



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Notice of Motion – Definition of Victim</b>
<b>Date:</b>	20th November, 2025
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance Manager

**Restricted Reports**

**Is this report restricted?**

**Yes**

☐

**No**

☒

**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**


**Call-in**

**Is the decision eligible for Call-in?**

**Yes**

☒

**No**

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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 1st December, 2025 in relation to Definition of Victim.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
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.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<b><u>Key Issues</u></b>
3.1	<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"> <li>(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></li> <li>(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></li> <li>(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></li> <li>(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></li> <li>(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></li> <li>(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></li> </ul>
3.2	<p>The following motion has been received:</p> <p><b><u>Notice of Motion – Definition of Victim</u></b></p> <p>“Belfast City Council (hereinafter “this Council”) expresses deep concern that the definition of victim within the <i>Victims and Survivors (Northern Ireland) Order 2006</i> fails to distinguish between those who perpetrated wrongdoing during the Troubles and the innocent victims whom they harmed, injured, killed, or bereaved.</p>

	<p>This Council further notes that many of those innocent victims and their families live within Belfast, rely on Belfast-based victim support services, and remain directly affected by how such definitions are applied in practice.</p> <p>This Council believes that innocent victims should not be required to engage with terrorists or their supporters when accessing victim-support services; asserts that there is no moral equivalence between victim-makers and innocent victims; and welcomes the fact that the Victims' Pension legislation makes a clear and necessary distinction between perpetrator and victim.</p> <p>This Council condemns the SDLP and, in particular, the Alliance Party for supporting the Sinn Féin amendment in a recent Assembly motion on the legacy of the past — an amendment which deliberately removed the word “innocent” from the description of a victim and intentionally blurred the line between perpetrator and victim.</p> <p>Accordingly, this Council resolves to write to the Justice Minister expressing serious concern regarding her publicly stated view that some terrorist perpetrators may also be considered victims, and to request that she clarify those comments and offer an apology to innocent victims who have been distressed by them, including those here in Belfast.”</p> <p>Proposer: Alderman Dean A. McCullough</p> <p>Seconder: Alderman James Lawlor</p>
3.3	<p>The motion calls upon the Council to write to the Justice Minister as set out above 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><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.5	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></b></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	None.