



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Member Area Working Groups (AWG) – terms of reference
Date:	25 April 2012
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources
Contact Officers:	Stephen McCrory, Chief Executive’s Department Caroline Wilson, Chief Executive’s Department

1.0	<u>Relevant Background Information</u>																																																						
1.1	<p>The Council at its meeting on 2 April 12 adopted five area working groups consisting of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – North Belfast comprising the Castle and Oldpark District Electoral Areas (DEAs); – South Belfast comprising the Balmoral and Laganbank DEAs; – East Belfast comprising the Pottinger and Victoria DEAs; – West Belfast comprising the Lower Falls and Upper Falls DEAs; and – Shankill comprising the Court DEA. <p>The party representation in each, is as follows:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: 40px;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Party</th> <th>North</th> <th>South</th> <th>East</th> <th>West</th> <th>Shankill</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>SF</td> <td align="center">5</td> <td align="center">2</td> <td align="center">1</td> <td align="center">8</td> <td align="center">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DUP</td> <td align="center">4</td> <td align="center">2</td> <td align="center">6</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SDLP</td> <td align="center">2</td> <td align="center">4</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">2</td> <td align="center">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ALL</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">2</td> <td align="center">4</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>UUP</td> <td align="center">1</td> <td align="center">1</td> <td align="center">1</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PUP</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">1</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IND</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">0</td> <td align="center">1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td align="center">12</td> <td align="center">11</td> <td align="center">13</td> <td align="center">10</td> <td align="center">5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Party	North	South	East	West	Shankill	SF	5	2	1	8	0	DUP	4	2	6	0	3	SDLP	2	4	0	2	0	ALL	0	2	4	0	0	UUP	1	1	1	0	0	PUP	0	0	1	0	1	IND	0	0	0	0	1	Total	12	11	13	10	5
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1.2	<p>Members are keen to play an active role in the project management cycle. It was agreed the key points of involvement for the Member Area Working Groups (AWG) would be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Project identification; – Prioritising short-list, on the basis of deliverability and affordability, for design and concept development; – Making recommendation on the investment decision to SP&R Committee, on the basis of feasibility and sustainability; – Monitoring progress and supporting community engagement, where appropriate; – Official launch and communicating success. <p>These stages have been reflected in the draft terms of reference outlined below.</p>																																																						

1.3	<p>At its meeting on 23 March, SP&R Committee agreed the following governance arrangements:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Investment Programme Governance</p> <pre> graph TD Council[Council] --- SP&R[SP&R] SP&R -.-> BudgetPanel[Budget Panel (oversight Board)] SP&R --- AWG[Area working groups •Prioritisation proposals •Monitoring] SP&R --- SC[Standing Committees •Delivery and monitoring roles] </pre>
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2.0	<u>Key Issues</u>
2.1	<p>In discussions with party groups, Members have indicated that the Area Working Groups (AWG) should be convened on an advisory basis to inform the implementation of Belfast Investment Programme. The expressed preference is for ‘light-touch’ governance arrangements for the AWGs, in the first instance. The AWGs will have no delegated authority and no budget.</p>
2.2	<p>The interim terms of reference for the AWGs are:</p> <p>“In the context of the Belfast Investment Programme, the SP&R Committee has convened the Area Working Groups to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Act as community advocates to identify local priorities and support effective ‘place-shaping’; ii. Make recommendations to SP&R Committee on investment decisions for the local area; iii. To offer advice and guidance to SP&R Committee and officers in the development and implementation of local projects; iv. Participate in and facilitate community engagement and communications activities with a wide range of groups on investment in local areas; v. Consider other area-based issues as referred by SP&R Committee; vi. To monitor progress and produce an annual report on performance.”
2.3	<p>Timing of meetings</p> <p>It is suggested that meetings are held on a monthly basis. In order to ensure that recommendations are made on a timely basis to SP&R Committee, the timeline will be:</p>

Date	Meeting	Purpose of meeting
30 Apr–3 May	AWG meetings x 5	Preliminary meeting
10 May	Budget and Transformation Panel	Further consideration prioritisation matrix
18 May	SP&R Committee	
28 May–8 June	AWG meetings x 5	First short-list of priorities for investment and further concept development
14 June	Budget and Transformation Panel	Review of AWG recommendations
22 June	SP&R Committee	Consideration and ratification of AWG recommendations
2 July	Council meeting	Ratification of AWG recommendations

These meetings are scheduled around the existing schedule for Standing Committees and party briefings.

2.4 Following consultation with Group Leaders the dates of the first meetings of each Area Working Group are outlined below –

Area	Date	Time
West	30th April	12.00 noon – 2.00pm
East	1st May	10.00am – 12.00 noon
North	2nd May	12.00 noon – 2.00pm
Shankill	2nd May	6.00pm – 8.00pm
South	3rd May	12.00 noon – 2.00pm

Democratic Services will issue summons for these meetings.

2.5 It is suggested that on a rolling basis, the AWG meetings should be scheduled over a 2-week period at the ‘turn’ of each month (i.e. Week 4 and Week 1) and that all decisions will be presented to SP&R Committee in Week 3.

Members will note that the tight timetable for decisions and there is very limited flexibility for additional party group briefings or meetings.

2.6 **Process for decision-making**

Over the next 2 months, the AWGs will be asked to consider the following issues:

May	Establishment of AWGs First consideration of long-list of projects
June	First short-list of priorities for investment (Phase 1) from the Local Investment Fund Initial consideration of project feasibility

	Identify priorities and consideration of feasibility of City Investment Fund projects
August – December	<p>Consideration of feasibility and sustainability reports on Phase 1 projects</p> <p>Brighter Belfast-type projects</p> <p>Outcomes framework</p> <p>Community engagement – with local area public meetings</p>
<p>In order to ensure that decisions are ratified in advance of the summer recess, it is critical that the AWGs focus on early prioritisation of projects, for presentation to the July Council meeting.</p>	
2.7	<p>Format of meetings</p> <p>In party group briefings, the suggestion was the format for AWG meetings should be a workshop format. For the first 2 meetings, in order that all Members can fully participate, it is suggested that the workshop will be facilitated jointly by the Director of Property and Projects and Director of Finance and Resources.</p> <p>As the work of the AWGs evolves, further discussion will be needed on chairing the meetings and setting their agenda.</p>
2.8	<p>It is suggested that the agenda for the first meeting of the Member Area Working Groups is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Overview of Local Investment Fund ii. Overview of governance arrangements iii. Prioritisation framework iv. Overview of identified projects and initial ‘sift’ v. Next steps <p>It is suggested that the agenda for the second meeting of the Member Area Working Groups is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Area profile – mapping existing physical assets in area ii. Discussion on first short-list of prioritised projects for feasibility iii. Views on City Investment Fund priorities and feasibility studies iv. Recommendations to SP&R on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Investment decisions – Feasibility/concept development support
2.9	<p>Communications plan</p> <p>A Communications plan is being prepared for the Investment Programme. This plan will also need to address the need for sustained community engagement by the Area Working Groups.</p>
2.10	<p>Review of AWGs</p> <p>The composition of the area working groups will be kept under review in line with any changes to the governance arrangements in the City. It is suggested that a 6-month review happens in</p>

	December, to allow for discussion on the role of political leads, the relationship with standing Committees and the capacity to oversee delivery.
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3.0	Resource Implications
Human – none Financial – none Assets – none at present	

4.0	Equality Implications
Not applicable at this stage – all decisions of the AWGs would be subject to equality screening.	

5.0	Recommendations
Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is asked to agree: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Terms of reference for the AWG (2.2)– Preliminary schedule of meetings for AWG (2.3)– First meeting agenda for AWG (2.6)	

6.0	Officers to contact
Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources Caroline Wilson, Chief Executive’s Department	