



**Belfast City Council (SHADOW)**

<b>Report to:</b>	Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>LGR – Regeneration Bill</b>
<b>Date:</b>	28 November 2014
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Suzanne Wylie, Chief Executive Designate
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Finance & Resources Ext 6148

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Members will be aware that over the past number of months the Department for Social Development has sought to introduce the draft Regeneration and Housing Bill into the NI Assembly. This legislation intended to bring affect the transfer of regeneration, community development (and associated assets including the Lagan Weir) and regulatory housing powers to the Council on the 1 April 2015.
<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	<p>On 11 November the Minister for Social Development, Mervyn Storey MLA submitted a Written Ministerial Statement to the NI Assembly confirming the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defer the transfer of regeneration and community development responsibilities (including the associated transfer of budgets and assets) to Councils for one year until <b>1 April 2016</b> and;</li> <li>• Remove the specific provisions from the draft Bill relating to statutory housing functions to create a standalone 'Regeneration Bill'. Whilst the Ministerial Statement refers to the Housing functions being considered separately from the Regeneration Bill, there is no timescales currently specified around this.</li> </ul> <p>Attached at Appendix 1 is a copy of correspondence recently received from the Minister for Social Development as well as a copy of the Written Ministerial Statement submitted to the NI Assembly, outlining the agreed way forward.</p>
2.2	Whilst the transfer of regeneration and community development functions has now been delayed for a year, it still remains critical that the council continue to engage at both a political and senior officer level with DSD to implement the necessary programme of work to facilitate transfer. It will also be important that the Council seeks to maximise all opportunities for joint working with DSD in the lead up to 1 April 2016, particularly in relation to the development and implementation of community development programmes, the city centre regeneration and investment plan and physical capital schemes within the city.
2.3	Members have previously stated their strong concerns in relation to the significant shortfall in the proposed budget allocation to accompany the DSD powers transferring to the Council. Given the growing budgetary pressures on the NI Executive and central government Departments, it will be essential that the council continue to engage and negotiate with the DSD and NI Executive to ensure that an adequate budget transfers on 1 April 2016 and argue against any further significant

	reductions.
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<b>3</b>	<b>Resources</b>
3.1	There are no financial or human resource implications contained within this report.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Implications</b>
4.1	There are no equality implications from this report. The deferral of transferring powers to the council means that DSD will continue to have responsibility for the delivery of the powers up until 1 April 2016.

<b>5</b>	<b>Call-in</b>
4.1	This decision is subject to call-in

<b>6</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
6.1	The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and the appendices attached.

<b>7</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
<b>Appendix 1</b> Letter from Minister for Social Development Written Ministerial Statement to NI Assembly	