



Subject:	Notice of Motion – High Costs of Childcare
Date:	23rd May, 2024
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	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">1. Information relating to any individual2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime	
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime 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/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 3rd June in relation to high costs of childcare.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to consider the motion and agree to either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Committee will be aware that Standing Orders 13 (m) to (r), as agreed by the Council at its meeting on 4th October, are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (m) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will have delegated authority to adopt or reject Notices of Motion. The Lord Mayor will indicate at the Council meeting those Notices of Motion that have been considered by the Standards and Business Committee and whether such Notices of Motion were rejected or adopted. In either case, the proposer only may speak on the issue at Council.</i> (n) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer all Notices of Motion directly to a standing committee when the matter to which the Notice of Motion refers falls within the remit of that committee. At Council, the Lord Mayor will indicate that the Notice of Motion was received and referred. There will be no speakers on such Notices of Motion at Council.</i> (o) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will refer Notices of Motion for consideration by full Council when the Notice of Motion relates to a strategic or constitutional matter.</i> (p) <i>The Standards and Business Committee will not have the power to amend the wording of any Notice of Motion that is being referred to the full Council for debate.</i> (q) <i>Any amendments to Notice of Motions to be proposed at the Council are to be furnished at least one day in advance of going to the full Council and will be circulated to Party Group Leaders in advance of the Council meeting.</i> (r) <i>In referring any matter to the full Council, the Standards and Business Committee may determine to restrict contributions to the debate in relation to any Notice of Motion to one per political party. At the Council meeting, the Lord Mayor will clearly indicate if the restriction applies.</i> <p>3.2 The following motion has been received:</p> <p><u>High Costs of Childcare</u></p> <p>“Belfast City Council:</p> <p>Expresses grave concern at the high costs of childcare which force parents, especially mothers, out of the workforce and into poverty; Recognises the financial challenges facing providers forcing many to close as a result; affirms that early</p>

	<p>education and childcare is a critical lever to reduce disadvantage; regrets that the Executive has not published a Childcare Strategy within its first 100 days of taking office; recognises the need for urgent financial interventions for parents including lifting the rate of tax-free childcare and removing the £2000 cap.</p> <p>Resolves to write to the Minister of Education to demand an ambitious package of immediate interventions to deliver urgent financial support for parents; Further resolves to urge the Minister of Education to work with his Executive colleagues to ensure the Early Learning and Childcare Strategy caps costs for parents so no family is paying more than they can afford and fees are at least halved by 2030; further calls for a new funding scheme to be implemented to guarantee sustainability for providers and increased pay and qualifications for workers; and supports a new independent body to oversee the development and implementation of the Strategy and regulation of the funding scheme.”</p> <p>Proposer: Councillor Paul Doherty</p> <p>Seconder: Councillor Séamas de Faoite</p>
3.3	<p>The motion calls upon the Council to write to the Minister of Education with a number of proposals regarding the cost of childcare provision. The Committee can either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>
4.0	<p>Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None.</p>