

Minutes of Budget and Transformation Panel Meeting 7th December 2017

In Attendance

Members:

Councillor Brian Heading (for Cllr Attwood)
Councillor Billy Hutchinson
Councillor Michael Long
Councillor Matt Garrett (for Cllr McVeigh)
Councillor Lee Reynolds
Alderman Jim Rodgers (for Alderman D Browne)

Apologies: Alderman Browne, Cllr McVeigh, Cllr Attwood

Officers:

Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive
Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources
John Walsh, City Solicitor
Nigel Grimshaw, Director of City and Neighbourhood Services (for item 1)
Emer Husbands, Strategic Performance Manager (secretariat)

1. Belfast Zoo

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services provided the panel with an update on the review of Belfast Zoo. A report on options was being developed and would be presented to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee in February 2018. Members asked that the review is also brought back to Budget Panel for discussion.

2. ECOC 2023

The Chief Executive outlined to the members that the five UK Cities who were preparing bids for the European Capital of Culture 2023 were working together to provide a joint response on the decision that they were now not able to complete the application process due to Brexit.

3. Revenue Estimates 2017-18

The Director of Finance and Resources updated the panel on the revenue estimating process for 2017 – 18 following the party group briefings. He highlighted the change in the EPP and also the final pay increase which is agreed nationally, and therefore is an added uncontrollable cost. In addition, a request had been received from People and Communities Committee to allocate £200,000 to the Boxing Strategy. The panel discussed options on areas where savings could possibly be made to fund these additional costs.

4. Developers Contributions

The City Solicitor circulated a paper outlining the proposal for the development of a Developers Contribution Framework and it was agreed that a workshop would be held with Members in January to discuss the draft policy. The panel welcomed this framework and agreed that it should be progressed as quickly as possible.

5. Strategy and Prioritisation Workshop

The Chief Executive proposed to set up a series of workshops linked to the Belfast Agenda and it was agreed that her office would circulate dates to Party Group Leaders.

6. Recruitment Update

The Chief Executive updated members on the current recruitment process for Directors.

7. Notices of Motion

The Chief Executive reminded the panel that there were previous discussions in relation to how we may limit the number of notices of motion considered at each council meeting. It was agreed that the previous paper which was considered at committee in May 2016 would be circulated and that this would be discussed by individual party groups.

8. Planning Updates

The Chief Executive informed the panel of the applications that were being presented to the Planning Committee this month.

9. AOB

Bonfire Review

Tom Frawley to attend a future meeting of the Party Group Leaders Forum and a report will subsequently be brought to SP&R.