

Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Wednesday, 5th August, 2020

SPECIAL MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Black (Chairperson);
Aldermen Dorrian, Haire, Kingston and Sandford;
Councillors Beattie, Bunting, Carson, Garrett,
Groogan, Heading, Long, Lyons, McAllister,
McDonough-Brown, McLaughlin, Murphy,
Nicholl, Spratt and Walsh.

Also attended: Councillors de Faoite, Flynn and Kyle.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources;
Mr. J. Walsh, City Solicitor;
Mr. R. Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Mrs. S. Toland, Director of City Services;
Mrs. A. Allen, Neighbourhood Services Manager;
Mrs. L. Caldwell, Head of Marketing and Corporate
Communications;
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer; and
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

Restricted Item

The information contained in the reports associated with the following 3 items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the Press and public from the Committee meeting during discussion of these items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Section 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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Bonfire Update

The Director of City and Neighbourhood Services provided the Committee with an update on the current position in relation to the August bonfires throughout at the following sites: New Lodge, Distillery Street, Manor Street/Clifton Park Avenue, Divis/Lower Falls, Jamaica Way and Falls Park.

He referred also to the decision of the Committee of 31st July regarding the possible use of a private security contractor in support of the bonfire material removal contractor in New Lodge and provided an update in relation to the actions which had been undertaken by officers.

The Director advised the Members of specific issues which required the Committee's consideration at the Distillery Street and Divis/Lower Falls sites where further direction was required from the Council given the specific circumstances which had arisen and where the landowner was unknown.

He provided the Members with a copy of the Pro forma template which had been issued by the PSNI directly after the July 2020 bonfires which contained the information which must be provided to the Police by the landowner in advance of any planned operations to remove bonfire material. He pointed out that this was being completed by landowners every time a request was made by them to the PSNI for police support around any planned operations to remove bonfire materials.

The Director also provided the Committee with a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which had been drafted by the Department for Communities (DfC) in relation to Bonfire Management Agreement. The draft had been shared with relevant partners for comment. The DfC had hoped to have the MoU in place this week to inform its legal action against the PSNI but had been advised that Council officers would have to get authority from the Council that it was content to explore this as an option in the first instance and that Committee approval would have to be sought for any proposed amendments. Accordingly, it was proposed that the MoU be brought forward for initial engagement to the Party Group Leader before formal Consideration at Committee.

After discussion, the Committee:

- Agreed that the Memorandum of Understanding be brought forward for initial engagement to the Party Group Leaders before formal Consideration at Committee;
- granted authority for officers/contractors to access the sites at Distillery Street/Lower Falls;
- agreed that the situation at New Lodge be kept under review and that officers explore the necessary steps by which a security contractor (if willing and able) could be appointed, which would be subject to further consideration by the Committee; and
- noted that, in accordance with Standing Order 37a - Duties of Committees: Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, it had full delegated authority to take decisions in relation to bonfire related issues.

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Call-in

The Committee agreed, in accordance with Standing Order 47 (a) (2) (c), that the aforementioned decisions would not be subject to call-in, on the basis that an unreasonable delay could be prejudicial to the Council's or the public's interest.

Request from Minister for Department for Communities

The Committee was advised that, immediately prior to the commencement of the meeting, a request had been received from the Minister for the Department of Communities asking the Council, within the remit of its contract, to access the Council's contractor for the removal of bonfire materials at Galliagh in Derry. The Minister had indicated that, subject to the agreement of the contractor and confirmation of terms, the Department would fully recompense the Council for the full costs of the operation.

After discussion, the Committee agreed to accede to the request.

**Independent investigation –
Roselawn Cemetery – 30 June 2020**

(With the exception of the Director of Finance and Resources, the City Solicitor, the Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing, the Senior Democratic Services Officer and the Democratic Services Officers, all other members of staff left the meeting whilst this item was under consideration.)

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for the Terms of Reference for the Roselawn investigation/review and seeking authority enabling approval for the individual to conduct the investigation to be confirmed by consensus of the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum.

Moved by Alderman Dorrian.
Seconded by Councillor Long,

That the Committee agrees to grant the approval and authority sought.

On a recorded vote, ten Members voted for the proposal and none against, with seven no votes and it was declared carried:

<u>For 10</u>	<u>Against 0</u>	<u>No Vote 7</u>
Aldermen Dorrian, Haire and Kingston; and Councillors Bunting, Groogan, Heading, Long, Lyons, Nicholl and Spratt.		Councillor Black, Beattie, Carson, Garrett, McLaughlin, Murphy and Walsh.

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Chairperson