



Subject:	Notice of Motion – End Hostile Environment
Date:	24th January, 2023
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

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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 February in relation to End Hostile Environment.
2.0	Recommendation
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.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p data-bbox="316 297 470 331"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="316 365 1517 432">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 data-bbox="363 465 1517 633">(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 data-bbox="363 656 1517 824">(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 data-bbox="387 846 1517 947">(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 data-bbox="387 969 1517 1037">(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 data-bbox="387 1059 1517 1171">(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 data-bbox="387 1193 1517 1328">(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 data-bbox="204 1361 1185 1395">3.2 The following motion has been received from Councillor Ferguson:</p> <p data-bbox="316 1429 667 1462"><u>End Hostile Environment</u></p> <p data-bbox="347 1496 1465 1630">“As a city of sanctuary, Belfast City Council recognises the need for refugees, migrants and asylum seekers to feel safe and welcomed in our communities. Moreover, the Council recognises the important cultural diversity and richness that newcomers to our communities bring, as well as all they contribute beyond this.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1664 1465 1765">The Council further notes the important work carried out by community and activist groups across the city in working to ensure people who move to Belfast are connected to services and supports where needed.</p> <p data-bbox="347 1798 1465 2022">However, the Council acknowledges the detrimental and often damaging impact of Hostile Environment policies which are set by the Home Office but administered here locally. These include the ban on the right to work for asylum seekers, temporary accommodation facilities such as Larne Detention Centre and hotels, ‘dispersals’ to regions in Britain, and punishing conditions designed to create a climate of fear and hostility, criminalising and impoverishing those who may find themselves without status.</p>

	<p>The Council recognises that the Hostile Environment is a xenophobic policy of the UK Government which encourages an ‘othering’ of people who move here.</p> <p>This Council therefore expresses its opposition to the Hostile Environment and calls on the Home Office to end this policy and immediately offer the right work and access services for people who arrive on our shores fleeing war or persecution. The Council further calls on the UK Government to put in place a right to remain policy, which is focused not on discouraging people to come here to better their lives, but ensuring the pathway is simplified and welcoming.”</p> <p>Proposer - Councillor Ferguson</p> <p>Seconder – Councillor Matt Collins</p>
3.3	The motion calls upon the Council to express its opposition to the Hostile Environment and calls on the Home Office to end this policy – the Committee can either adopt the motion, refer it for debate at the Council meeting (with or without restrictions) or reject the motion.
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	Documents Attached
	None.