

**Minutes of Budget and Transformation Panel Meeting
14 June 2012**

1. Attendance

Members:

Cllr Tim Attwood
Cllr Deirdre Hargey (Chair)
Cllr Maire Hendron
Cllr Jim McVeigh
Cllr Guy Spence
Alderman Bob Stoker

Officers:

Peter McNaney, Chief Executive
Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources
Gerry Miller, Director of Property and Projects
Lisa Toland, Development Department
Mark McBride, Head of Finance and Performance

2. Alderman Smyth

The Chief Executive reported that Alderman Smyth was in hospital having surgery and that during this period Cllr Kyle would be acting Party Group Leader for the PUP.

3. Investment Programme

3.1 Delivery Plan

The Director of Finance and Resources referred to list of programme briefs for the Investment Programme which had been provided to Members. He advised that a detailed brief for each of the projects would be included with the papers for the SP&R meeting on the 22 June and that a presentation on the briefs, and their role in ensuring delivery of the programme, would be made at the SP&R meeting. It was also confirmed that a council officer had been allocated to each project as the project manager, and it was agreed that these names should be added to the summary list.

3.2 Bursary Scheme

Lisa Toland, Economic Development Manager, presented the report on the proposals for the council bursary scheme. Lisa outlined the results of the research undertaken into existing schemes which operated in the City. It was noted that the list of existing schemes may not be exhaustive and that if Elected Members could provide information on other schemes then this would be welcomed.

It was agreed that in order to fulfil the commitment of spending £100k per year over the three years of the investment programme, it would be necessary to take a phased approach to the development of the bursary scheme. This would involve working with existing partners such as BMC and the Prince's Trust during the first year of the programme while at the same time developing an approach with other organisation /funders from the public and private sector to develop a jointly funded BCC scheme. It was agreed that the report should be presented to SP&R on the 22 June with the recommended phased approach to development of the scheme.

3.3 Job Opportunities

The Chief Executive summarised the proposals included within the paper prepared by the Head of Human Resources and highlighted the proposed targets for Job Opportunities and Job Placements. It was confirmed that performance against the targets would be reported to SP&R on a quarterly basis.

3.4 Resources

The Director of Finance and Resources updated Members on the arrangements with SIB to procure the additional specialist project management support for the major construction projects within the investment programme. Members noted the draft advertisement which SIB would be using to attract suitable Infrastructure Project Managers.

3.5 Local Investment Fund

The Director of Property and Projects summarised the key issues arising from the Area Working Groups (AWGs). These included the following:

- A recommendation from two of the AWGs to apply a cut-off date of 22 June for the first phase of projects;
- The first full round of prioritisation will take place over the summer with recommendations from AWGs being presented to SP&R in August;
- Guidance on the issues of asset ownership, leases and Facility Management Agreements;
- Amendments to the prioritisation matrix based on a red / amber / green system;
- Capital funding guidelines
- Time critical match funding opportunities

3.6 Social Investment Fund

The Chief Executive provided an update on the Social Investment Fund and advised that in addition to the Elected Members representation on the Steering Groups, it would be recommended that the council nominate four Directors for the groups. This would be considered at the SP&R meeting on the 22 June.

4. Capital Programme

The Director of Property and Projects provided an overview of the key stages and political decision points of the capital programme process. He explained, through the use of examples, how projects could progress through the initial proposal and strategic outline stages and then through the subsequent design, tender and construction stages. He also highlighted the SP&R decision points at the emerging list, uncommitted and committed project stages.

The Director of Finance and Resources then provided an overview of the capital financing budget for 2012/13. He advised that the incremental nature of the capital expenditure associated with the investment programme meant that £500k could be set aside as a feasibility fund to enable potential projects to be brought to a decision making stage. Funding of approximately £1.8m would also be available in 2012/13 to fund non recurring works to council facilities in line with the council's prioritised planned maintenance programme.

It was agreed that permission should be sought from SP&R on the 22 June to set aside £500k of the 2012/13 capital financing budget for the feasibility fund.

5. Efficiency Programme

The Director of Finance and Resources provided an update on the efficiency programme and confirmed that the proposals for the delivery of the 2012/13 savings of £2m would be presented to SP&R for approval on the 22 June.

6. Year End Outturn Report

The Panel noted the year end outturn position which reported actual net expenditure for the year being £1.8m below estimate representing a variance of 1.6% which was well within the best practice tolerance level of 3%. The improved general reserves position of £11.36m was also noted.

7. Review of Public Administration

The Chief Executive presented a report detailing the council's action plans which would ensure the effective implementation of RPA for Belfast. The plans included project briefs for individual work streams together with details of the lead officers, the methodology, milestones and deliverables for each project.

The report also included the "Forward Work Plan" for the Transition Committee and detailed the key reporting and decision points covering the following areas:-

- Legislation
- Boundary Changes and Convergence
- Finance
- Transfer of Functions
- Human Resources and Organisational Development
- Communication and Engagement

8. Ministerial Engagement

The panel noted the date, time and venue of the first phase of Ministerial meetings in support of the delivery of the Investment programme and agreed to consider the proposed areas for discussion with the Ministers. The panel also agreed the proposals for the second phase of meetings.

9. Dates of Future Meetings

Meetings commencing at 10.00am:-

- 9 August 2012
- 13 September 2012
- 11 October 2012
- 8 November 2012
- 6 December 2012