1  Purpose of Report/Recommendations

1.1  To present to Members options taking into account urban and rural areas following consideration of the proposal to acquire a beacon scheme to mark the Queen’s 90th birthday (GSP44/16).

2  Background

2.1  The official Guide to Taking Part in Beacon Scheme (Appendix 1) has been issued by The Queen’s 90th Birthday Beacons and forwarded via The Northern Ireland Local Government Association (NILGA).

2.2  A number of Local Authorities in Northern Ireland have already joined the project, along with over 250 local community and other organisations around the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories.

3  Key Issues

3.1  The Queen’s 90th Birthday Beacon Scheme is open to local communities and organisations and can be part of a public or private event.

3.2  The beacon is of lightweight construction and comes assembled and complete with the exception of the gas cylinders that will need to be purchased separately. One 47kg propane cylinder or 2 x 19kg cylinders are recommended to give a full flame for half an hour.

3.3  Alternative providers including Groundwork NI can supply eco-friendly beacons to enable communities across Northern Ireland to light up and celebrate a range of events in a safe and fun environment.

3.4  Groundwork NI beacons are steel pyramids filled with willow woodchips and built on sand. The beacons burn safely for up to two hours. (Appendix 2)

3.5  The beacons also have the benefit of significantly reduced clean-up costs and cause no environmental damage.

3.6  The introduction of beacons reduces the negative impact of bonfires on local communities, reduces anti-social behaviour and enables communities and organisations to celebrate various events in a positive manner.

4  Financial, Equality, Legal, HR and Other Implications
4.1 The official gas fuelled beacon specifically manufactured for this unique occasion is priced at £299 + VAT plus carriage costs of approximately £50. There will be additional costs for propane gas at approximately £60.

4.2 The range of proposals provided by Groundwork NI and estimated costs are detailed below:

4.2.1 Cost estimate for the hire, delivery and installation of Groundwork NI beacon to Council during 2016 - £6,250 + VAT

4.2.2 Cost estimate for the fabrication of 1 No Groundwork NI beacon for Council - £8,650 + VAT

4.2.3 Cost estimate for the installation of 1 No Council-owned beacon for Council during 2016 which is project-managed by Groundwork NI - £5,100 + VAT

4.3 A locally engineered beacon may generate cost efficiencies and could be procured through a competitive procurement process.

4.4 Depending on the option, there will be associated project management issues including for example costs of delivery, installation and insurance.

4.5 A community/voluntary group policy of usage would also be required.

5 Recommendation
5.1 That Members consider the purchase of a beacon for the Derry City and Strabane District Council area.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Official Guide to taking part in the Queen’s 90th Birthday Beacon Scheme

Appendix 2 – Groundwork NI Beacons

Minutes Ref: GSP44/16