



People & Communities

Committee Plan 2024- 2025

Year end Update Report



Belfast
City Council

Introduction

The People and Communities Committee is responsible for the development and implementation of strategies, policies, programmes and projects aimed at improving life at a local level in the context of the outcomes agreed in the community and corporate plans and other corporate strategy.

Its specific functions include:

- Developing and delivering programmes, events, and activities to promote health, safety and wellbeing at a local level
- Developing and delivering programmes, events and activities to promote health, safety and well being at a local level.
- Administering and enforcing the Council's powers and duties under the Public Health Acts and all environmental health and building related legislation and regulations.
- Securing and providing adequate provision for the recycling, treatment and disposal of commercial and domestic waste including bulky waste and the collection and disposal of abandoned motor vehicles.
- Exercising the Council's powers for improving local environmental quality in relation to housing legislation, managing controlled waste, emergency planning and community safety and anti-social behaviour, clean neighbourhoods and other environmental or regulatory issues not falling within the remit of any other Committee.
- Managing, maintaining, and maximising the benefit of the Council's parks, pitches, playgrounds, and other public spaces as well as community centres and other indoor facilities
- Developing and implementing activities to ensure the delivery of corporate strategies and initiatives in respect of the promotion of health and physical activity, environmental protection, community safety and other such areas under the domain of this Committee.
- Overseeing the delivery of the Council's frontline services and associated community assets including:
 - Environmental Health Services
 - Cleansing
 - Waste Management
 - Parks and Leisure Service (excluding Zoo, Malone House and Belfast Castle)
 - Neighbourhood and Development Services
 - Community Services,
 - Community Safety
 - Emergency Planning
 - Building Control

Ref: Standing Orders – December 2021

People & Communities Committee Members



Councillor Ruth Brooks (Chairman)
Party: DUP
Ward: Titanic



Councillor Matt Garrett (Deputy Chair)
Party: Sinn Fein
Ward: Collin



Councillor David Bell
Party: Alliance Party
Ward: Titanic



Councillor Christina Black
Party: Sinn Fein
Ward: Court



Councillor Christine Bower
Party: Alliance Party
Ward: Ormiston



Councillor Nicola Bradley
Party: Sinn FeinParty
Ward: Oldpark



Councillor Sarah Bunting
Party: DUP
Ward: Balmoral



Councillor Claire Canavan
Party: Sinn Fein
Ward: Court



Councillor Fred Cobain
Party: DUP
Ward: Castle



Councillor Micheal Donnelly (Deputy Chair)
Party: Sinn Fein
Ward: Black Mountain



Councillor Paul Doherty
Party: SDLP
Ward: Black Mountain



Councillor Róis-Máire Donnelly
Party: Sinn Fein
Ward: Black Mountain



Councillor Nicola Verner
Party: DUP
Ward: Court



Councillor Anthony Flynn
Party: Green Party
Ward: Ormiston



Councillor JJ Magee
Party: Sinn Fein
Ward: Oldpark



Councillor Jenna Maghie
Party: Alliance Party
Ward: Ormiston



Councillor Gary McKeown
Party: SDLP
Ward: Botanic



Councillor Ian McLaughlin
Party: DUP
Ward: Court



Councillor Hedley Abernethy
Party: Alliance Party
Ward: Ormiston



Councillor Conor Maskey
Party: Sinn Fein
Ward: Castle

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

Build capacity within our communities

Senior responsible officer (SRO) Jim Girvan, Director City & Neighbourhood Services

Action	Expected end date	RAG status	End of Year progress update
Implement the recommendations of the review of Belfast City Council Funded advice services.	Ongoing	Achieved	Recommendations of the review of Belfast City Council funded advice has progressed and all outcomes have been achieved in Q4 by our partner organisations.
Develop and implement a Community Support Plan which outlines Council's agreed approach to Community support and Neighbourhood Integration and Community Planning Priorities	Ongoing	Achieved	Draft plan has been developed and was brought to committee in March 2025 for approval. Committee approved the draft plan and have agreed to move to the next stage of the process with full consultation due to be start I Q1.

Addressing vulnerabilities and responding to societal challenges

SRO: Jim Girvan, Director City & Neighbourhood Services

Delivery and administration of DFC social supermarkets fund to deliver food/ wrap around support in areas of need	June 2025	Achieved	Projects are continuing to deliver in line with funding agreements.
---	-----------	----------	---

Increase opportunities for people to be physically active

SRO: Jim Girvan, Director City & Neighbourhood Services

Development of the Belfast Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy and action plan	June 2025	Partially Achieved	The final Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy has been drafted, and consultation has been completed. Further work required from consultation findings, action plans developed, costings and delivery framework to be completed. Intention is to table for committee consideration in May 2025.
Deliver the Boxing Strategy Action Plan	March 2026	Achieved	Targets have been achieved for the 2024/25 year and extension has been agreed to complete year 10 of the project.
Development of Belfast Pitches Strategy and action plan	May 2025	Partially achieved	Draft presented to relevant directors. Financial implications to be developed in line with capital funding requirements. Consultation timeline to be confirmed. Committee approval planned for May 2025.
Work in partnership and deliver an annual work programme with Irish Football Association and Gaelfast to deliver the Stadia Community Benefits Initiative.	April 2025	Achieved	At the end of Quarter 4 figures highlight full achievement of the targets set for the year.
Oversight of the contract with and ongoing management of relationships with Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) for the effective operation of BCC leisure centres.	Ongoing	Achieved	In line with the approved contract management plan, regular operational and strategic meetings are ongoing to ensure oversight of the GLL contract. The last six-monthly contract compliance and performance report, covering quarter 1 and quarter 2 2024/25, was presented to the People and Communities Committee in November 2024. The next 6 monthly report, covering quarter 3 and quarter 4 for 2024/25, will be presented to committee in April 2025.
SRO: Stephen Leonard, Director City & Neighbourhood Services			
Scope a review of all Council managed allotment facilities and report back to People and Communities committee	Ongoing	Achieved	Committee report presented 4th March with action plan to be implemented 25/26.
Continue to deliver the annual Playground Improvement Programme (PIP) and undertake a review of selection criteria for	Ongoing	Achieved	PIP 2023/24 now complete. New play value and accessibility audit adopted by Council Sept 2024. Sites selected under 24/25 are Grampian Avenue (nearly completion), Michelle Baird (onsite), & Balfour Avenue (commence April 25).

the capital programme. (Implement the programme of development of playgrounds across the city to further improve accessibility).			Design work, community engagement and equipment ordering under way. £ Design work, community engagement and equipment ordering under way. Design work, community engagement and equipment ordering under way.
Community Safety SRO: Jim Girvan, Director City & Neighbourhood Services			
Review of anti-social behaviour in Parks	June 2025	Partially achieved	There are several workshops taking place with officers across CNS to progress this work area. Engagement with staff teams underway. The timescales have been revised due to complex nature of work.

OUR PLACE

Heritage Tourism SRO: Siobhan Toland, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
To explore community arrangement with external providers to assist with ambitions for heritage tourism within the context of the tourism strategy for historical cemeteries and city cemetery visitor centre to increase visibility and footfall	July 2025	Partially achieved	Tender exercise completed, however no submissions received, options for next steps currently being assessed. A report will be brought back to SDMT for update. Decision required on best way to progress project and deliver on meeting Heritage Fund targets.
Off-street Car Parking			

SRO: Siobhan Toland, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
Continue to work with the Department for Infrastructure on taking forward the Belfast off-street Parking Order for the city	January 2026	Partially achieved	<p>Engagement ongoing with DfI and BCC Legal Services on progressing OSP Order. Consultation is required on the new Off Street Parking Order which will depend on DfI revoking their order via the NI assembly. A status update report was taken to SOLACE in December 2024. BCC ready to consult on draft order in early 2025.</p> <p>Off street parking are waiting on legal advice regarding the relevant legislation, until such advice is received council will be unable to progress with implementation of Off-street parking order.</p>
Open Spaces			
SRO: Stephen Leonard, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
Continue to work in partnership with Planning to secure/ deliver Section 76 contributions for council maintained open space	Ongoing	Achieved	Continuing to work in partnership with Planning to secure and deliver Section 76 development contributions for open spaces.
Reservoir Improvement Programme			
SRO: Stephen Leonard, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
Continued inspection, reporting and improvement on the structural integrity of reservoirs to meet new statutory requirements (Reservoirs Act NI 2015).	Ongoing	Achieved	Contract now in place for 1 year only, need to explore a longer contract through existing Frameworks. Continued engagement with P&P required.

OUR PLANET

Transition to low carbon			
SRO: Siobhan Toland, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
Coordinate the delivery of the Belfast City Council Air Quality Action Plan 2021 – 2026, in working partnership with Belfast Air Quality Steering Group Members	June 2026	Achieved	<p>The council’s 2024 Updating and Screening Assessment (USA) report has been reviewed and accepted by DAERA's Technical Assessors; the report has subsequently been published on the DAERA NI Air website via the following weblink: https://www.airqualityni.co.uk/reports/district-council-reports-1</p> <p>The 2024 USA report was presented to the People & Communities Committee at its meeting of 10th September 2024 and the Committee was subsequently updated on 3rd December 2024 regarding the outcome of the technical appraisal process and concerning the technical assessor’s recommendations regarding the council’s Air Quality Management Areas. Work continues this year’s local air quality management programme; a 2025 Air Quality Progress Report will be prepared and presented to the People and Communities Committee prior to submission to DAERA by 30th June 2025. The Progress Report will include details of recent ambient air quality monitoring data for Belfast, an analysis of monitoring trends and an assessment of progress with actions detailed within the Belfast Air Quality Action Plan 2021-2026, together with any ambient air quality conclusions and proposed actions.</p>
SRO: Stephen Leonard, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			

Agree council approach to funding for a fleet replacement strategy	TBC	Partially achieved	Challenges around infrastructure further provision of electrical charging at Duncrue to be considered as part of medium-term financial plan.
Explore opportunities to fund the conversion of the fleet to alternative non fossil fuels (electric) in conjunction with the Director of Finance.	August 2025	Partially achieved	Will be part of outcome of thematic session – to be raised at WPB – No progress since July 22 feedback.
Continue to lead on the Climate Action Programme for four keys projects including City Centre Recycling pilot; Carbon retention assessment at Cavehill; Species rich grassland pilots; and business case for potential Tree Nursery	June 2025	Partially achieved	All projects successfully complete. Business case for Beechvale Farm drafted, next steps being led by Estates. Funding for further wetlands/grass restoration project agreed in June 2024.
Implement and deliver on the Belfast Tree Strategy and action plan to help manage and improve the tree scape in the city, to provide a resilient and diverse urban forest for future generations.	October 2033	Partially achieved	Following the sign off the Belfast Tree Strategy and action plan we have achieved the following: - A tree establishment plan for tree planting opportunities (soft and hard landscapes) has been agreed at P&C in June 2024 and due to full council in July 2024. - In June 2024, we were awarded Tree Cities of the world status and are currently the only Council in Ireland to hold this status. - We have changed our health in condition tree inspection cycle from once 7 years to 3 years this will improve the health safety of our trees. Additional monies secured in the estimates to treat the impact of Ash Die Back on trees across the city.

Undertake a review of the Belfast Tree Strategy after year 1 (Oct 2024) and then every 3 years after	October 2033	Achieved	Year 1 review now complete.
Promote sustainable circular economy approaches SRO: Stephen Leonard, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
Subject to approval, determine the implementation plan for Household Glass collection services.	March 2027	Partially achieved	Phase 1 rolled out and operational and Phase 2 being planned for Q2/Q3 of 25/26.
Bring revised options paper on Kerbside Recycling to council governance for consideration and approval.	TBC	Partially achieved	Options paper presented to WPB. Tender awarded for inner city dry recycling & food waste (commenced 1/8/24).
Develop and seek approval for a single use plastics policy for the council.	Jan 2026	Partially Achieved	Governance arrangements with Climate team are being finalised.
Consider findings of the report on Paint Re-use scheme and seek approval for full implementation.	December 2024	Achieved	Contract awarded and live.
Review of litter bin provision across the City including learning from trial city centre recycling project.	October 2024	Partially achieved	Condition survey for litter bins is currently ongoing and due for completion end of Q2 25/26. Smart bin and dog fouling pilots nearing completion. Further update to include outworkings of pilot and recommendations for future bin provision to be brought back to committee Spring 2025. Additional resources have been secured for additional bin provision across the city. Officers are working with PMU to try to work around challenges to bin installation. New systems project officer will help support the roll out of the bin survey. Recruitment of this post has been delayed to May 25.
Climate Resilience SRO: Stephen Leonard, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			

Scope and develop a Local Biodiversity Action Plan	March 2026	Partially achieved	<p>Additional Biodiversity resourcing secured including new post. This programme of work will be progressed by the new biodiversity resources.</p> <p>Significant delays in recruitment have resulted in the extension of the timeline. Officer due to be in place May 2025.</p>
--	------------	---------------------------	--

COMPASSIONATE CITY

Belfast Youth Council SRO: Jim Girvan, Director City & Neighbourhood Services			
Facilitate, an active and engaged Belfast City Youth Council who work with relevant fora and elected members to ensure that the needs of children and young people are reflected within the Belfast agenda and council priorities	Ongoing	Achieved	<p>All vacant positions for Belfast City Youth Council were filled in February 2025.</p> <p>Members of the Belfast City Youth Council will meet with P & C committee in April 2025.</p>
Good Relations Action Plan SRO: Jim Girvan, Director City & Neighbourhood Services			
Delivery of the Good Relations action plan to promote good relations to persons of different religious belief and political opinions or racial group and promote cultural	Ongoing	Achieved	<p>Delivery for this year was completed on 31 March with full delivery and spend. Full reports and outcome on the action plan to be presented on Q1 25/26.</p>

diversity and positive cultural expression for all cultural identities			
Community Safety			
SRO: Jim Girvan, Director City & Neighbourhood Services			
Delivery of the Police and Community Safety action plan, to make people feel safer and confidence in Policing.	Ongoing	Achieved	The PCSP action plan have been fully delivered and the 2025/26 draft action plan of PCSP has been submitted to the joint committee for approval.
Facilitation of the multi-agency 5 (D) PCSP meeting to support decision making and discussion on the People and Community Safety Action plan and Policing plan	Ongoing	Achieved	Meetings are scheduled monthly across the 5 partnerships- reactive meetings held as required. In Q4 there were a number of public meetings as part of the action planning process for PSCP.

IMPROVING OUR SERVICES

Bereavement Services			
SRO: Siobhan Toland, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
Undertake a review of Bereavement service to ensure responsive, integrated, and flexible service to realise the programme benefits.	March 2025	Partially achieved	Renewed focus on this required and structural work in these areas of the service are linked to other key areas workstreams in the Bereavement Services business plan e.g. Memorial Safety programme. Work to be completed to deliver and implement service review of structural

			element. Various internal stakeholders working to resolve including CI, Legal and CHR.
Port Health			
SRO: Siobhan Toland, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
Undertake a service review of Port Health to ensure responsive, integrated, and flexible service to realise the programme benefits.	June 2025	Partially achieved	Baselining exercise to look at service review has been completed, and a range of short-term development actions have been identified. Challenges remain in identifying medium/longer term actions as this work is heavily dependent on the direction from UK Government, and particularly a long-term sustainable funding model.
Houses in Multiple Occupancy			
SRO: Siobhan Toland, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
Undertake a service review of HMO services to ensure responsive, integrated, and flexible service to realise the programme benefits	June 2025	Partially achieved	The service review of HMO services is ongoing, further work is required to complete the review and implement the agreed changes. As a result, the new timeline has been agreed to change to June 25. Internal audit by AGRS minor actions to be completed by March 25.

ORGANISATIONAL PRIORITIES

Bereavement Services			
SRO: Siobhan Toland, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
CNS to work with Physical Programs and Estates to support the identification,	TBC	Partially achieved	A burial provision board has been established with representation from P&P, Corporate Finance and CNS as client. The objective of this board is to track

acquisition, and development of new burial land provision for BCC.			progress, manage risks and ensure good governance. The burial provision board will meet bi- monthly. The first meeting was held in November 2024. A stock take of current burial provision has been completed and will be completed on annual basis and managed via the officer lead bereavement services board
CNS to work with Physical Programmes on preparing for the new Crematorium development and the repurposing of the existing crematorium building	January 2026	Partially achieved	Work ongoing on review of OBC and FBC. Awaiting an update on the financial business case (FBC) to help inform next steps for this project.
Port Health SRO: Siobhan Toland, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
Advocate for a long-term sustainable funding model to secure adequate funding and review resources (Including staff) to ensure effective delivery of the Council's legal responsibilities at Belfast Port.	March 2026	Partially achieved	Conversations remain active between key partners and stakeholders in advocating for and promoting the development of a long-term funding model. Again, this is influenced and shaped by UK Government direction and discussions with EU.
Digital Development SRO: Siobhan Toland, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
Replace the current software system with a single modern and intuitive case management system designed to embed mobile technology and digitally transform how we plan, manage, and monitor our service delivery across the core areas of City & Neighbourhood Services.	January 2030	Partially Achieved	The Case Management Replacement Project is progressing well. The Project Team is focused on data cleansing and developing and writing the specification of requirements. Additionally, the team are involved in the current system (Authority Public Protection) upgrade aligned to the new Food Service Delivery Model and supporting with the introduction of various new pieces of legislative work.
SRO: Stephen Leonard, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			

Development and implementation of the in-cab technology to enhance operational performance and efficiency	August 2025	Partially achieved	Contract awarded to Whitespace for the new In-Cab Technology, to balance and optimise routes in Waste Collection &OSS.
Asset Management SRO: Stephen Leonard, Director City and Neighbourhood Services			
Develop a container policy for parks.	Sept 2025	Partially achieved	Performance and Improvement Team support in place; draft report completed by P&I to be presented to upcoming asset board in 25/26. Scope of the report has been widened resulting in the extension of the timeline. This includes a parallel audit of containers now taking place.

Contact us:

City and Neighbourhood Services
Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall Street
Belfast
BT2 8DP



staffnews@belfastcity.gov.uk



028 9032 0202



www.belfastcity.gov.uk



Belfast
City Council