

People and Communities Committee Planning

Workshop Feedback

Date: Wednesday 15 February 2017, 12.30pm – 2.00pm, Room AD1H, 1st Floor, 9 Adelaide.

Member Attendees: Cllr Matt Garrett, Alderman Jim Rodgers, Cllr Janice Austin, Cllr Sonia Copeland, Cllr Steven Corr, Cllr Mervyn Jones.

Officer Attendees: Suzanne Wylie, Nigel Grimshaw, Rose Crozier, Caroline Wilson, Cate Taggart, Sam Skimin, Sara Steele, Karen Anderson-Gillespie.

Key areas of feedback

1. Belfast Agenda and Local Development Plan

- Big opportunity for the Committee under Living Here theme in BA, as well as under Local Development Plan – how we support a city and neighbourhoods which are positive places to live
- Biggest threat to the Belfast Agenda is the failure of work in partnership effectively – education authorities and housing authorities are particularly important. Potential to bring them into area planning.
- Key challenges in terms of LDP – how do we build infrastructure around new housing development.
- Abundance of city structures i.e. partnership board, policing partnerships – need a strategy to streamline this for going forward, to focus work and maximise resources going into neighbourhoods. There is a requirement for structures to better support area working.
- Challenge in how we liaise with major landowners in the city i.e. Harbour Commission.

2. Delivery of Services

- There needs to be more focus on integrated neighbourhood delivery. Excellent example re: Manchester re: community safety, they have co-location of services on an area basis, all under one roof (housing, safety, PSNI etc.). Safer communities – how do we get them working together better? Youth agencies all working together.
- Need for the alignment of services – grants and investment and the importance of building sustainable programmes in the buildings/assets. Our grant-aid needs to be more customer-focussed – easier applications and allow time for better planning of local events
- Area priorities – importance of problem solving. Locality planning deals with very local issues well e.g. Whiterock.
- Opportunity to use community centres as locations for decentralised services, out in the heart of the communities where the services are needed. Potential to pilot this.
- AWGs – opportunity to use Local Investment Fund differently in the future.
- AWGs – Their role should be to discuss housing and area need, the group needs to invite housing associations and reduce NIHE to twice a year in Committee.

3. Committee and corporate arrangements

- Still a need to integrate services of new Local Government Reform areas that weren't part of Belfast.
- Setting up the P&C committee and bring all services together has been a success. Achievement bringing all three key customer-facing services together.
- Need to streamline names of BCC Departments with Committees – can be confusing, both internally and externally.
- Committee Agenda needs to be more streamlined. Too many operational issues, there needs to be more strategic pieces of work brought for discussion. Examples of some strategic areas of work include:
 - Pitches Strategy – needs looked at again, particularly issue re: intermediate vs casual. No Rugby and hockey pitches provided by Council across the city.
 - Boxing Strategy
 - Community centre review
- There is still an issue for customers re: planning function phone number, this needs looked at.