



Subject:	Notice of Motion – Safeguarding Belfast’s Playparks
Date:	24th June, 2025
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

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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

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
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Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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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 1st July, 2025 in relation to Safeguarding Belfast's Playparks.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>Members are asked to note that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or falls within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.</p> <p>At this time Members are only asked to note that the Notice of Motion has been received and that a subsequent report will be brought to Committee, if that Committee so agrees, outlining a detailed consideration of the Notice of Motion and the potential costs implications.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to note that this motion will be referred on the first instance to the People and Communities Committee.</p>
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>

	<p>(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	<p>The following motion has been received:</p> <p><u>Safeguarding Belfast's Playparks</u></p> <p>"Belfast City Council, hereinafter "this Council", expresses its deep concern at the growing number of reports relating to indecent, threatening, and predatory behaviour in Council-owned playparks across Belfast. These spaces, intended for the happiness and well-being of children, are increasingly being compromised by individuals loitering without lawful purpose, in a manner that alarms parents and communities.</p> <p>This Council believes that every child has the right to play safely, and every parent has the right to peace of mind when bringing their children to a local park. Public spaces must reflect public values – including the protection of childhood innocence, the upholding of decency, and the moral duty to safeguard the vulnerable.</p> <p>Accordingly, this Council commits to the creation of a comprehensive Safeguarding Belfast's Playparks Policy – including, but not limited to, the following objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To prohibit loitering in and around children's playparks by any adult not accompanying a child, or without a legitimate purpose; 2. To conduct a full public consultation, both online and in person, to hear the views of residents, parents/guardians, and community organisations in directly shaping this policy; 3. To work with statutory bodies – including the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Home Office, and community organisations – to combat predatory sexual crime and anti-social behaviour in our public spaces." <p>Proposer: Alderman Dean A. McCullough Seconder: Councillor Andrew McCormick</p>
3.3	<p>The motion calls upon the Council to commit to the creation of a comprehensive Safeguarding Belfast's Playparks Policy - The People and Communities Committee is responsible for the Council's playgrounds and parks and the motion will therefore be referred to that Committee.</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>

	None.