



Subject:	The Five C's Public Realm Catalyst Project
Date:	18 December 2020
Reporting Officer:	Alistair Reid, Strategic Director Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Cathy Reynolds, Director City Regeneration and Development Richard Griffin, Development Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To seek approval to commit developer contributions secured through the planning process in order to enable delivery of a public realm scheme known as 'The Five Cs Public Realm' catalyst project, which covers Chichester Street, Callender Street, College Avenue, College Court and College Street.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to i. note the update in respect of the use of developer contributions for a proposed public realm project known as 'The Five C's Public Realm Project' in Belfast City Centre.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. grant approval for the commitment of £3,150 secured as a developer contribution following receipt of amended information regarding planning approval at No. 78 College Avenue (LA04/2015/0419/F) to part-fund the Five Cs public realm catalyst project; and iii. grant approval for the commitment of an additional £243,310 secured as developer contributions from The Paper Exchange (LA04/2019/0909/F) and Chichester House (LA04/2016/0548F) to part-fund the Five Cs public realm catalyst project, with a further £42,500 to be committed from the Chichester House scheme on receipt of payment which will be triggered by occupation.
3.0	Main Report
	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>3.1 As agreed at the SP&R meeting in November 2018 and the CG&R meeting in December 2018, officers have been working with the Department for Communities (DfC) to develop a programme of public realm catalyst projects utilising historical developer contributions.</p> <p>3.2 These contributions are legally defined by planning agreements and are designed to mitigate the impacts of new development. They can only be required where they are necessary to make the development acceptable and, once secured, are ring-fenced for an agreed purpose. The agreements through which all contributions referred to in this report have been secured specify that they may only be used for public realm improvements to mitigate the impact of increased footfall and to improve connectivity. The contributions may only be used within a defined geographical area, and must be 'committed' by Council within a specified time period of receipt, or risk being returned to the developer.</p> <p>3.3 Governance arrangements for developer contributions were agreed by SP&R on 17th December 2019. The commitment of developer contributions requires authorisation by Planning Service and Legal Services for the spending service area (in this case City Regeneration & Development) to proceed, with financial oversight provided by the Business Support Manager. No monies will be paid until all services have provided authorisation.</p> <p>3.4 At its meeting on 23rd November 2018, the SP&R Committee agreed to commit £475,650 of developer contributions from two developments (including No. 78 College Avenue - LA04/2015/0419/F) to part fund (with DfC) a public realm catalyst project in the College Street/College Avenue area. It was also noted that there would be an opportunity for Members and local stakeholders, including traders and residents, to engage in the development of proposals.</p>

3.5	<p>Following receipt of amended information in relation to No. 78 College Avenue (LA04/2015/0419/F) a further agreement secured an additional contribution of £3,150 towards public realm improvements. This sum has not yet been committed.</p>
3.6	<p>On 9th October 2019, the CG&R Committee agreed to proceed with design development and delivery in partnership with DfC, of further public realm improvements in Chichester and Callender Street utilising developer contributions, subject to approval by SP&R Committee, from two schemes - The Paper Exchange (LA04/2019/0909/F) and Chichester House (LA04/2016/0548F). These contributions total £285,810, though £42,500 is to be paid on occupation of Chichester House.</p>
3.7	<p>It was subsequently agreed with DfC that a single pilot project would be taken forward incorporating all of the streets referred to above, involving improvements to footway surfaces, street furniture, lighting and soft landscaping across the 'Five Cs'- Chichester Street, Callender Street, College Street, College Court and College Avenue. The project is being delivered by DfC in partnership with Council through existing governance arrangements established by the Belfast Streets Ahead Board, which includes representation from Dfl.</p>
3.8	<p>This project is being undertaken in the context of ongoing work to transform connectivity across the city, and will be delivered in line with the principles set out in the City Centre Connectivity Study 'A Bolder Vision'.</p>
3.9	<p>As reported to the CG&R Committee on 9th September 2020, a BCC Stakeholder and Engagement Group has been formed to provide cross Departmental input, and initial engagement with key stakeholders including Dfl has also been undertaken and will continue throughout the project. A workshop for elected members was facilitated in June during the early stages of design development and a further session took place in mid-September. Following this targeted stakeholder engagement, concept designs have been developed and are currently available as part of a public consultation process running from 30th September to 22nd December 2020 (see the attached Appendix - Five C's Consultation Booklet).</p>
3.10	<p>The Five Cs scheme has a total estimated value in the region of £1,900,000. Capital funding by Council will only be provided from the developer contributions referred to above which total £764,610, of which £475,650 has already been committed.</p>

3.11	This report proposes commitment of a further £243,310, plus £3,150 secured following receipt of amended information in relation to No.78 College Avenue (LA04/2015/0419/F). In relation to the Chichester House contribution, a further £42,500 will be committed on receipt of payment which will be triggered by occupation.
3.12	Each developer contribution will only be spent within the area defined by the relevant S76 agreement, and in line with all other terms of that agreement. Appropriate arrangements will be agreed between Belfast City Council and the Department for Communities, stating the requirement to adhere to the terms of each Planning agreement, including conditions regarding the purpose and location of spend.
	Financial and Resource Implications
3.13	Commitment of £243,310 of developer contributions from two schemes - The Paper Exchange (LA04/2019/0909/F) and Chichester House (LA04/2016/0548F). A further £42,500 will be committed from the Chichester House contribution, on receipt of payment which will be triggered by occupation.
3.14	Commitment of £3,150 of developer contributions in relation to a further agreement entered into following receipt of amended information regarding the scheme at No. 78 College Avenue (LA04/2015/0419/F).
	Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
3.15	The Five Cs Public Realm Catalyst Project is subject to equality and good relations screening with ongoing monitoring which is being carried out by DfC- https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/5-cs-public-realm-project-screening
3.16	Council's Equality & Diversity Officer has also been consulted on BCC Equality Screening for the Five Cs Public Realm Project to ensure that Equality and Good Relations implications and Rural Needs are fully considered.
4.0	Document Attached
	Five C's Consultation Booklet