

<b>Report to:</b>	Strategic Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Community Planning – procurement update</b>
<b>Date:</b>	25 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Suzanne Wylie, Director of Health and Environmental Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Sharon McNicholl, Corporate Planning and Policy Manager
<b>1.0 Purpose</b>	
1.1	To update Members on the ongoing preparations for community planning and to seek approval to procure external expertise to support the development of the community planning framework and vision for Belfast.
<b>2.0 Background</b>	
2.1	In November 2013, SP&R agreed an outline budget to support Local Government Reform (LGR), which included setting aside resources for community planning in the form of expertise and practitioner support in designing of process, delivery structures and approach to community planning at a city, thematic and local area level; and to support capacity building and awareness.
2.2	Earlier this year, STC (15 Jan 2014) and SP&R (2014) agreed a work programme designed to ensure the council was prepared for the duty of community planning. The programme has four key strands: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>Start to develop the city vision and long-term objectives</b></li> <li>ii. <b>Develop an approach to community planning at the local level</b></li> <li>iii. <b>Develop the right governance, structures and accountability frameworks</b></li> <li>iv. <b>Ensure effective communications and build capacity to support community planning</b></li> </ul>
2.3	Work has commenced on aligning this programme to other relevant Local Government Reform related work such as planning and regeneration as well as concurrent work on the strategic development of the city centre. STC has agreed a detailed monitoring process for all LGR work which will also provide a monitoring framework for the development of community planning.
2.4	On the 9 <sup>th</sup> April, the STC agreed the inclusion of tenders within its expenditure controls to support community planning; namely (i) the development of the city vision and community planning outcomes framework for Belfast; and (ii) the development of local area community planning.
2.5	This report sets out more detail regarding the proposed expenditure and seeks authorisation from SP&R to commence the procurement process for securing the external support.
<b>3.0 Key Issues</b>	
<b><i>City Vision and Community Planning Outcomes Framework for Belfast</i></b>	
3.1	Members have agreed that creating an evidence-based and shared vision for Belfast that is aligned to the achievement of agreed outcomes is essential to effective community planning. It will also set an overarching framework in which to develop and support neighbourhood development and will form the central plank for community planning in the longer term. To

help us develop and secure commitment we are proposing to commission external support, or a consortium of support, that will enable us to develop and facilitate a robust and collaborative process for developing and agreeing:

- a. the city vision
- b. shared outcomes
- c. performance monitoring process

This will be a Member-led process which will include community planning partners and other stakeholders as well as extensive training and capacity building on outcomes based accountability.

3.2 Furthermore, the role of the external support contract will be to advise and help council develop:

- 1) A common agenda (short term) and shared vision for Belfast (long term)
- 2) A draft high level outcome based framework and vision for Belfast – for presentation to new council / Community Planning Partnership during 2015.
- 3) An aligned performance framework that takes account of regional requirements, council corporate planning and performance management and those of our community planning partners i.e. shared accountability mechanisms
- 4) Information to support effective governance and delivery structures both at city level and within Council.

3.3 Other key requirements will be to ensure

- Effective engagement with stakeholders across the city;
- Alignment and complimentary to the emerging statutory guidance requirements;
- Innovation, sustainability and deliverability;
- Learning to inform partnership building and future partnership governance structures;
- Impact is felt on the ground in local communities;
- Negotiation with central government.

3.4 The work to develop the vision and outcomes for the city will also help inform and shape the Local Development Plan, i.e. the spatial plan for the city, and will ensure that the statement of community involvement takes account of community planning. It will also help ensure the impact of the city centre strategy is maximised across the city, and will help direct and inform the wider strategic context for local area planning. The previously agreed community planning budget will therefore be used to buy in expertise and experience to ensure that the community planning process creates not only an outcomes led strategic plan for Belfast but also supports the effective use of partnerships, resources, investment and regeneration powers to drive forward city growth and address issues of deprivation and inequality.

### ***Local Area Community Planning***

3.5 The second key strand of work relates to the practical outworking of community planning at a local or neighbourhood level. Practice elsewhere (particularly in Scotland, Wales and in English cities such as Manchester) provides substantial evidence that suggests we need to consider the implications of community planning at the local level and how to integrate local and city community planning objectives. At the local level there is often a strong relationship between community planning and neighbourhood regeneration (physical, social and economic). Community planning, community development, spatial planning and regeneration are all mutually reinforcing processes and new functions for these are passing to us from

Government.

3.6 As with the city-wide vision, Members have agreed that specialist external expertise is procured to support this work which will be led by Members through their Area Working Groups the strands of work will include:

- Strategic support and capacity building for Members and partners;
- Local area geographies
- Local governance and partnership structures
- Framework for developing and agreeing local area planning and outcomes
- Developing shared service planning and coordination at local level
- Developing an agreed approach and framework for local area interventions.

#### 4.0 Resource Implications

6.1 The development costs for community planning, including the procurement processes outlined above, have been factored into the budget estimates for 2014/15 and agreed through STC and Council.

#### 5.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications

7.1 None at present.

#### 6.0 Recommendations

8.1 Members are asked to agree that a tender process is now undertaken to procure the specialist support required to develop the Council's community planning processes at a city and local area level in line with previous council decisions.

#### 7.0 Documents attached

None.