments and agencies transferring functions and representatives of local government to hold early and open conversations involving the mutual exchange of information on the resources and capacity of the functions being transferred.**
- (3) This work should be facilitated within the arrangements for the task force, ensuring a timetable, consultation arrangements and a project plan for implementation is prepared and overseen by the Minister in liaison with the Strategic Leadership Board.**
- (4) Reports on the transfer of individual functions should be prepared by individual Departments and be reported to the Minister and Strategic Leadership Board for endorsement.**
- (5) Ministers should require Departments to prepare reports in consultation with local government and each report going to the Strategic leadership Board should be signed off by both parties indicating the areas of agreement and disagreement.**
- (6) Ministers should require their Departments to prepare these reports based on the following principles:**
  - (a) All services announced by the Minister as transferring to local government will transfer (subject to discussions with local government on some minor items).**
  - (b) A clear definition will be provided for of the transferring functions in terms of their scope, currently policy, associated resources and current governance arrangements.**
  - (c) A clear time line and project plan will set out the methodology and processes (including consultation arrangements) necessary for the timely transfer of functions.**
  - (d) Functions being transferred should be sufficiently funded at the point of transfer to ensure that the same quality of service is available to citizens pre- and post-transfer in a manner that ensures that at the point of transfer there is no additional cost to the ratepayer.**
  - (e) All the resources associated with the function in terms of estate, fleet and human resources together with a proportionate amount of the**

**back office administration and human resources associated with the exercise of the function will transfer.**

- (f) Both parties recognise that it is essential that skilled staff are transferred with the function as it is these staff who will ensure that services to citizens are maintained and improved. Discussions will take place between both parties to agree the number, capacity levels and skills of staff who should transfer.**
- (g) The Minister in liaison with the Strategic Leadership Board will determine whether the above principles have been complied with when considering the reports from the individual Departments and if there is disagreement will consider taking independent advice on the arguments put before them.**
- (h) The Minister and Strategic Leadership Board recognise that it is vital to maintain staff motivation and morale through a period of radical change and therefore undertake that the principle of parity will apply to all staff who are affected by the change whether they be in local or central government. This means that the same compensation and transfer arrangements will apply and that the principle of fair and equal treatment will be at the heart of all decisions.**