

Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
Subject:	DRAFT Investment Programme 2012-15 - Update
Date:	9 December 2011
Reporting Officer:	Peter McNaney, Chief Executive

1.0	<u>Relevant Background Information</u>
1.1	<p>This report sets out the key issues relating to the revised “DRAFT Belfast Investment Package 2012-15”, which is attached at appendix 1.</p> <p>The information in the package is DRAFT at this point, with final content dependent on the affordability limits set by Members through agreement of the rate for 2012/13. This paper therefore needs to be read in conjunction with the rates report which sets out the implications of different levels of rate for deliverability, particularly of capital investment projects. Should Members be minded, a final draft of the package will be presented to Committee in January 2012, in the context of the decision about the rate, with a view to launching consultation on the document in February.</p> <p>Members should note that the “people, communities and neighbourhoods” aspect of the package requires further development in the light of the outcome of the Members’ workshop on this theme, held on 29th November.</p> <p>The draft document has been moved forward since it was discussed by Members on 20th September and 21 October; amendments have been made in respect of the issues raised by Members at these meetings, including the sections on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical investment;• Employability and skills;• Procurement and• International relations and marketing.
2.0	<u>Key issues</u>
2.1	<p>Content of the Draft Investment Programme</p> <p>The content of the Draft Investment Package has moved on from previous iterations in line with the comments made by Members; however, it remains a draft for discussion. A mock up document of the draft programme is attached and a number of areas and figures are still to be finalised for example;</p> <p>Available resource – finalisation of this information is dependent on Members consideration of affordability limits in the context of setting the rate;</p> <p>Target setting – for example, in terms of potential job creation, where analysis is still being finalised to quantify all the potential employment created through the</p>

capital projects proposed in the package, the outreach work, internships and apprenticeships. In terms of the Council's own commitments, some of this will be dependent on the review of agency and overtime which work is ongoing.

Microfinance – a full paper will be taken to Committee in January, outlining the potential options and implications for the Council;

Outcome of the people and communities workshop – the content of this section need to be further updated in the context of the Members' workshop on 29th November.

The draft investment programme contains the following elements:

Introduction from the Chair of SP&R;

Context information about the city;

Principles which underpin the investment programme;

Physical Investment Projects

- Council led, partnership and advocacy projects;

Economy

- Support for Businesses and Growth (tourism, events, international marketing, supporting, businesses, procurement);
- Support for employability and skills development (internships and placements, skills development, bursary scheme, social clauses)

People, Communities and Neighbourhoods

- including local investment fund, good relations, interfaces work, community support, community safety, health inequalities, renewing the routes; poverty and inequalities strategy, advice provision and local parks and leisure developments.

It is likely that any final iteration of the document will need to contain more summarised text; however, at this stage, Members are asked for their views on whether:

- the content reflects the range of interventions Members want to see pursued;
- the tone of the document and its messages are appropriate;
- the right level of information is provided.

The document will be redrafted in line with Members views and presented again to Committee in January.

3.0	<p><u>Linked issues</u></p>
3.1	<p>Draft Masterplan</p> <p>As Members are aware work has been ongoing to refresh the Belfast Masterplan which will give a wider physical development context to the investment/stimulus programme. Revision of the masterplan has been led by the Development Committee which considered the Masterplan review in the context of the Regional Development and Transportation strategies earlier this year. The revised Masterplan will set out what the Council needs to focus on in terms of city infrastructure and relationships in order to create a competitive, connected, inclusive Belfast. The key development platforms emerging from the Masterplan review include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The centre city – a vibrant and dynamic centre city and regional economy. • The neighbourhood city – neighbourhoods which provide the focus for community, social and environmental sustainability. • The accessible and connected city – enhancing the accessibility and connectivity internationally, regionally and locally. • The learning city – harnessing the power of cutting edge research and development and third level educations. • The eco city – clean technology, renewable energy and efficiency will drive growth in the economy and reduce costs for businesses and households. <p>Emerging thinking from this work is referenced within the draft investment package in the context of those projects which Members have prioritised for advocacy, including the new UU campus, stadia proposals, rapid transit and Royal Exchange.</p> <p>In order that Members can discuss emerging thinking on the revised Masterplan, it is proposed that a joint meeting of the Development and SP&R Committees is held in early January 2012, to which all other Members will be invited. This will allow Members to shape and inform the recommendations from the masterplan and will also provide an opportunity to consider the elements of the investment programme in this context. The intention is that the draft masterplan would be launched for consultation together with the investment package so that they are mutually reinforcing documents, both aimed at creating a successful and competitive city. Obviously the creditability of the investment package will depend upon agreement being reached on the rate at the end of January.</p>
3.2	<p>Launch</p> <p>Members have asked that the investment programme is launched for consultation in February, in the context of the Masterplan document, as outlined above. It is proposed that this happens on 2 February 2012 and that two sessions are held with different audiences in mind:</p> <p>A media briefing focusing on business and economic correspondents from the local media and</p> <p>A morning “conference” to which Ministers, Belfast-based MLAs, Belfast City Councillors and senior decision makers from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors will be invited.</p>

	<p>It is proposed that the detail and approach to this and other potentially related events and communication activity should be worked up together with the Party Leaders Forum with a view to updating the Committee of progress when the final draft of the programme is submitted in January.</p> <p>Taking forward work with Members on further prioritisation of capital projects within the draft programme</p> <p>The capital projects listed within the draft investment programme are those contained within the report by the Director of Property and Projects to the meeting on 18 November which contained information on all current and proposed capital projects. Members noted the need for officers and Members to work together to establish the feasibility and deliverability of projects. This work will commence in the new year when there is clarity about the resources available to deliver this stream of work in the context of the agreed rate.</p>
3	Resource Implications
3.1	<p>The resource implications of taking forward the Council's commitments as set out in the "investment programme" will be discussed further in line with the budget setting process for 2012-15.</p> <p>There will be costs associated with the launch of the document and its production but these can be covered from within existing budgets.</p>
4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	Equality screening of all elements of the investment programme will be under taken in line with Council policy.
5	Recommendations
5.1	<p>Members are asked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for feedback on the draft programme with a view to a further document being submitted to Committee in January; • to agree that a special meeting of the SP&R and Development Committees is held in early January 2012 to consider the revised draft masterplan and its relationship with the investment programme; • to agreed to 2 February as the target date for launching the programme and that details of the launch and related communication activities are worked out in further detail with the Party Leaders Forum.
6	Documents attached
	Appendix 1: DRAFT Belfast Investment Package 2012-15