

## **Minutes of Budget and Transformation Panel Meeting 10 February 2017**

### **Attendance**

#### Members:

Councillor Hussey (Chair)  
Alderman Pat Convery  
Councillor Billy Hutchinson  
Councillor Michael Long  
Councillor Jim McVeigh  
Councillor Lee Reynolds  
Alderman Jim Rodgers (for Ald D Browne)

Apologies: Alderman Browne

#### Officers:

Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive  
Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources  
John Walsh, Town Solicitor  
Emer Husbands, Strategic Performance Manager (secretariat)

In attendance for 6

Rose Crozier, Assistant Director City and Neighbourhood Services  
Margaret Higgins, Senior Good Relations Officer

### **1. Finance**

#### **a. Quarter 3 Position**

The Director of Finance and Resources outlined the quarter 3 financial position which would be presented to Strategic Policy and Resources (SP&R) Committee in February. He recommended a number of re-allocations of underspend including the previously agreed support for the shortfall in the community development grant programme.

#### **b. City Centre Investment Fund**

The Chief Executive referred to a report on the City Centre Investment Fund that had been discussed by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee. She reminded members that decisions relating allocation of the fund need to be approved by SP&R and that a further report would be brought on this to the committee in February.

### **2. Belfast Visitor Attraction**

The Chief Executive updated Members on the ongoing development of proposals for a new visitor attraction for Belfast City Centre. She highlighted the importance of the project to the regeneration of the city and outlined the next steps in taking the project forward and a

proposed programme of work. Members discussed the project and were keen to see proposals and design concepts for the attraction and to engage further in the process.

### **3. Capital of Culture**

The Chief Executive referred to a report which had been discussed by the City Growth and Regeneration Committee relating to an update on capital of culture. It was agreed that this report would be considered further by the SP&R Committee at their February meeting.

### **4. NOM - Tourism Offer Consultation on Licensing Hours**

The Town Solicitor circulated a paper which provided an update on a previous Notice of Motion moved by Councillor McVeigh, regarding the importance of tourism to the City's economy and the need to modernise the current licensing regimes. He outlined to the panel the proposed next steps and specifically requested approval for officers to carry out targeted consultation with representatives from the local tourism and hospitality sector, licensing industry and statutory bodies. The Members discussed the need to ensure that this goes beyond licensing laws but also includes the changes that need to happen to make the city a more attractive tourism offer. The Town Solicitor agreed to circulate an outline of the consultation to members of the panel.

### **5. Planning Update**

The Chief Executive informed the panel of the applications that were being presented to the Planning Committee this month. She also updated them on the recent announcement in relation to proposed development at Royal Exchange adding that the developers have asked to present the proposals to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee.

### **6. Bonfire Management Programme** (R Crozier and M Higgins also attended in relation to this item)

The Assistant Director of City and Neighbourhood Services outlined to Members the content of a report which would be considered by the Good Relations Panel on the future proposals for the Bonfire Management Programme. The members discussed the proposed options and the challenges in increasing participation on the programme.

### **7. AOB**

Councillor McVeigh asked that the ongoing work on the revision to the Irish Language Policy is taken into committee for consideration. Councillor Long referred to a broader piece of work on a Language Policy for the council and suggested that this also be taken

into consideration. Members agreed to discuss it at the next Budget Panel meeting with work on revisions to the current policy date circulated in advance.