

# Strategic Policy and Resources Committee

Friday, 24th April, 2026

## HYBRID MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Brennan (Chairperson);  
Councillors Beattie, Black, Bunting,  
Doran, de Faoite, R-M Donnelly, Ferguson,  
Garrett, Long, Maghie, I. McLaughlin, R. McLaughlin  
Murray, Nelson, Ó Néill, Smyth and Whyte.

Also attended: Councillor R. Brooks

In attendance: Ms. S. McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Director  
of Corporate Services;  
Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and  
Civic Services;  
Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Property and Projects;  
Mr. D. Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;  
Mr. K. Forster, Director of Economic Development;  
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;  
Mr. E. McConville, Director of Communications, Marketing  
and External Affairs;  
Mr. D. Sales, Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood  
Services;  
Mr. J. Girvan, Director of City and Neighbourhood  
Services;  
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;  
Mrs. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration and  
Development;  
Ms. C. Sheridan, Director of Human Resources;  
Mr. S. Leonard, Director of Resources, Fleet, Transport  
and Open Spaces and Street Scene;  
Mr. J. Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance  
Manager; and  
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance  
Coordinator.

### **Apologies**

An apology was reported on behalf of Councillor Cobain.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 20th March, were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meetings on 1st April, subject to the following amendments:

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor R-M. Donnelly declared an interest under item 8. (a) Minutes of Shared City Partnership, in so far as it related to PEACEPLUS in that she worked for an

organisation which was funded under the Programme. As the item did not become the subject of debate, she was not required to leave the meeting.

In relation to item 3. (b) Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, Councillor Murray declared an interest, in that he was employed by S.O.S NI who were a delivery partner of the Fleadh, as the related interests did not become the subject of debate, he was not required to leave the meeting.

Councillor de Faoite declared an interest under item 5. (j) Planning Information, in that he was on the Board of Governors of Forge Integrated Primary School. As the item did not become the subject of debate, he was not required to leave the meeting.

In relation to item 4.e) Notices of Motion - Quarterly Update, Councillors Long declared an interest, in that his wife was the Justice Minister and Councillor R. McLaughlin declared an interest under the same item, in that his partner was a Junior Minister, and they both left the meeting whilst the item was under consideration.

Regarding item 5. i) Social Supermarket Update, Councillor Beattie declared an interest in that he was employed by a funding recipient and left the meeting whilst the item was under consideration.

Councillor Bunting declared an interest under item 3.e) Request for Funding, in that she was on the Committee of one of the of the centres and left the meeting whilst the item was under consideration.

Councillor Doran declared an interest in relation to item 3.e) Requests for Funding, in that he was associated with some of the applicants and left the meeting whilst the item was under consideration.

### **Presentations**

#### **Irish Athletic Boxing Association (IABA)**

The Chairperson welcomed to the meeting Mr. G. Stewart, CEO, Boxing Ireland, Ms. C McAuley, COO (Policy & Governance), Boxing Ireland, Ms. R. Moffett: Operations Manager (Ulster), Mr. P. Barnes Snr: President Antrim Boxing County Board, and Ms. L. McMillan, Club Development Officer (Underrepresented Communities), Boxing Ireland.

Mr. Stewart provided an overview of Boxing Ireland and the 'Built Different' campaign.

Ms. Moffett outlined the success of the Council's Boxing Strategy to date and highlighted the range of activities, memberships and achievements of the Boxing participants from grassroots level to Olympians.

Ms. McAuley advised of the work which had been undertaken in relation to the Equality Commission Report Update. She summarised the action plan regarding the following 9 Key Action Plan Areas:

- Elite Pathways and Selection Criteria
- Oversight and Implementation Panel
- IWG Recommendations – Review and Implementation
- Focused Club Development Programme
- Participation and Representation Programme
- Code of Conduct and Behavioural Standards
- Training and Accreditation Systems
- Governance Representation and Office Holders
- Reporting, Monitoring and Delivery Timeframes

During discussion, several Members welcomed the update and highlighted the importance of the sport in Belfast. One Member requested that a copy of the Action Plan be shared with Members.

After discussion, the Chairperson thanked the representatives for their presentation.

Noted.

**Request to present - Retail NI and USDAW  
(Sunday Trading consultation)**

The Committee agreed to accede to the request to receive a presentation from Retail NI and USDAW, and also a presentation from Belfast One (Belfast Chamber and Visit Belfast) in relation to the Sunday Trading consultation, at its meeting on 22nd May.

The Committee also agreed to delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Place and Economy to consider any further requests to present on the issue.

**Restricted Items**

**The information contained in the reports associated with the following nine items is restricted in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.**

Resolved – That the Committee agrees to exclude the members of the press and public from the meeting during discussion of the following nine items as, due to the nature of the items, there would be a disclosure of exempt information as described in Section 42(4) and Schedule 6 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

The Members were advised that content of ‘restricted’ reports and any discussion which takes place during closed session must be treated as ‘confidential information’ and no such information should be disclosed to the public as per Paragraph 4.15 of the Code of Conduct.

**Connswater Community and Leisure Services Ltd at Ballymacarrett**

The Committee was provided with an update on the status of Connswater Community and Leisure Services Ltd which had responsibility for the Council owned Ballymacarrett Community Centre, together with the implications of the associated insurance risk and subsequent closure of the facility on 20th March, 2026.

During discussion, in response to Members' concerns in relation to lessons learned and the risks involved, the Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that Members should flag any issues regarding Independently Managed Community Centres so that engagement could take place.

In response to a Member's question regarding previous reporting and highlighting of the issue, the Director advised that the previous report that had been considered by the People and Communities Committee would be circulated.

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report and, in particular, the fact that the Ballymacarrett Facility was closed and that the current IMCC arrangement with Connswater Community and Leisure Services Ltd had now ceased.

**Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann**

(Ms. L-A O'Donnell, Senior Manager - Culture and Tourism attended in connection with this item.)

The Director of Economic Development and Senior Manager, Culture and Tourism provided an update on the planning to support the hosting of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Belfast in August 2026.

During discussion, one Member highlighted the urgent need for the Business Toolkit and the Senior Manager - Culture and Tourism advised that this would be released in the coming days.

One member requested an update each month on the Policing Plan and its completion and another Member requested an update on the Fringe Events Programme and engagement.

After discussion, the Committee noted the progress to date on the development of the Fleadh Cheoil and approved:

- A Single Tender Action with a value of up to £1.257million (all income from the service would come to the Council reducing the net cost significantly);
- A Year 2 Funding agreement with Ards CCE of up to £56.5K; and
- A Funding agreement with the Belfast Bands Forum up to £30K.

The Committee also noted that the issues raised would be taken forward by the relevant officers.

### **Update on Employees on Temporary Contracts and Agency Workers**

The Committee noted the update on the number of employees on temporary contracts, secondments and the number of agency assignees.

### **Organisational Reviews and Change Programme**

The Committee considered a report which provided a quarterly update for the Organisational Reviews and Change Portfolio projects.

The Committee noted the progress on the work programme for the Organisational Reviews and Change Portfolio and timescales going forward.

### **Requests for Funding**

The Committee deferred consideration of the report until its Special Meeting on Thursday, 30th April, to allow Members more time to consider the report.

The Committee also agreed to write a letter to the Minister of Education in relation to the removal of ring-fenced protection for youth service funding within the Education Authority to request that the Minister reconsiders this decision and engages with the Education Authority to ensure that youth services were properly resourced.

### **Summer Community Diversionary Fund**

(Mr. P. Hamilton, Lead Officer Community Safety, attended in connection with this item)

The Committee considered the detail of the assessments undertaken by officers in relation to the funding awards for the 2026 – 2028 Summer Community Diversionary Programme.

The Committee:

- Noted the contents of the report, confirming the assessment process and proposed allocation of funding to applicant organisations;
- Noted that any funding awarded was subject to further engagement with groups and analysis of projects and associated budgets in line with Council due diligence procedures, this would include any outstanding financial and monitoring returns with regards to other Council funding. Funding would not be awarded until approved contracts were issued and signed.
- Approved permission for those organisations which had been successful to use Belfast Parks for their event or activity and to delegate authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to ensure the following:

- Negotiate satisfactory terms and conditions of use via an appropriate legal agreement prepared by the City Solicitor, including managing final booking confirmation dates and flexibility around 'set up' and take down' periods, and booking amendments, subject to:
  - The completion of an appropriate management plan,
  - The promoter resolving any operational issues to the Council's satisfaction;
  - The promoter meeting all the statutory requirements of the Planning and Building Control Service including the terms and conditions of the Park's Entertainment Licence.

### **Northern Ireland Football Fund Application**

The Committee agreed to support an application to the Northern Ireland Football fund at the maximum value, £1.5m, with 50 per cent match funding, to develop a new full size floodlit artificial pitch, fully accessible changing pavilion at Blanchflower Playing fields, with the facility to be restricted to use by under-represented groups including women and girls and inclusive soccer clubs.

The Committee, given that the funding deadline was in advance of the full Council meeting, agreed that Committee support, in principle, be put forward to satisfy the requirement of the funding application for Council support.

### **Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy / Belfast Playing Pitches and Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategy**

The Committee deferred consideration of the report until its Special Meeting on Thursday, 30th April, to allow further information to be provided in relation to the inclusion of Belvoir Park Football Club and additional sport consultation responses.

### **Leisure Programme Update**

The Committee noted the update provided and:

#### ***Programme Level***

- **USP approach and facilities mixes**– noted that Committee had previously agreed that the USP approach to the remaining sites be maintained and that it was proposed that the next round of AWGs would have a focus on leisure (North, West and South) with Party Group briefings to be organised in order to start to agree proposed USPs and facilities mixes for the remaining sites.
- **Visit to Belfast Leisure Centres** – noted that a site visit had been organised for all Members to a range of leisure facilities across Belfast to understand current USPs and programming on Tuesday, 28th April.

- **Whiterock and Shankill Leisure Centres** – agreed that site optimisation plans be developed for these sites that may accommodate both leisure and housing in a wider placemaking perspective and in the context of both the Housing Led Regeneration Programme and the Leisure Transformation Programme with future detail to be brought back to the Committee.
- **Girdwood Indoor Leisure Facility**  
Noted the updates in respect to Girdwood Indoor Leisure Facility

### **Matters referred back from Council/Motions**

#### **Notice of Motion - Gender Budgeting**

The Committee was advised that, at the meeting of the Standards and Business Committee held on 24th March 2026, the following motion, which was proposed by Councillor McCabe and seconded by Councillor Ó Néill was referred to the Committee for consideration:

***“That this Council acknowledges the potential benefits of gender budgeting in addressing systemic gender inequalities for all in our society, as well as improving equality for whom we are providing services for thorough, thoughtful and deliberative financial planning.***

***That the Council performs a gender data audit including to ensure maximum impact of data and to understand what gaps exist relating to the scope and scale of gender inequality, with the aim of achieving better equality outcomes and more targeted resource allocation. Annual review of progress will determine further steps in auditing and where progress allows for the phased adoption of gender budgeting tools.”***

During discussion, one member suggested that engagement with colleagues from Ulster University who had researched the issue and the Women’s Steering Group would also be useful.

After discussion, the Committee noted that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or fall within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.

The Committee noted that the notice of motion had been received and agreed that a subsequent report would be brought back to the Committee outlining a detailed consideration of the motion and the potential cost implications.

#### **Notice of Motion - Disused and Derelict Phone Boxes**

It was reported that, at the meeting of the Standards and Business Committee held on 24th March 2026, the following motion, which was proposed by Councillor Bower and seconded by Councillor Abernethy was referred to the Committee for consideration:

***“This Council notes the increasing number of disused and derelict phone boxes across Belfast which are often used as spaces for anti-social behaviour, vandalism, and littering. These phone boxes represent a unique opportunity for urban regeneration and community empowerment.***

***This Council agrees to liaise with BT regarding the process to adopt a phone box and to identify all eligible phone boxes within the Belfast City Council area.***

***The Council will support those wanting to adopt a phone box by developing a process to help charities, community groups, and local businesses to navigate the legal and logistical requirements of adopting a box.***

***The Council will also explore the feasibility of a small grant to help groups with the initial costs of refurbishment (e.g., painting, shelving, or installing solar lighting).”***

The Committee noted that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or fall within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.

The Committee noted that the notice of motion had been received and agreed that a subsequent report would be brought back to the Committee outlining a detailed consideration of the motion and the potential cost implications.

#### **Notice of Motion - Proposed City Ambassadors Scheme**

The Committee was reminded that, at the meeting of the Standards and Business Committee held on 24th March 2026, the following motion, which was proposed by Councillor Long and seconded by Councillor Nelson was referred to the Committee for consideration:

***“This Council will introduce a City Ambassadors scheme which recognises those in the city who have made outstanding contributions in various sectors. These individuals will have a formal role in promoting Belfast.***

***This new scheme will be more inclusive and allow for more diverse recognition than the Freedom of the City scheme and allow us to better recognise the achievements of those in Belfast.”***

During discussion, the Committee suggested that engagement should take place with Visit Belfast on what type of schemes might already be in existence and that, given a previous lack of representation, consideration should be given to recognising women in Belfast, if the scheme was to be brought forward.

The Committee noted that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or fall within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.

The Committee noted that the notice of motion had been received and agreed that a subsequent report would be brought back to the Committee outlining a detailed consideration of the motion and the potential cost implications.

### **Notice of Motion - Costed Support for the Childcare Sector**

It was reported that, at the meeting of the Standards and Business Committee held on 24th March 2026, the following motion, which was proposed by Councillor Maghie and seconded by Councillor Bower was referred to the Committee for consideration:

***“That this council notes with regret the amount of parents who received notification of increased childcare costs in the past month and realises the increased financial burden this places on parents in this city.***

***This council will undertake to bring back a costed report that looks at how council assets can better support childcare provision in Belfast.***

***Including:***

- ***How our parks and open spaces could be utilised to further support the provision of forest schools.***
- ***How community spaces could be utilised to support expansions of childcare places.***
- ***How community groups could be supported to provide childcare places.***
- ***How our training academies could support this work.”***

During discussion, Members suggested that the report should include what work was currently being undertaken by the Council on the issue as an employer and the potential for a flexible hour approach be included, together with potential assistance for social economy projects.

After discussion, the Committee noted that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or fall within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.

The Committee noted that the notice of motion had been received and agreed that a subsequent report would be brought back to the Committee outlining a detailed consideration of the motion and the potential cost implications.

### **Notices of Motion - Quarterly Update**

The Committee considered an update on the progress of all Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance for which it was responsible for.

After discussion, the Committee:

- Noted the updates to all Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance that the Committee was responsible for;
- Agreed to the closure of Notices of Motion 284, 305, 347, 358, 391, 411, 439, 440, 455, 456;
- Agreed that motion - Together – Building a United Community Strategy (474) remained open until the project progressed; and
- Noted that further updates would be provided in relation to Motion 297 – Comber Greenway, and motion 330 – Clean Indoor Air.

### **Correspondence Received - Hardship Funding**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting in January, the Council agreed to write to:

- ***the Minister for Communities to express its objection to the confirmation that the Department for Communities hardship funding, provided in 2023/24, would not be available in future years, and to encourage the Minister to look at more equitable ways to tax the profits of energy companies to help fund the service going forward; and***
- ***the Minister of Education to express its concern in relation to the Education Authority's decision to increase the price of school meals, and to state its support of the campaign by trade unions for the delivery of free school meals for all children."***

It was reported that responses had been received which were attached at appendix 1 and 2 of the report.

The Committee noted the information which had been provided.

### **Correspondence Received - Minister for Infrastructure - Winter Preparedness**

The Committee was reminded that, at the Council meeting held on 2nd March, 2026, it was agreed to write to the Minister for Infrastructure to seek clarification on the Winter Preparedness arrangements for Belfast City Centre, specifically in relation to drainage and gully management, in light of the sustained and prolonged rainfall across Northern Ireland and to request the urgent clearance of all drains in order to ensure that the City Centre has no unnecessary barriers to accessibility.

The Committee is advised that a response has been received from the Minister.

In her response she advised that officials from DfI continued to work closely with the Council, BID representatives and other stakeholders through the Belfast City Centre Task and Finish Group which was established in July 2025.

A number of problem drainage sites have been identified by the Group and DfI officials, along with external contractors, had been working through a programme of remedial works to address the issues raised. In addition, it has been agreed that Belfast City Centre gullies would receive additional cleaning as part of the next drainage maintenance programme due to commence in April 2026.

The Committee was reminded that the correspondence was linked to the Motion - City Centre Gritting Feasibility Study, and a further update would be provided at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

### **Proposal**

Moved by Councillor Smyth,  
Seconded by Councillor R. McLaughlin,

Resolved – that the Committee notes the smart gully monitoring innovation project in Dublin in helping to identify blocked or at risk gullies in real time and agrees that officers work with the Department for Infrastructure to gather learning from Smart Dublin with the intention of using this information to scope a small pilot in Belfast, focused on known flood prone areas, with a view to improving drainage response, reducing surface water flooding, to include a potential Council contract in removing weeds in alleyways and identifying potential external funding opportunities;

The Committee:

- noted the correspondence as set out in the report;
- noted the smart gully monitoring innovation project in Dublin in helping to identify blocked or at risk gullies in real time and agreed that officers work with the Department for Infrastructure to gather learning from Smart Dublin with the intention of using this information to scope a small pilot in Belfast, focused on known flood prone areas, with a view to improving drainage response, reducing surface water flooding, to include a potential Council contract in removing weeds in alleyways and identifying potential external funding opportunities; and
- agreed that a report be submitted to a future meeting to provide an update on the Motion - City Centre Gritting Feasibility Study.

### **Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues**

#### **Gender Pay Gap Report**

The Committee was reminded that, the Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 22nd February, 2024 considered the following motion which had been received for submission to the Council on 4th March, 2024:

***Gender Pay Gap Recording and Reporting***

***“That this Council will lead the way in Northern Ireland, adopting robust, transparent and accountable processes for gender pay gap recording and reporting.***

***The TUC calculated that in 2023 in the UK, the day when the average woman stops working for free compared to the average man is the 23rd of February. The average woman in paid employment effectively works for free for nearly two months of the year compared to the average man in paid employment. Average figures disguise wider disparities, for instance the gap tends to widen if a woman is a mum, or works in education, finance or insurance.***

***There is no legal obligation to record and report gender pay gap data in Northern Ireland. However, if we don't transparently measure pay by gender, how can we understand and address structural inequalities in our organisation?***

***Therefore, this Council will record and report:***

- ***Its mean gender pay gap in hourly pay***
- ***Its median gender pay gap in hourly pay***
- ***The proportion of males and females in each pay quartile***
- ***A statistical overview of progression/promotion rates for male and female staff***

***And will use guidance such as the UK Government Equalities Office - What Works guidance to address the gap.***

***After the first gender pay gap report, the Council will move to include Disability and ethnicity pay reporting.”***

The Director of Human Resources provided an overview of the report findings. She stated that, at 31st March, 2025:

- women earned £1.27 for every £1 that men earned (comparing median hourly pay)
- women made up 51.04% of employees in the highest paid quarter, and 21.93% of employees in the lowest paid quarter.

***Mean gender pay gap***

- women's mean (average) hourly pay was 16.3% higher than men's.

She advised that, the gender pay gap results for this reporting period showed a pay gap in favour of women, both at the median and mean levels. This outcome was closely linked to the structure of the workforce and the distribution of roles across the organisation.

During discussion, the Director of Human Resources answered a range of questions in relation to overtime, reporting constraints and the methodology of the report.

After discussion, the Committee noted the contents of the report and that reporting on gender pay gaps within pay bands would be investigated.

**Draft Bullying and Harassment Policy  
and draft Equal Opportunities Policy**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 To present the draft Bullying & Harassment Policy and draft Equal Opportunities Policy for approval.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

**2.1 The committee is asked to:**

- Note the contents of this report;
- And agree to adopt the Bullying and Harassment and Equal Opportunities Policies.

**3.0 Main Report**

**One of the people goals in our People Strategy is to make Belfast City Council ‘a place for everyone’, and we have committed to developing a culture of respect and inclusivity by increasing awareness and understanding of diversity issues and implementing policies and procedures that aim to achieve this.**

**3.2 The Draft Bullying & Harassment Policy and Draft Equal Opportunities Policy demonstrate our commitment to an inclusive workplace where all employees feel welcome, valued and respected. These policies were developed and consulted on through the IR Framework with management and Trade Unions. The policies were agreed at JNCC on 26 March 2026.**

**Draft Bullying & Harassment Policy**

**3.3 The Council is committed to providing a good and harmonious working environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation and victimisation and where all employees are treated with dignity and respect and their rights are protected. The purpose of this policy is to ensure a working environment in which bullying and harassment are understood to be unacceptable and where individuals have the confidence to complain about bullying and harassment, should it arise, in the knowledge that their concerns will be dealt with**

promptly, appropriately and fairly and that they will not be made to feel disadvantaged in any way for having raised or pursued a concern in good faith.

- 3.4** This policy covers behaviour in any work-related setting both inside and outside the workplace, by and against fellow employees or customers, suppliers or the public during or outside of working hours, for example business trips or work-related social events or by way of electronic communication including email, social media or by phone such as by text message or app.
- 3.5** This policy applies to all employees of Belfast City Council (the 'Council'). Casual workers will be treated in accordance with the principles inherent in the policy.

**Draft Equal Opportunities Policy**

- 3.6** The Council is committed to providing equal opportunities and promoting a good and harmonious working environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying, intimidation and victimisation and where all employees are treated with dignity and respect and their rights are protected.
- 3.7** The purpose of this policy is to ensure equal opportunities for employees and job applicants and a working environment in which all employees and job applicants will be treated on the basis of merit in a fair, consistent and objective manner and where unlawful discrimination and victimisation is understood to be unacceptable and individuals have the confidence to complain about it, should it arise, in the knowledge that their concerns will be dealt with promptly, appropriately and fairly and that they will not be made to feel disadvantaged in any way for having raised or pursued a concern in good faith.
- 3.8** This policy covers behaviour in any work-related setting both inside and outside the workplace, against fellow employees, job applicants, customers, suppliers and the public and during or outside of working hours, for example business trips or work-related social events or by way of electronic communication including email social media or by phone such as text message or app.
- 3.9** This policy does not cover alleged incidents of unlawful discrimination or victimisation of Council employees by those who are not Council employees. Such matters will be dealt with in accordance with the Protection of Staff from Workplace Violence and Abuse from the Public – Roles and Responsibilities.

**3.10 Financial and Resource Implications**

None

**3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment**

The policies promote equality of opportunity for people within Section 75 groups by promoting an inclusive workplace and showing our commitment to the creation of a work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and no one is treated less favourably than any other person or group of persons on the grounds of their sex, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment status, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership status or any other characteristic.”

The Committee noted the contents of this report and agreed to adopt the Bullying and Harassment and Equal Opportunities Policies.

**Sustain Exchange Climate Leadership Event – Funding Agreement**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to:**

- Inform Committee of a proposal by the non-profit Management and Leadership Network (MLN) to host a prominent climate leadership event ‘Sustain Exchange’ with up to 300 decision-makers attending.
- Request approval for a funding agreement to be put in place between Belfast City Council and the event organiser to the value of £10,140. The event will put the challenges, opportunities and absolute need for positive action associated with climate change on the agenda for local organisations and leaders.

**2.0 Recommendation**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to consider support for this climate leadership conference by approving a funding agreement to the value of £10,140 be entered into with the event organiser.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**Background**

**3.1** It is now beyond doubt that organisations of all shapes, sizes and sectors need to radically reduce their environmental impact both directly and indirectly through their supply chains. The extreme weather experienced across the globe over the past twelve months has further evidenced the reality that the effects of climate change are being felt and the need for decisive action from organisations, championed by their leaders, is now. We are fast approaching the point of no return.

**3.2** It is a truly transformative time for organisations as they address climate risks and identify new opportunities in the green economy. The transition is not straightforward. Organisations need help in developing planet positive practices, securing cleaner power, heat and transport solutions. They need help in navigating new markets to find more environmentally sustainable solutions in their supply chain, and they need to do it fast. There has never been a more important time to find specialist help to navigate the transition, and to educate, inform and engage by sharing the existing knowledge and exemplar experience of those at the forefront of the transition.

**Purpose and format of event**

**3.3** The Sustain Exchange Summit will deliver on the objectives above and will connect local decision-makers with international thought leaders as well as those at the forefront of the transition locally.

**3.4** The event is expected to attract some 300 local leaders (primarily business leaders but also those from the public, NDPB and third sectors) to a Belfast city centre venue with strong public transport links to ensure the carbon footprint of the event is kept to a minimum. The Sustain Exchange Summit will ensure the messages around the need and importance of positive climate action are heard and that the Council's proactivity in this area will be strongly profiled before and during the event.

**Content**

**3.5** Previous speakers at this event have included the eminent writer, broadcaster and commentator Sir Jonathan Porritt CBE, Norman Crowley (global entrepreneur and founder of CoolPlanet), Sir Tim Smit KBE (Founder of The Eden Project and world-renowned thought leader in sustainability) and John Elkington (the global godfather of sustainability and creator of the triple bottom line concept). The 2026 Sustain Exchange Summit will again be delivered to a world-

class standard and will feature globally-renowned speakers (Mary Robinson is the first in-person speaker to be confirmed). The speakers will encourage and empower attending organisations to consider their own climate impact and take the first (or next) steps in their quest to become 'planet positive'. Previous local speakers at this event have demonstrated how leaders from humble beginnings in Belfast have become game-changers in their respective fields. These include the likes of Dr Andrew Woods from Catagen (Sustain Exchange 2022), Eddie McGoldrick from The Electric Storage Company (Sustain Exchange 2021), Philip Rainey from Weev (Sustain Exchange 2023), Dr Katrina Thompson from Artemis Technologies (Sustain Exchange 2024) and Stephen Dunn from CarbonFit (Sustain Exchange 2025). The 2026 event will once again showcase how leaders from Belfast are leading the charge when it comes to the quest to avoid what is now a 'code red for humanity'. In doing this, MLN plans to galvanise existing businesses to act and to inspire the next cohort of planet positive pioneers to emerge from our city.

The event will also provide the opportunity to make the broader leadership community in NI aware of the proactive work of Belfast City Council when it comes to the climate emergency.

#### Management and Leadership Network Experience

- 3.6 The Management and Leadership Network (MLN) is a non-profit which exists to connect decision-makers in NI with the insights of thought-leaders and world-class performers. The rationale is that by enhancing our leadership competence, we will empower local organisations, strengthen our economy, enrich our society and ultimately improve lives.
- 3.7 MLN has worked with some of the most respected leaders on the planet and is vastly experienced in creating and delivering truly world-class events that engage, enrich and elevate attendees. As host, MLN will facilitate the event and invite all speakers to provide their slides in advance so that the idea-sharing session is delivered in a concise, visually impactful and professional manner. Belfast City Council would once again be invited to participate and profile its extensive climate work i.e. the Net Zero Carbon Roadmap for Belfast, Belfast Resilience Strategy, Belfast Climate Commission, One Million Trees Programme etc.
- 3.8 The Sustain Exchange Summit will take place on 23rd October 2026. The total cost of the project will be in excess of £75k. Belfast City Council has been a key partner in the Sustain Exchange Summit since its inception in 2021 and its support has been crucial in the growth of the initiative

and its impact. In order to reduce the financial cost to Belfast City Council and increase collaboration, MLN will seek financial support from additional sources to include the private sector. MLN will give previous sponsors the opportunity to remain as partners. These have included Belfast-based organisations such as Danske Bank, AAB, CarbonFit, International Synergies (circular economy specialists), Belfast Harbour and Mills Selig Solicitors. As well as demonstrating real collaboration, these partnerships have allowed MLN to reduce Belfast City Council's financial contribution from £10,000+vat in 2021 to £10,140 in 2026.

#### Partner Contribution & Profile Benefits

- 3.9 Should Belfast City Council choose to support the Summit, it would be profiled as an 'Event Partner' alongside several other lead event partners (examples given in 3.5). The Council brand would be prominent on all event marketing collateral as well as 'at-event'. A Council representative would be invited to participate in the event press launch and MLN would be delighted for the Lord Mayor of Belfast to speak at the event. Council would also promote the conference through its social media and other relevant communication channels.

#### Financial & Resource Implications

- 3.10 Should Members approve sponsorship of the Sustain Exchange Climate Leadership event, £10,140 will be allocated from within the existing Climate Programme budget.

#### Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

**There are no direct equality or good relations/rural needs implications."**

In response to a Member's question regarding the Conference Sponsorship Framework which had previously been requested by the Committee. The Director of City and Organisational Strategy advised that this was being progressed to include economic and community benefits, and post evaluation outcomes.

The Committee:

- agreed to support the climate leadership conference by approving a funding agreement to the value of £10,140 be entered into with the event organiser; and

- noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting regarding the Conference Sponsorship Framework, to include economic and community benefits, and post evaluation outcomes.

### **Horizon Cities@Heart Project**

The Committee considered the following report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the progress of the Horizon Europe Cities@Heart project which successfully secured funding through the Horizon Europe ‘Innovation Health Initiative’ programme.**

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 The Committee are asked to note the contents of this report including the intention to enter into a MOU with Belfast Healthy Cities in relation to their role in supporting the work required from a Belfast perspective, as set out at para 3.6 below, and the proportionate allocation of the €75,000 grant funding secured from Cities@Heart for administration.**

#### **3.0 Main report**

##### **Background**

**3.1 Members will recall that at its meeting on the 21 November 2025, the Committee was updated on the continued work of council officials with QUB and Belfast Healthy Cities colleagues to input to a joint funding submission to the Horizon Europe Innovative Health Initiative grant funding call. The intention was to develop and submit an overall €15million funding bid across seven cities (named Cities@Heart) to enable work to be undertaken with the WHO Healthy Cities Network and innovative technology with the aim of reducing recognised cardiovascular risk factors in order to more effectively manage risk and prevent future cardiovascular events.**

**3.2 The Cities@Heart proposal focuses on obesity, hypertension, dyslipidemia and diabetes as key drivers of cardiovascular disease and poor health. It seeks to improve awareness, prevention, detection and management of cardiovascular disease. The intention is to identify effective public health activities which offer potential to scale-up. The project will also seek to develop and deploy strategies to leverage engagement and citizen empowerment, raise awareness of cardiovascular disease, effective prevention, early detection and optimal management to improve outcomes.**

- 3.3 The bid involves a range of representatives including public sector, academia and industry experts from across seven municipalities including Izmir (TR), Belfast (NI), Łódź (PL), Cork (IE), Udine (IT), Birmingham (EN) and Utrecht (NL). Each have diverse communities and a commitment to deploy multi-disciplinary health strategies and specific interventions.
- 3.4 Members will be aware of the significant health challenges, including cardiovascular disease, impacting on people across the city and will also be aware that addressing health inequalities has been identified as a key priority set out in the Belfast Agenda. It is intended that the Cities@Heart project would build connections and capacity across a broad array of stakeholders, including citizens, patients, municipalities, healthcare providers, policymakers and industry experts, and support the next generation of health technology to address critical barriers in card

Current position

- 3.5 In January 2026, confirmation was given that the Cities@Heart consortium submission was successful and the €15million funding bid secured. As part of the submission the Council and Belfast Healthy Cities has secured €75,000 for 3 years to assist with the overall administration and input into the emerging programme. It is important to highlight however, that there will be future opportunities for Belfast to develop specific funding bids into the overall €15million programme to support specific Belfast based prototyping or demonstrator projects. Any such bids will be developed in liaison with the other city partners involved (e.g. Healthy Cities, QUB, BHSCT, Public Health Authority and importantly community stakeholders). Any proposed bids would be brought into SP&R Committee for consideration and input in advance of submission.
- 3.6 As previously highlighted to Members, the Council is working closely with Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC) in relation to their role in supporting the work required from a Belfast perspective including, but not limited to, ensuring all relevant city partners are engaged in the developmental work required, capturing and disseminating key information and data, ensuring effective communication and dissemination of key information (e.g. progress updates, key milestones, funding opportunities available to Belfast etc), as well as assisting with the administration, coordination and programme management of Belfast's participation in the overall programme. As Members will be aware the Council shall enter into a MOU with Belfast Healthy Cities to set out how both parties will work

together on the project and how the initial €75,000 administration will be allocated.

**Financial & Resource Implications**

- 3.7 €75,000 grant funding has been secured as part of the overall bid to support the administration of Belfast involvement in the project. Future funding opportunities may become available as part of the implementation of the Cities@Heart programme and any associated Belfast focused bids which may be considered would remain subject to future Committee consideration in advance of submission.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.8 There are no equality/ good relations or rural needs implications arising directly from this report.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report including the intention to enter into a MOU with Belfast Healthy Cities in relation to its role in supporting the work required from a Belfast perspective, as set out at para 3.6 of the report, and the proportionate allocation of the €75,000 grant funding, over three years, secured from Cities@Heart for administration.

**City Innovation**

The Committee considered the undernoted report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update Members on a number of City Innovation programme initiatives including Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayors’ Challenge competition.

**2.0 Recommendations**

**2.1 Members are asked to:**

1. Note the outline workplan for the Belfast City Council Alleyways programme (developed in accordance with the Bloomberg’s processes) and the intention to engage with Mid-Falls Alleyways Regeneration group.
2. To approve a budget contribution for a Connected Places Catapult twelve-month embedded role within the Council who will support work on SME scaling and commercialisation associated with City Deal and similar innovation investments.

**3.0 Main report**

**3.1 Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayors' Challenge update**

Following Belfast City Council acceptance of a letter of offer (for approx. £750,000) from Bloomberg Philanthropies, work is now underway to design, in collaboration with Bloomberg's facilitators, a two-year programme that will put in place a new sustainable, Belfast City Council 'Alleyway Service Commitment' that's responsive and supportive of the individual needs and ambitions of neighbourhoods across the city.

**3.2 As part of the letter of offer Belfast City Council is committed to the following:**

- By June 2026 – recruit a programme manager who will lead on the development of this new integrated Council approach and report to a new programme board with direct accountability to the chief executive.
- By July 2026 – Completion of a Bloomberg-approved implementation plan and budget with work-packages that will support the council and its partners to work towards this ambition. This is likely to include activities such as service modelling, baselining costs and savings, testing data gathering and engagement approaches, piloting approaches such as provision of training, materials and possibly microgrants; and working towards a final long-term service proposal for Council to consider by Spring 2028.
- By January 1, 2028 completion and approval of the long-term sustainability plan.
- By Spring 2028 – transforming up to 20 miles of alleyways with interventions that will range from the modest to the transformational.

**3.3 At March Committee Members requested that officers consider how the Bloomberg programme might support an application for £70,000 from Mid-Falls Alleyway Regeneration. As this new Council programme is developed it will be important for officers to work closely with those residents and neighbourhoods that have the capability and interest in alleyway transformation. As such officers will be seeking to engage with Mid-Falls Alleyway Regeneration to help inform the new programmes and the range of tools and interventions that reflects the project's long term sustainability ambitions.**

**Connected Places Catapult Embedded role**

- 3.4 The City Innovation Office and City Deal Programme Office have been approached by the Connected Places Catapult with the offer of providing a twelve-month Catapult officer to be embedded with Belfast City Council. The Catapult is establishing similar posts in city regions across the UK, including Scotland and Wales, with the aim of helping regions to best maximise the impact of innovation-style investments such as City Deal.
- 3.5 The person would be a Connected Places Catapult member of staff but would be based in Belfast City Council and work with a group of local stakeholders to manage a workplan based on local needs. This would include supporting pathways to scaling, commercialisation and investment by local SMEs engaged in City Deal initiatives. And working with public procurement teams from councils to enhance our role as first customers for innovation.
- 3.6 Connected Places Catapult are proposing to contribute £45,000 for the post; with an additional contribution of £20,000 being offered by Belfast Region City Deal partners. Members are asked to approve a £25,000 contribution from Belfast City Council to ensure that there is the requisite match funding.

**Financial & Resource Implications**

- 3.7 Bloomberg Philanthropies will provide funding of \$1.2 million for a two-year programme which includes funding for a Project Manager.

Other expenditure has been identified within existing departmental budgets.

**Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment**

- 3.8 Equality and Rural screenings will be completed as part of the Bloomberg programme design process.”

During discussion, the Director of Resources, Fleet, Transport and Open Spaces and Street Scene answered a range of questions in relation to the existing Alleyways Programme and the intended Pilot Phase timescales and structure. He explained that how both processes would work in tandem was being considered, together with a business model and highlighted the importance of a sustainable approach.

One Member suggested that stakeholders should meet with Area Partnership Boards and Community Networks.

After discussion, the Committee:

1. Noted the outline workplan for the Belfast City Council Alleyways programme (developed in accordance with the Bloomberg's processes) and the intention to engage with Mid-Falls Alleyways Regeneration group;
2. Approved a budget contribution for a Connected Places Catapult twelve-month embedded role within the Council who will support work on SME scaling and commercialisation associated with City Deal and similar innovation investments; and
3. Agreed that a report be submitted to its meeting in May in relation to the overall structure of the Council's Alleyways Programme, to include a timeline for the pilot, resourcing issues, and a list of groups that had expressed an interest in alleyway transformation.

**Potential Additional Funding from Special**  
**EU Programmes Body - Local PEACEPLUS**  
**Action Plans**

The Committee considered the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

- 1.1 **To report to committee on the availability of additional in Year Funding from the Special European Union Programme Body (SEUPB) for 2026.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 **That the Committee agrees to the approach detailed in the body of the report.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**Background**

- 3.1 **Following a meeting with SEUPB on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026 Councils were informed that there was a significant underspend within SEUPB, which potentially could be decommitted by EU. SEUPB are seeking proposals from Councils for activity that could be spent by September 2026 and claimed within the 3rd quarter of the financial year. Projects should be linked to existing Local PEACEPLUS Action Plan, as any additional agreed proposal will require a modification to the current Local Action Plan Letter of Offer**

### Approach

- 3.2 Officers have discussed this and considering the truncated timeline there are a number of project/programmes that have the potential to complete and spend within this small window of time: -
- Fleadh Cheoil 2026 Programme
  - Forth Meadow Greenway Signage
  - Positive Cultural Expression (Beacons)
- 3.3 All the above can be aligned with the current PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan, and Council has the opportunity to bid for funds in the region of €2 - 3 million.
- 3.4 To progress this opportunity further it is proposed that Officers engage directly with SEUPB to formally submit a proposal for additional funding for this year and to explore potential options for 2027.
- 3.5 Members should note that SEUPB indicated that the level of participation will be proportion / reasonable, and that compliance with programme requirements is required, although in some instances, it may be lighter touch.

### Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.6 All financial implications are covered as the additional funding will be provided at 100%. The main resource pressure for Council will be Officer time, to ensure a successful proposal and compliance.

### Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.7 The current Local PEACEPLUS Action Plan has been equality screened and will promote good relations and will enhance equality peace, reconciliation and good relations impacts for the City of Belfast.”

During discussion, Members requested further detail on the process for selecting projects for the potential additional funding and the eligibility criteria.

One Member suggested that 2 Royal Avenue also be put forward for consideration of the fund.

The Committee:

- agreed to the approach as outlined in the report to submit a proposal to progress the potential additional in Year Funding from the Special European Union Programme Body (SEUPB) for 2026;
- agreed that 2 Royal Avenue project also be considered as a potential project; and
- agreed that a report be submitted to a future committee to confirm what had been approved, how the additional funding would be allocated and the process for selecting projects for inclusion.

### **Social Supermarket**

The Committee considered the following report:

#### **“1.0 Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues**

**To provide an update for members in relation to the Social Supermarket Fund 26/28 and seek members agreement in relation to the allocation of financial resources.**

#### **2.0 Recommendation**

**2.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report and agree the allocation of funding to Social Supermarket Fund 26/28 applicants.**

#### **3.0 Main report**

##### **Background**

**3.1 At February committee officers provided an update on the assessment of applications to the Social Supermarket Fund 26/28. Members agreed the following;**

- the allocation of 25 per-cent bridging funding for those groups which scored 50% and above, in advance of receiving the DfC LoO so that activity could begin from 1st April, 2026.
- that a report be submitted to the Committee within the next three months to confirm the Department for Communities budget, outline how the remaining 75 per cent of funding could be allocated, together with options on how the three groups which had eligible funding but scored below 50% could be assisted.

### Key Issues

- 3.2 On 10th April 2026, Council received the Community Support Programme Letter of Offer from the Department of Communities. This included £777,811 for the Social Supermarket Fund. At its February meeting committee agreed an allocation of 25% for all applications scoring 50% and above which was £207,562. If this 25% award was increased to 100% a budget of £830,249 would be required. The Letter of Offer does not provide sufficient funding to make awards at 100% to all projects scoring 50 and above, there is a shortfall of £52,437.
- 3.3 The Letter of Offer provides sufficient funding to award 94% of eligible costs to all projects scoring 50. This level of award requires £780,434 and does not require any additional allocation from council budgets.
- 3.4 Officers have been in contact with the three organisations that scored below 50% to explore what support can be given and signpost to other funders and relevant support services who can provide support to existing users.

### Financial and Resource Implications

- 3.5 The Letter of Offer from DFC provides £777,811. Social Supermarkets are primarily funded through the CSP Letter of Offer, although council has made additional contributions in recent years to provide additional levels of financial support.
- 3.6 Members agreed last September that although funding is primarily from DfC the Social Supermarket Fund should be advertised on a two year basis rather than one. Applications to the fund were for activity from 01 April 2026 until 31 March 2028. Organisations will only receive a Letter of Offer for 26/27 initially. A paper will be brought to committee in January 27 to advise of the financial position in terms of available funding for 27/28.

### Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessment

- 3.7 The 26/28 Social Supermarket Fund open call is being screened for Equality, Good Relations and Rural Needs Implications.”

The Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed the allocation of funding to Social Supermarket Fund 2026/2028 applicants.

## Planning Update

The Committee noted the update on the Major planning applications and applications that had been determined by the Planning Committee.

## Physical Programme and Asset Management

### Physical Programme Update

The Director of Property and Projects reminded the Committee that the Council's Physical Programme currently included over 200 capital projects with investment of £150m+ via a range of internal and external funding streams, together with projects which the Council delivers on behalf of external agencies. The Council's Capital Programme forms part of the Physical Programme and was a rolling programme of investment which either improved existing Council facilities or provided new facilities.

She presented the half year update, requests for stage movement approvals under the Capital Programme along with updates on capital letters of offer and contracts awarded.

During discussion, the Chairperson requested an update on Woodlands.

The Committee –

- **Physical Programme Half Year Update** - Noted the overall update on projects that had been completed recently and projects currently under construction at 3.3 to 3.5 and in Appendix 1 of the report; and that the Property and Projects Department was happy to arrange a site visit to any projects that had been completed or were underway.
- **Awards and Recognition** – noted that Hosford Community Homes was shortlisted for All-Ireland Housing Awards 2026 in the '*Excellence in Housing Innovation*' category and Berlin Swifts FC was awarded the Irish FA Grassroots Football Awards - Club of the Year 2025.
- **Capital Programme Movements -**
  - **IT Programme — Asset Management System** (Integrated Workplace Management System) - Noted that a satisfactory tender return had been received and that the Director of Finance had confirmed that this project was within the affordability limits of the Council and agreed that a maximum of up to £880,000 be allocated.
  - **IT Programme — Website Content Management System (CMS) Upgrade** - Noted that a satisfactory tender return had been received and that the Director of Finance had confirmed that this project was within the affordability limits of the Council and agreed that a maximum of up to £183,750 be allocated.
  - **Woodvale Park Sensory Garden** – Agreed that the project be moved to *Stage 3 – Committed* with a maximum allocation of up to £350,000 (as previously agreed as part of the reallocated SPF funding).

- **Capital Letters of Offer** – noted the update in relation to capital letters of offer.
- **Contracts awarded in Q4 2025/26** – noted the update in relation to contracts awarded.

### Asset Management

The Committee:

- i) **Cromac Street Car Park – Licence Renewal**  
Approved the renewal of a Licence agreement from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) in relation to the Council operated off-street car park at Cromac Street.
- ii) **Station Street Car Park – Licence Renewal**  
Approved the renewal of a Licence agreement from the Department for Communities (DfC) in relation to the Council operated off-street car park at Station Street.
- iii) **Little Victoria Street Car Park – Advertising Station**  
Approved the grant of a Licence to Bauer Media Outdoor NI Limited for an advertising station located at Little Victoria Street car park.
- iv) **Ballymacarrett Walkway – Container Licence**  
Approved the grant of a Licence to Walk Wheel Cycle Trust for a storage container located at Ballymacarrett Walkway.
- v) **Hanwood Centre Lands – sublease**  
Approved of a surrender of the current Licence Agreement with Hanwood Trust Company Ltd and approved the granting of a sublease to Hanwood Trust Company Ltd.

### Finance, Procurement and Performance

#### Contracts Update

The Committee:

- Approved the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (**Table 1**); and
- Approved the modification of the contract as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (**Table 2**).

**Table 1: Competitive Tenders**

<b>Title of Tender</b>	<b>Proposed Contract Duration</b>	<b>Est. Max Contract Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Short description of goods / services</b>	<b>On published pipeline (Y/N)</b>	<b>Prior Committee approval (Y/N) If Y name Committee &amp; Date</b>	<b>External Funding (Y/N)</b>
Provision for the Implementation and Delivery of West Belfast District Policing and Community Safety Partnership's Network Support Project	Up to 4.5 years	£169,312.50	D Sales	West Belfast DPCSP wishes to appoint a contractor to support local structures to identify and address local policing and community safety issues.	Y	N	Y
To provide and supply the hire of 1 x RCV 18t narrow track vehicle with twin rear bin-lifters (including maintenance)	Up to 2 years	£103,480	D Sales	A new lease agreement is required from 01 August 2026 to 31 July 2028 to allow for the continuation of services until the procurement of 1 new 18T RCV is complete. Current lead time of new vehicle is 14 months from point of order.	Y	N	N
Waste Management Services to support the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann	Up to 2 years	£342,000	D Sales	Waste management services to support delivery of the Fleadh 26 with option to cover Fleadh 27, if required. Approved Feb 2026 SP&R. Estimated 2 year value now included.	N	N	N
Replacement Heating Installation & Associated Works at Vehicle Maintenance Workshop & Garages	Up to 12 weeks	£150,000	S Grimes	Replacement heating systems required as current no longer meets the operational requirements. Due to the age and condition of the plant and equipment it is no longer economically viable to repair/maintain.	N	N	N

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Est. Max Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services	On published pipeline (Y/N)	Prior Committee approval (Y/N) If Y name Committee & Date	External Funding (Y/N)
Supply & Installation of Replacement Boilers & Associated Works at Belfast Castle	Up to 12 weeks	£100,000	S Grimes	Replacement boilers required as current no longer meets the operational requirements. Due to the age and condition of the plant and equipment it is no longer economically viable to repair/maintain.	N	N	N
Corporate Asset Management System (AMS)	Up to 1 year	£68,000	P Gribben	The Corporate Asset Management System (AMS) is provided by Concerto (Bellrock) and this contract is due to expire on 01/07/2026. Whilst a procurement process is underway to replace the existing system, the implementation will not be complete in advance of the current contract expiration. A new 1-year agreement is required to support the procurement and implementation of a replacement system.	N	N	N

**Table 2: Modification to Contract**

<b>Title of Contract</b>	<b>Original Contract Duration &amp; Value</b>	<b>Modification – Period &amp; Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>
Email Filtering Service (T2699)	Up to 3 years & £150,000	Additional 6 weeks	S McNicholl	Tender for 3 years was approved at Nov 25 SP&R. During negotiations at award an additional 6 weeks to contract term was required which resulted in a reduction to contract price.	Softcat plc

**NICVA Summit 2026**

The Committee considered a request from NICVA for a contribution of £20,000 from Belfast City Council to support the 2026 Summit, with the full delivery costs of the event estimated at over £70,000.

It was reported that NICVA had stated that this investment would directly support the delivery of a ‘vital platform for collaboration, learning and advocacy, ensuring that organisations across Belfast and beyond could participate and that the value of the voluntary and community sector was clearly demonstrated and strengthened’.

It was highlighted that Council had previously agreed to provide sponsorship of £10,000 to NICVA for their Future Thinking Summit which took place in October 2024.

**Proposal**

Moved by Councillor R. McLaughlin,  
Seconded by Councillor O’Neill,

Resolved – that the Committee agrees to the sponsorship of £10,000 for the NICVA 2026 Summit event.

**Summit of the Cities 2026**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting in January, it had agreed to the use of the city hall to host an event titled “Summit of the Cities 2026”. This event would bring together leaders and delegates from all 12 cities across the island of Ireland to celebrate their history, share ideas, forge partnerships and accelerate practical action on the issues shaping urban life with panel discussion and speeches.

It was reported that MW Advocate Ltd, which was organising the event, had recently made a request to the Council to sponsor this event to be held on 24th June 2026 in the City Hall. As outlined in the Appendix 1, the focus of the event was shaping the island’s urban future – our cities and our communities.

The Committee noted the contents of the report and agreed to sponsor the event to the value of £10,000.

**Equality and Good Relations**

**Minutes of Shared City Partnership Meeting**

The Committee approved the minutes and recommendations from the Shared City Partnership Meeting held on the 13th April, including:

***Revised Schedule of Meetings***

- The Shared City Partnership agreed to change its monthly scheduled meetings from Mondays to Wednesdays from May 2026 and recommends that Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note and agree this change.

***Members Update – NIHE Presentation***

- Shared City Partnership recommends that members note the presentation.

***Good Relations Quarter 4 Update***

- The Shared City Partnership recommends that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report

***Community Recovery Fund Update***

- The Shared City Partnership recommends that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee notes the contents of the report and agrees the proposed approach.

***PEACEPLUS – Local Community Action Plan Secretariat Update***

- The Shared City Partnership recommends that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report

***Peace Plus Thriving and Peaceful Communities Thematic Update***

- The Shared City Partnership recommends that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report

***Peace Plus Celebrating Culture and Diversity Thematic Update***

- The Shared City Partnership recommends that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report

***Community Regeneration and Transformation Thematic Update***

- The Shared City Partnership recommends that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report

***Any Other Business***

- The Shared City Partnership welcomed Denis Long and Finvola McIntyre to the team and wished Emma Kennedy all the best on her maternity leave.

**Operational Issues**

**Minutes of the Party Group Leaders  
Consultative Forum**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum of 16th April, 2026.

**Requests for use of the City Hall and  
the provision of Hospitality**

The Committee approved the recommendation as set out below:

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	CHARGES
Dunlewey Addiction Service	11 June 2026	<b>Celebration of Volunteers</b> – showcase event to celebrate the achievements of service users and recognise the contribution of volunteers.  Numbers expected; 50	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NO ROOM HIRE</li><li>• Any applicable additional charges</li></ul> <i>With 20% charity deduction applied to final total</i>

**Request for use of City Hall grounds  
for International Yoga Day**

The Committee:

1. Authorised the use of City Hall grounds on 21st June, 2026 for International Day of Yoga Celebrations; and
2. Authorised the event to take place on the basis of submission of an event management plan and risk assessment and appointment of an event controller to ensure delivery of a safe public event.

**Minutes of Disability Working  
Group of 24th March, 2026**

(Councillor R. Brooks attended in connection with this item)

The Committee considered the Minutes of the Disability Working Group.

After discussion, the Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the Disability Working Group of 24th March, 2026.

The Committee also noted that a report would be submitted to a future meeting in relation to the following issues:

- That need for a Disability Strategy and a time-bound Action Plan;
- The model of delivery for disability related actions to ensure a top-down model of delivery, with co-design built in from the beginning;
- A paper on the Accessibility Roadmap 2035 including the level of resources required and the key stakeholders who could be involved;
- Information brought to the relevant committees that highlight the progress made in improving accessibility and inclusion across the city; and
- The potential to extend the Working Group to external members.

**Minutes of Installations - City Hall/City Hall**  
**Grounds Working Group of 30th March, 2026**

The Committee approved and adopted the minutes of the Installations – City Hall/City Hall Grounds Working Group of 30th March, 2026.

Chairperson