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**Democratic Services Section
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS**

20th August, 2025

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

I enclose copies of the reports for the following items to be considered at the meeting to be held at 9.30 am on Friday, 22nd August, 2025.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

2. Restricted Items

- (d) Asset Management (Pages 1 - 6)
- (f) Draft Irish Language Policy – Update on Consultation (Pages 7 - 186)

8. Operational Issues

- (c) Request for use of City Hall grounds for two events in Autumn 2025 (Pages 187 - 190)

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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Subject:	Request for use of City Hall grounds for two events in Autumn 2025
Date:	12 August 2025
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Christopher Burns, Acting Functions and Exhibition Manager

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

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Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

☐

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. 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 matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
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
7. 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

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

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Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	<p>To consider two requests for the use of City Hall grounds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Price Waterhouse Coopers on Friday 26th September 2025 for a staff sleep out to raise awareness of homelessness. From Belfast One BID on 24th – 26th October 2025 for Halloween themed animation
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authorise the use of City Hall grounds on dates noted above. 2. Authorise the events to take place on the basis of submission of an event management plan and risk assessment to ensure delivery of a safe public events.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<u>Background Information</u>
3.1.1	Members will be aware that requests for the use of City Hall are normally dealt with under the authority delegated by the Committee to the Director of Legal and Civic Services using criteria agreed for this purpose. Occasionally however, it is necessary to place such requests directly before the Committee, and the requests set out below falls into this category.
3.2	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>Two requests have been received for events over September and October to use City Hall Grounds and due to the larger scale of activities involved it is deemed necessary to seek Committee approval.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Proposed event: PWC Sleep-Out for Homelessness Awareness 26 September 2025</u></p> <p>PWC held similar events on 20th October 2023 and on 27th September 2024 and the events were successful with no incidents, hence PWC requesting a third event.</p>
3.3.1	<p>This proposed sleep-out would take place along the West façade of City Hall, with around 50 participants sleeping overnight on the pathways, ensuring a safe distance from the intruder alarms situated along façade. Their preference is concrete rather than the grass lawns. City Hall building and grounds will be closed to the public as normal at this time. The only Infrastructure onsite is portaloos, no catering provision is planned, and participants will bring their own sleeping materials. A wet weather alternative is not available inside City Hall. PWC staff will fundraise in advance of this event and monies raised will be donated to charities helping with homelessness.</p>

3.4	<p><u>Proposed event: A Belfast One Halloween 25 – 26 October 2025</u></p> <p>Belfast One held similar events on 28th and 29 October 2023 and on 26th and 27th October 2024 and the events were successful with no incidents, hence Belfast One requesting a third event.</p>
3.4.1	<p>Aimed towards families celebrating Halloween, with a pumpkin patch on the west lawn with a few novelties throughout such as scarecrows. The event will be ticketed online and at the gate, allowing for restricted flow throughout the day with an allowance of 80 guests per half hour to avoid overcrowding. Designed with a route through the patch with entrance and exit on opposite sides to stop congestion and limit lawn damage, with matts in place to help mitigate also. There will be some additional entertainment throughout the day such as characters animation. Set-up will be facilitated from the afternoon of the 24 October 2025. The event intends to support wider activity across the City Centre. A report outlining Council funding for this event and associated city-wide activity was presented to City Growth and Regeneration Committee on 6th August by Culture & Tourism Unit.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Point for consideration:</u></p> <p>Committee are asked to note the in respect of the PWC request that the city centre is very busy on Friday evenings and therefore there may be a requirement for the organiser to pay for additional security depending upon the event management plan and risk assessment.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There would be no costs for the council for both these requests as the various organisers would bear any/all stewarding and equipment costs etc themselves. The normal event support in the form of electrical and water provision in the grounds is not required for either of these events. There are no concerns from an asset management point of view, although the organisers would be required to provide the usual insurances, indemnities, and obligations.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no direct good relations or rural needs implications arising from this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None

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