

Standards and Business Committee

Tuesday, 28th April, 2026

MEETING OF THE STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Members present: Councillor Flynn (Chairperson);
Aldermen Lawlor and McCullough; and
Councillors Bower, Bradley, Carson,
de Faoite, P. Donnelly, D. Douglas,
Long, Lyons, Magee, McAteer, McCallin,
McCormick, McDonough-Brown, McDowell,
I. McLaughlin, R. McLaughlin and Murphy.

In attendance: Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor and Director of Legal
and Civic Services;
Mr. J. Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance
Manager; and
Mrs. L. McLornan, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies for inability to attend were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 24th March, 2026, were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Council at its meeting on 1st April, 2026.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Long declared an interest in Items 7 and 8, namely "Tackling Anti-Social Scrambler and E-Scooter Use in Belfast" and "University of Ulster to rescind decision to cut 450 jobs", in that his wife was the Minister of Justice, and he would not participate in the items.

Councillor R. McLaughlin declared an interest in item 8, in that his partner was a Junior Minister in the Executive, and he would not participate in the discussion.

Notices of Motions

Item Withdrawn

The Committee was reminded that the Notice of Motion "Opposing Aspirational Climate Targets" had been withdrawn from the agenda.

**Notice of Motion to rescind a decision –
Armed Forces Covenant**

The Committee was reminded that, at its meeting on 24th March, it had agreed to adopt the following motion:

“That this Council recognises the unique contribution that Armed Forces service leavers have and continue to make to our society; agrees that Veterans and serving personnel should not face any disadvantage as a result of their military service and resolves that this Council will sign up immediately to the Armed Forces Covenant.”

Subsequent to the Committee adopting the motion and the expiry of the call-in period, in accordance with standing order 26 (b), a motion was received requesting that the decision to adopt the motion be rescinded.

“In accordance with Standing Order 26 – We the undersigned Members call on Belfast City Council to rescind the Standards and Business Committee of 24th March, 2026, decision to adopt the notice of motion in respect of the Armed Forces Covenant on two grounds:

1. No resource implications were listed in the report of the motion. There will be a resource implication associated with this motion through Council officer time or in any event that would mark the signing of the armed forces covenant. Therefore a referral to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee should have been recommended
2. Furthermore in reference to Standing Order 13 o, the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant being a strategic decision the item should have been referred to full Council.

These are the two options that should have been recommended to the Committee before it could make a decision on this matter.

We therefore call for the decision to be rescinded and to be tabled again at the Standards and Business Committee on 28th April.”

Proposal

Moved by Councillor Murphy,
Seconded by Councillor Bradley,

That the above motion be referred to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Amendment

Moved by Alderman Lawlor,
Seconded by Alderman McCullough,

That the motion be rejected.

The City Solicitor drew the Committee's attention to the question of cost considerations within the motion and also whether Standing Order 13 (o) applied, which required that if an issue related to a strategic or constitutional matter, the Committee should refer a Motion to the Council meeting.

After discussion, the proposer of the amendment confirmed that he acknowledged the advice from the City Solicitor and that he wished to proceed with the vote on his amendment.

On a vote on the amendment, standing in the name of Alderman Lawlor, ten Members voted for it, nine against and with one no vote, it was accordingly declared carried.

Further Amendment

Moved by Councillor R. McLaughlin,
Seconded by Councillor de Faoite,

That the decision in relation to the rejection of the motion be amended to provide that the matter be referred to the Council for debate.

On a vote on the further amendment, nine Members voted for it, ten against and with one no vote, it was accordingly declared lost.

Therefore the first amendment, standing in the name of Alderman Lawlor, was put as the substantive motion.

On a vote, ten Members voted for it, nine against and with one no vote, the motion to reject the motion was carried.

Public Acts of Remembrance Events

The Committee noted that the motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Bower and seconded by Councillor Maghie, be referred, in the first instance, to the People and Communities Committee.

Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD)

Moved by Councillor Flynn,
Seconded by Councillor McAteer and

Resolved - That the Committee agrees that the motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Groogan and seconded by Councillor Maghie, be referred to the Council for debate, with no restriction to be placed on the number of speakers.

Tackling Anti-Social Scrambler and E-Scooter Use in Belfast

Moved by Councillor Alderman McCullough,
Seconded by Alderman Lawlor and

Resolved – That the Committee agreed that the motion, which had been proposed by Alderman McCullough and seconded by Councillor R. Brooks, be referred to the Council for debate, with no restriction to be placed on the number of speakers.

**University of Ulster to rescind
decision to cut 450 jobs**

Moved by Councillor Flynn,
Seconded by Councillor Lyons and

Resolved – That the Committee agreed that the motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Collins and seconded by Councillor Flynn, be referred to the Council for debate, with no restriction to be placed on the number of speakers.

Chairperson