



<b>Subject:</b>	Correspondence Received - Minister for Infrastructure re Winter Preparedness
<b>Date:</b>	24th April, 2026
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Stephen Leonard, Operational Director, City & Neighbourhood Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Eilish McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance Coordinator

<b>Restricted Reports</b>									
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Information relating to any individual</li> <li>2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual</li> <li>3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)</li> <li>4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter</li> <li>5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained</li> <li>6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction</li> <li>7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime</li> </ol>									
<p><b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b></p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

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

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	To note the correspondence received from Liz Kimmins, Minister for Infrastructure.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the correspondence as set out in the report.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	Key Issues
3.1	The Committee will recall that, at the Council meeting held on 2nd March, 2026, it was agreed to write to the Minister for Infrastructure to seek clarification on the Winter Preparedness arrangements for Belfast City Centre, specifically in relation to drainage and gully management, in light of the sustained and prolonged rainfall across Northern Ireland and to request the urgent clearance of all drains in order to ensure that the City Centre has no unnecessary barriers to accessibility.
3.2	The Committee is advised that a response has been received from the Minister.
3.3	In her response she advises that Officials from DfI continue to work closely with the Council, BID representatives and other stakeholders through the Belfast City Centre Task and Finish Group which was established in July 2025.
3.4	A number of problem drainage sites have been identified by the Group and DfI officials, along with external contractors, have been working through a programme of remedial works to address the issues raised. In addition, it has been agreed that Belfast City Centre gullies will receive additional cleaning as part of the next drainage maintenance programme due to commence in April 2026.
3.5	This correspondence is linked to the Motion - City Centre Gritting Feasibility Study, and a further update will be provided at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.
3.6	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.
3.7	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> None associated with this report.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 – Response from Liz Kimmins, Minister for Infrastructure