

**Democratic Services Section  
Legal and Civic Services Department  
Belfast City Council  
City Hall  
Belfast  
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast  
City Council**

22nd September, 2022

## **MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Council Chamber and via Microsoft Teams on Friday, 23rd September, 2022 at 9.30 a.m., for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

### **AGENDA:**

#### **1. Routine Matters**

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest

#### **2. Restricted Items**

- (a) Medium Term Financial Plan and Efficiency Programme (Pages 1 - 8)
- (b) Update on Structures (Pages 9 - 12)
- (c) Cost of Living Payments – Agency and Casual Workers (Pages 13 - 14)
- (d) City Hall Recovery Plan - Update on Progress (Pages 15 - 18)

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

- (a) Motion: Elected Member Disability Working Group – Draft Terms of Reference (Pages 19 - 24)
- (b) Motion: GLL and Trades Unions – Response from GLL (Pages 25 - 30)

**4. Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues**

- (a) Update on City Region Growth Deal (Pages 31 - 40)
- (b) Age Friendly Belfast Draft Plan 2022-2026 - Public Consultation (Pages 41 - 82)
- (c) Dual Language Street Signs Policy (Pages 83 - 90)
- (d) Sustain Exchange Climate Business Conference Funding Agreement (Pages 91 - 94)

**5. Physical Programme and Asset Management**

- (a) Asset Management (Pages 95 - 98)
- (b) Update on Physical Programme (Pages 99 - 104)
- (c) Update on Area Working Groups (Pages 105 - 162)

**6. Finance, Procurement and Performance**

- (a) Belfast City Council Statement of Accounts 2021-22 (Pages 163 - 168)
- (b) Update on Contracts (Pages 169 - 176)

**7. Equality and Good Relations**

- (a) Minutes of Meeting of Shared City Partnership (Pages 177 - 202)

**8. Operational Issues**

- (a) Minutes of Meeting of Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum (Pages 203 - 206)
- (b) Requests for Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality (Pages 207 - 210)
- (c) Minutes of Meeting of Language Strategy Working Group (Pages 211 - 212)
- (d) City Hall - Design of Carson Tile (Pages 213 - 216)
- (e) Minutes of Meeting of City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group (Pages 217 - 224)
- (f) Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit and Risk Panel (Pages 225 - 250)

**9. Request to Present**

To consider a request from Mr. Eamon Deeny, Public Affairs Manager, Queen's University, for representatives of Queen's University and the Ulster University to attend a future meeting to highlight the role of Purpose Built Managed Student Accommodation in Belfast.



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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 6  
of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Motion: Elected Member Disability Working Group – Draft Terms of Reference</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Sarah Williams, Governance and Compliance Manager;

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to request approval of the draft Terms of Reference for an Elected Member Disability Working Group.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve the draft Terms of Reference for a cross-party Elected Member Disability Working Group.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Councillor McMullan raised a motion at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee meeting in June 2020, part of which agreed to:</p> <p>Create a Reference Group for Disabled People. This will provide a forum for Councillors, our Disability Advisory Panel, Council officers, as well as other relevant stakeholders and</p>

	<p>experts from time-to-time, to discuss and progress actions on Belfast City Council's commitment to becoming an accessible city for all by 2035.</p> <p>Unfortunately, due to various resourcing issues there has been a delay in establishing this group.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p><b>Disability-Related Work in the Council</b></p> <p>Disability awareness has increased significantly in recent times, with access and inclusion of disabled people in all aspects of life breaking down stereotypes held by much of society. Societal, health and economic inequalities all demonstrate that, in spite of successful gains, inequalities remains in place. With 1 in 5 people in Belfast having some type of disability and a focus on disability is increasing in the Council.</p> <p>The Council under section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 ('the Act'), (as amended by the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006) is required to carry out the following functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people; and</li> <li>▪ Encourage participation by disabled people in public life.</li> </ul> <p>Every three years, the Council produces a new Disability Action Plan outlining its commitment and what areas of work will be actioned in terms of improving accessibility and inclusion for disabled people. A new Disability Action Plan 2022-25 has been out for consultation and is being brought to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee this month for approval.</p>
3.3	<p><b>Elected Member Disability Working Group</b></p> <p>It is proposed that a Working Group for Disabled People is established and resourced by Legal and Civic Services. This will meet quarterly and provide a forum for discussion as well as receive updates on the Council's Disability Action Plan, so that Members are aware of the work in this area and can provide suggestions so that work can be incorporated into existing strategic programmes of work where relevant.</p>

	The Working Group would make recommendations on proposed actions and policy development. These recommendations would then be referred to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for agreement, as required. The proposed draft Terms of Reference are attached.
	<b>Financial and Resource Implications</b>
3.4	None. Will be met within existing budgets.
	<b>Equality, Good Relations or Rural Needs Implications</b>
3.5	Any new policies will be subject to the Council's equality, good relations and rural needs screening processes.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Document Attached</b>
	Elected Members' Disability Working Group Draft Terms of Reference

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## **Draft Terms of Reference for the Elected Member Disability Working Group**

### **Introduction and purpose**

A Disability Working Group has been established to provide Members with a forum within which to discuss the progress and implementation of the Belfast City Council Disability Action Plan 2022-2025 and ensure alignment with the Council's Disability Strategy.

Whilst the Working Group will not be a decision-making body, it will be required to report into or make recommendations to the Council's Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on progress against the strategy and associated action plans.

### **Terms of Reference**

The Disability Working Group Terms of Reference are:

- to provide elected Members with a forum to discuss how to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, and encourage their participation in public life across the Council;
- to monitor the delivery of the commitments set out in the Disability Action Plan;
- to support the development of a Disability Strategy;
- to report on progress or make recommendations to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee on a regular basis through reports and minutes of meetings.

### **Membership**

- All political party groupings should be represented.
- Each political party grouping should have one representative.

### **Ways of Working**

- The Working Group will decide on arrangements for chairing the meetings.
- The Working Group will meet quarterly or as required.

### **Governance**

The Working Group will be supported by staff within the Council's Legal & Civic Services Department.

The Working Group does not have decision-making powers. Its recommendations, as set out in the minutes of its meetings, will be reported to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to adopt, amend or reject the recommendation of the Working Group.

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Motion: GLL and Trades Unions – Response from GLL</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John Walsh, Chief Executive
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	John Walsh, Chief Executive

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	To consider a response from GLL to a motion on GLL and Trades Unions which was passed by the Standards and Business Committee at its meeting on 23rd August.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the response and take such action thereon as may be determined.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<u><b>Key Issues</b></u> The Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 23rd August, agreed to adopt the following motion, which had been proposed by Councillor Ferguson and seconded by Councillor Michael Collins:

	<p>“This Council recognises the importance of collective bargaining in the workplace and the central role of trade unions to this process, as representative voices for workers. Moreover, in a period where very many workers are opting to take industrial action, the Council recognises the right of workers to do so, and the role it can play in winning much needed pay increases during a cost-of-living crisis and while inflation continues to rise.</p> <p>The Council notes that there are ongoing issues in Council leisure centres across our city, which workers and their trade unions have been attempting to resolve. The Council also notes, with disappointment, that GLL does not officially recognise trade unions in Council leisure facilities, denying workers the ability to collectively bargain effectively.</p> <p>This Council agrees that GLL should officially recognise trade unions in Belfast City Council leisure centres and will write to the leadership of the organisation to urge it to do so.</p> <p>The Chief Executive of the Council will also convene a meeting with the relevant trade unions to hear directly about the issues facing workers in our leisure centres and commit to address them with GLL.”</p>
3.2	A response has been received from Mr. G. Kirk, Senior Regional Director of GLL, a copy of which is attached.
3.3	Mr. Kirk begins by explaining that, as a worker owned, charitable social enterprise with an elected worker board, the interests of its people are represented at the highest level within the company. The nature of GLL’S business means that it is organised primarily on a partnership basis and the company has a good record of working closely with Trades Unions in these local environments. He highlights the fact that the Trades Union forum in Belfast works particularly well, with both GLL’s management and the Trades Unions being able to raise issues and discuss collectively, in order to reach a favourable conclusion for both parties. This arrangement has, he points out, worked very well for the past seven years and has created very strong partnership working and outputs for staff under this model. GLL does not, therefore, see any reason for this to change.



3.3	<p>He goes on to state that there is strong evidence in the outputs across the City, within staffing teams, that reinforces how successful the social enterprise partnership between the Council and GLL has been. There have been over 200 GLL promotions in recent years, which demonstrates an inward focus on staff and excellent delivery of learning and development opportunities. All of GLL's staff received an average 4% pay increase in April 2022, in recognition of the current cost of living challenges which many face. In partnership with the Council, there have been seventeen leisure employment academies, resulting in over 100 local people gaining training and then employment within leisure centres. Alongside this, GLL has employed six graduates for its successful Trainee Manager programme, thereby ensuring succession planning for its future leisure leaders. GLL also opened a customer service centre in Belfast twelve months ago, creating 60 new jobs for local people and a further 25 new staff will be employed when Templemore Baths open in October, 2022.</p>
3.4	<p>Mr. Kirk adds that GLL notes that, while at times there can be challenges, there is a healthy partnership created through the Trades Union forum, allowing items to be resolved through collaborative working. He concludes by stating that GLL looks forward to future staffing success in the year ahead and will address any issues that arise from the planned meetings.</p> <p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p> <p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></b></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	<b>Document Attached</b>
	Response from Senior Regional Director, GLL.

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Date; 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022

Email (Carolyn Donnelly [DonnellyCarolyn@BelfastCity.gov.uk](mailto:DonnellyCarolyn@BelfastCity.gov.uk))

Dear Carolyn,

Many thanks for sharing with GLL the motion that was adopted at the Business and standards committee in August 2022, please the GLL response below;

As a worker owned, charitable social enterprise with an elected worker board, the interests of our people are represented at the highest level within the company. The nature of our business means that we are organised primarily on a partnership basis, and GLL has a good record of working closely with trade unions in these local environments. The Trade union forum in Belfast works particularly well with both GLL management and the trade unions being able to raise issues and discuss collectively, in order to reach a favorable conclusion for both parties. This set-up has worked very well for the past 7 years and created very strong partnership working and outputs for our staff under this model, therefore we do not see any reason for this to change.

There is strong evidence in the outputs across the city within our staffing teams that reinforce how successful the social enterprise partnership between Belfast City Council and GLL has been. There have been over 200 promotions in recent years showing an inward focus on our staff and excellent delivery of learning and development opportunities. All of our staff received an average 4% pay increase in April 2022 recognising the current cost of living challenges for many of our employees. In partnership with BCC there have been 17 leisure employment academies resulting in over 100 local people gaining training and then employment within our centres. Alongside this we have employed six graduates who have joined our successful Trainee Manager programme which ensures succession planning for our future leisure leaders. GLL opened up a customer service centre in Belfast just 12 months ago creating 60 new jobs for local people in the city, and we will see a further 25 new staff employed in the city when we open up Templemore Baths in October 2022.

GLL note that while at times there can be challenges, there is a healthy partnership created through the trade union forum allowing items to be resolved through collaborative working. We look forward to future staffing success in the year ahead and will address any items that come from the planned meetings.

Yours sincerely



Gareth Kirk  
Senior Regional Director  
GLL

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Update on City Region Growth Deal</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	John Walsh, Chief Executive
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources Damien Martin, Programme Director

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	This report is to provide the Committee with an update on the progress of the Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) including a detailed update on progress to secure in excess of £7m of funding through the Complementary Fund to establish a Northern Ireland wide Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF) which will help to address the financial barriers facing small businesses and social enterprises wishing to digitally transform.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is requested to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. note that it is intended that the DTFF will operate on NI wide basis and be led by Newry, Mourne and Down District Council through its existing arrangements operating the Full Fibre NI Consortium;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. note the revenue costs associated with operation of the Fund, across a three year delivery period as outlined in the attached. Please note that there is no additional financial ask for Belfast City Council as revenue costs identified have already been accounted for within existing Belfast Region City Deal (BRCD) budgets;</li> <li>iii. approve the council's participation in the DTFF requiring Belfast City Council to join the FFNI consortium along with the other 10 partnering councils currently members of this partnership and for revenue costs associated with the delivery of the project to commence from November 2022 to enable pre-development work to commence;</li> <li>iv. note the update in relation to Belfast Stories and approve the extension for the Programme Director in line with the project timetable which will be financed from existing BRCD resources;</li> <li>v. note the update in relation to the Belfast Digital Innovation Commissioner;</li> <li>vi. approve the contribution to Innovation City Belfast, which will be financed from existing BRCD resources; and</li> <li>vii. note that the next meeting of the BRCD Council Panel will be hosted by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council on 28<sup>th</sup> September.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<p><b>Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF)</b></p> <p>As the Committee will be aware, supporting digital innovation is a key priority in the development of the spectrum of projects emerging through city and growth deals across Northern Ireland. The Digital Transformation Flexible Fund (DTFF) concept was initially developed in response to the low levels of innovation and digital transformation taking place across the region - particularly among the small business community. The DTFF aims to address the financial barrier that small businesses face when seeking to digitally transform by establishing a capital grant fund that will support investment in the types of capital equipment considered critical to their strategic digital transformation ambitions (e.g. hardware, software, bespoke system development).</p>
<b>3.2</b>	<p>To date, £6m of funding for this project has been ring-fenced through the NI City and Growth Deal Complementary Fund. The Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has committed a further £1.1m. Due to its ineligibility for the Complementary Fund, engagement is ongoing with the Derry City &amp; Strabane Growth Deal to secure an additional £450k to create a total capital grant fund of £7.5m.</p>

3.3	<p>Over the past six months, councils have participated in a robust process to develop the outline business case required to release this government funding. The business case has been informed by detailed and continuous engagement with a range of stakeholders including more than 40 businesses and organisations such as Digital Catapult Catalyst, Innovate UK, Intertrade Ireland and Invest NI. A review of best practice models - such as the Leeds City Region Digital Enterprise and the Scottish Digital Boost initiatives – has been used to supplement this work.</p>
3.4	<p>The preferred option for the delivery and management of the DTFF project is as summarised below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Business Eligibility:</b> micro and small businesses and social enterprises (up to 50 employees) across all sectors, with the exception of primary agriculture and fisheries<sup>1</sup>. Eligible businesses must be able to demonstrate at least one year's trading history;</li> <li>• <b>Grant funding levels:</b> will range from £5,000 - £20,000 with a grant subvention rate of 70% of total project costs;</li> <li>• <b>Eligible expenditure:</b> will be limited to the purchase of capital equipment and/or resources for software or bespoke system development. It will be aligned to advanced digital technologies<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• <b>Application Process:</b> Up to nine funding calls will be opened across the three year delivery period of this Fund. Pre application workshops will be held in local council areas in advance of calls to help stimulate demand. Businesses will be required to submit a digital transformation plan<sup>3</sup> to demonstrate the strategic fit and economic return of their proposed investment projects through a competitive application process. There is an imperative to progress the business case process at pace to ensure alignment with the Councils' Digital Surge programme<sup>4</sup> which is likely to lead to business plans that will require financial investment to which the DTFF is directly aligned to support. This current programme is due to end in March 2023 and it will be important to ensure that the DTFF is operational prior to the conclusion of this programme.</li> <li>• <b>Management of the Fund:</b> the project will be managed on a cross council basis through existing governance structures created through the existing Full Fibre NI Consortium, led by Newry, Mourne &amp; Down District Council. Whilst the centralised management structure will deliver economies of scale for managing the overall fund, its operation will be managed through cross council governance structures. Local Council Economic Development Teams will play a key supporting role to animate and promote the Fund, assess funding applications etc.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Due to state aid challenges and wider interventions provided to these sub-sectors

<sup>2</sup> Including; smart technologies (Internet of Things), process automation, big data and analytics, immersive technologies, artificial intelligence and blockchain technologies;

<sup>3</sup> Please note support to develop Digital Transformation Plans is currently available through Councils' Digital Surge Programme (led by Antrim & Newtownabbey Borough Council) equivalent plans are also provided through FE College intervention such as Innovate US.

<sup>4</sup> Digital Surge is a capability-building programme designed to support small businesses wishing to develop digital transformation plans,

3.5	<p>The Full Fibre Consortium is an existing partnership initially established to support digital infrastructure delivery across Northern Ireland with ability to deliver additional digitally focused interventions which require cross council partnership working. At present Belfast City Council are the only local authority not engaged through this consortium, this was principally due to the fact that the council had proceeded with their own digital infrastructure arrangements at the time when the consortium was formed. Recognising the opportunity now presented through DTFF it is recommended that Belfast City Council join this consortium to facilitate the delivery of this project, it should be noted that Legal Services have already reviewed partnership documents have confirmed that the DTFF project can be brought within the remit of this existing partnership and that mechanisms are in place for the Council to be added as a member.</p>
3.6	<p>In the delivery of this contract, the centralised project team based within Newry, Mourne &amp; Down District Council will undertake overall management of the project. The council's Economic Development Unit will support this activity and seek to maximise impact for local businesses by undertaking localised promotion, supporting the delivery of pre-application workshop sessions, participating on grant funding assessment panels and assisting businesses in receipt of funding to progress their onward innovation journey.</p>
	<p><u>Outcomes</u></p>
3.7	<p>Based upon an average grant rate, it is estimated that approximately 600 businesses will be supported over the three-year delivery timeframe of the project, delivering significant investment in local businesses across Northern Ireland, with an expected return of investment of £1: £2.24, with expected benefits expected to be principally focused upon increased employment levels and/or turnover levels for participating businesses.</p>
3.8	<p>As with wider city and growth deal funding, both the Complementary Fund and DAERA funding are limited to capital expenditure creating the need for additional revenue funding to manage delivery of the Fund. The estimated total revenue cost for the 11 council partners for the preferred delivery option is approximately £870k over the three year period. Members should be aware that in identifying the preferred delivery mechanism a range of options were explored including council led and procured delivery providers. The proposed council-led delivery model was identified to be the most cost effective, quickest to implement and benefited from a model of delivery where economies of scale could be achieved whilst retaining the ability to maintain localised engagement. The proportional cost allocation for each council have been informed by business population levels across Council areas. This is detailed within the attached <b>Appendix</b>. The revenue cost contribution for Belfast City Council across the three-year period will be £165,312. The council's contribution for this project has already been</p>



	accounted for within existing Belfast Region City Deal budgets so there is no additional financial ask.
3.9	Given the time pressures outlined above, councils are asked to commit revenue funding at risk, whilst the final stages of the business case approval process continue simultaneously in Autumn of this year. This will ensure sufficient resources are in place to support the business case process, as well as preparing for the delivery of the project including updating governance structures, development of detailed project plans and preparing funding processes to enable the project to mobilise quickly. Revenue funding will be required to support the project team required to deliver the project enabling vital pre-development work to be undertaken and ensuring the project can be mobilised in the January to March 2023 period, subject to a successful approval process.
3.10	<p>The approval process for the business case requires Invest NI approval initially prior to progressing through departmental approval mechanisms. In the development of the business case ongoing engagement has taken place with government departments and Invest NI to inform the development of the business case. Equally the staged approval process will mean that in advance of the November timeframe when revenue costs are expected to be incurred by Councils 'at risk' there is expected to be reasonable progress made through the business case approval journey.</p> <p><b>Belfast Stories</b></p>
3.11	Members will be aware that Belfast Stories, the Council's flagship BRCD project, is due to open in 2028. Several important milestones in relation to the project have been achieved including the acquisition of the site in October 2021 and the press launch of Belfast Stories in December 2021 following the signing of the Deal. Public consultation across the city is underway and includes a Members' workshop in October 2022, date to be confirmed.
3.12	The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agreed in November 2021 to progress a number of key pieces of work, in order to ensure we meet the 2028 anticipated opening date including the appointment of the integrated design team, the exhibition design team and the stories collection. Documentation is being finalised to procure these teams who should be confirmed Q1 2023. City Growth and Regeneration Committee received programme updates in February and December 2021 and in May 2022.
3.13	To deliver a project of this magnitude for the city and the region it was necessary to recruit a Project Director to lead the development and delivery of the project. Members agreed this

	<p>appointment in 2019 on a three year full-time fixed term contract, with the possibility of extension and / or permanency.</p>
3.14	<p>Now that the timescales for delivery of the project have been further established, the Committee is asked to approve the extension of the Project Director for 5 years in line with the proposed opening in 2028. This will be financed from existing BRCD resources.</p> <p><b>Belfast Digital Innovation Commissioner</b></p>
3.15	<p>The Committee is asked to note that the Belfast Digital Innovation Commissioner has resigned from post, as of September 2022. Partners will be consulted in the coming months in terms of the role and way forward in order to align with the Innovation and Digital Pillar requirements for the next phase of the Deal and Members will be updated as this progresses.</p> <p><b>Innovation City Belfast</b></p>
3.16	<p>Members previously agreed to contribute £50,000 to the overall programme budget for the development of the Belfast Innovation District proposition as part of the work of Innovation City Belfast in order to fund the necessary resources, staffing, and technical support required as part of a total ICB co-investment of £325,000.</p>
3.17	<p>Now that the partnership is established and is moving into the next phase, the Committee is asked to approve the contribution of £50,000 for the next phase. This will be financed from existing BRCD resources.</p> <p><b>BRCD Council Panel</b></p>
3.18	<p>The next meeting of the BRCD Council Panel will be hosted as a hybrid meeting by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council on 28th September 2022. In addition to considering a detailed programme update, the Panel will receive a presentation on the i4C innovation hub that will be located at the St Patrick's Barracks Regeneration site in Ballymena and on the work that is being undertaken to ensure that social value criteria are being integrated into future BRCD procurements and that social value benefits are then realised.</p>
3.19	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>All costs associated with the BRCD are within existing budgets.</p>
3.20	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>Equality and Rural Needs Assessment screening has been undertaken for the DTFF project. The project has been designed to support inclusion by targeting smaller businesses who face</p>

	barriers to engagement in digital transformation, the fund will also actively target businesses in rural areas in line with DAERA funding requirements.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Document Attached</b>
	DTFF Revenue Cost Summary

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**Appendix**

		FY 2022 -2023	FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025	FY 2025-2026	Totals
Antrim & Newtownabbey	6%	6,576	18,499	20,299	6,830	<b>52,204</b>
Ards & North Down	7%	7,672	21,582	23,682	7,969	<b>60,904</b>
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon	11%	12,056	33,914	37,214	12,522	<b>95,707</b>
Belfast	19%	20,825	58,579	64,279	21,629	<b>165,312</b>
Causeway Coast & Glens	7%	7,672	21,582	23,682	7,969	<b>60,904</b>
Derry City & Strabane	7%	7,672	21,582	23,682	7,969	<b>60,904</b>
Fermanagh & Omagh	8%	8,768	24,665	27,065	9,107	<b>69,605</b>
Fishburn & Castlereagh	8%	8,768	24,665	27,065	9,107	<b>69,605</b>
Mid & East Antrim	6%	6,576	18,499	20,299	6,830	<b>52,204</b>
Mid Ulster	10%	10,960	30,831	33,831	11,384	<b>87,006</b>
Newry, Mourne & Down	11%	12,056	33,914	37,214	12,522	<b>95,707</b>
<b>Totals</b>		<b>109,603</b>	<b>308,311</b>	<b>338,311</b>	<b>113,838</b>	<b>870,064</b>

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Age Friendly Belfast Draft Plan 2022/2026 - Public Consultation</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Siobhan Toland, Director City Services David Sales, Neighbourhood Services Manager
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kelly Gilliland, Neighbourhood Manager Margaret Higgins, Lead Officer, Community Provision

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	To update the Committee on the Age Friendly Belfast Draft Plan 2022-2026 and agree the Age Friendly Belfast Draft Plan to go to public consultation.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve the Age Friendly Belfast Draft Plan 2022-2026 for public consultation in Autumn 2022.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<u>Key Issues</u>
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	In 2012, the Council's All-Party Reference Group on Older People provided the initial leadership to explore Belfast becoming an Age Friendly City, and in May 2012, the Lord

	Mayor signed a declaration committing Belfast to this process. HASP coordinated delivery of two Age Friendly Belfast Plans in 2014-2017 and 2018-2021.
3.2	The Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP) coordinates the work of many organisations and agencies working with and for older people. HASP manages the development and implementation of the city's Age Friendly Plans on behalf of Belfast City Council and the wider Community Planning Partnership.
3.3	The draft plan is attached in Appendix 1, this will be issued for consultation in the Autumn as part of October Positive Ageing Month, with a launch in December 2022/January 2023 and submission to WHO. An accessible version of the final plan will also be made available.
	<u>Age Friendly Draft Plan 2022-2026</u>
3.4	The plan will retain the vision <i>A city where older people live life to the full.</i>
3.5	<p>Consultation has identified the following 4 strategic themes and associated actions;</p> <p><b>1. Infrastructure/Getting out and about</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a joined-up approach to engagement and co-design with older people on local and city centre developments, led by Greater Belfast Seniors Forum, the Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC) and the Department for Infrastructure</li> <li>• Develop age friendly design principles, which can be used to inform new infrastructure developments, led by Age Friendly Network NI and Belfast City Council</li> <li>• Review and improve access to seating and toilets, led by Belfast City Council, Department for Communities and Department for Infrastructure</li> <li>• Raise awareness and provide training for bus drivers on the needs of older people using their services, led by Age Partnership Belfast</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Social Connections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support recovery of groups/programmes with older people led by Age Partnership Belfast, Belfast City Council and voluntary and community sector partners</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate an Age Friendly Belfast annual programme of events/activities, led by BCC Age Friendly Co-ordinator, supported by a range of city partners</li> <li>• Develop local connection hubs and a city centre hub where older people can meet each other and access information, led by Greater Belfast Seniors Forum</li> <li>• Develop dementia carers cafes in all 4 dementia friendly neighbourhoods, led by Dementia Friendly Neighbourhood groups and supported by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust</li> <li>• Develop a recruitment drive to encourage older people to re-engage in volunteering, and to recruit new volunteers. Promote initiatives to manage and support older people's participation in volunteering, led by Volunteer Now</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Greater Belfast Seniors forum to link with GP representatives and multi-disciplinary teams to ensure that the voice of older people is heard in discussions on access to services led by Age Partnership Belfast</li> <li>• Support 600-800 older people (most in need) to improve their mobility levels and to feel more connected and less lonely, led by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, supported by BHDU. (This is the older people's priority for the refreshed Belfast Agenda)</li> <li>• Promote key messages and connect older people's programmes that seek to increase their strength and mobility, including fall prevention, led by Age NI and Public Health Agency</li> <li>• Involve Older people in the development of the 'Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing' approach, led by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust</li> </ul> <p><b>4. Financial Security/Cost of Living</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with older people to provide information and support on financial security in a way that is easy to understand and navigate.</li> <li>• Review and support the wider policy level work on food and fuel poverty</li> </ul>
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3.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer access to employment support and employment for those aged 50+, led by Belfast City Council Employability and Skills Team/Belfast Labour Market Partnership</li> <li>• Promote and support the Age at Work approach to recruit, retain and retrain workers aged 50+, led by Business in the Community.</li> </ul> <p>The plan is written in the context of recovery from Covid-19 and it includes some lessons learned from the Covid-19 response, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Covid-19 response demonstrated at scale and pace, a whole-system approach to supporting vulnerable populations. The response tested new approaches to joint working across sectors at both the strategic / policy setting level and the operational / neighbourhood level. Whilst the scale and urgent timing of response is different, lessons from this joint working are needed to help the most vulnerable citizens in Belfast on an ongoing basis and particularly in the context of the cost-of-living crisis.</li> <li>• Neighbourliness thrived during Covid-19 with many local services identifying and supporting older residents to a much greater extent than prior to the pandemic. Older people value the services and amenities in their local areas, they mostly feel safe there and they are often able to access all the goods and services they require. This desire to use local provision should inform how service providers engage and provide services for older people.</li> <li>• During Covid-19 new approaches to befriending and connecting people developed and learning from these approaches have been shared through Age Friendly Belfast partners.</li> <li>• Living with Covid-19 restrictions showed the resilience and adaptability of older people's groups. This included increased use of technology and moving to using outdoor spaces for meetings and events. The various methods of engaging should be considered when developing future services and programmes.</li> <li>• Loneliness has always been a key concern for, and about, older people in the city, and this was exacerbated by Covid-19. This has placed a focus on mental health and wellbeing which should continue to be a priority.</li> </ul>
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	<p><u>Links to the Belfast Agenda</u></p>
3.7	<p>The new plan will operate over 4 years to align with Belfast Agenda, which includes 'Older People' as one of its cross-cutting themes.</p>
3.8	<p>The draft Belfast Agenda Review has potential to support the Age Friendly Belfast plan through some of the following priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connectivity, Sustainability and Active Travel - improve cycle and walking lanes and improve use of sustainable transport</li> <li>• Housing led Regeneration - increase affordable housing supply</li> <li>• Health Inequalities - promote, improve, and support mental health and emotional wellbeing, and increase levels of physical activity and reduce obesity</li> <li>• Future City Centre - facilitate a clean, green, safe, vibrant, and inclusive city centre</li> <li>• Inclusive Growth - better understand issues/drivers of those in poverty and develop action plans to address issues</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p>
3.9	<p>There is a small budget from Belfast City Council and Belfast Health and Social Care Trust to deliver actions in the Age Friendly Plan. Funding has also been secured through Public Health Agency (PHA) to appoint an Age Friendly Co-ordinator until March 2025 in line with the other council areas and this officer will co-ordinate delivery of the plan.</p>
3.10	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>None – EQIAs and RAIAs have been completed</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Document Attached</b>
	Age Friendly Belfast Draft Plan 2022-2026

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# Age Friendly Belfast Plan

2022 - 2026

A city where older people live life to the full

<https://yoursay.belfastcity.gov.uk>





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## Forewords

### *Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Tina Black*

I am delighted as Lord Mayor of Belfast to introduce our third Age Friendly Belfast Plan. We committed to our civic leadership in being the first city in Northern Ireland to sign up to the World Health Organization's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

Our statutory, community and voluntary partners have been essential in this ongoing commitment. In particular, we benefit from the leadership of the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership who coordinate our Age Friendly Belfast Plan on behalf of Belfast Community Planning Partnership.

Ensuring an Age Friendly Belfast is a key workstream in Belfast's community plan, the Belfast Agenda. We want to ensure that the needs of older people are taken into account during service development and to help maximise the benefits of older people's experience.

Older people are at the heart of what we do. We could not fulfil our vision of Belfast being a city where older people live life to the full without the input, support and challenge provided by Greater Belfast Seniors Forum, the six local older people's forums and the many groups they represent.

We know that the pandemic has provided a number of key challenges, particularly for older people, however city-wide and community-based collaboration thrived during Covid-19. Older people were at the heart of this collaboration, both as volunteers and recipients of support. We will build on this partnership approach in tackling the challenges that older people have said are important to them.



### ***Chair, Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership, Ciara McClements***

Like many cities around the world Belfast's population is ageing and we need to adapt our services and structures to support the health and wellbeing of our



older people. We currently have a slightly smaller older population than the NI average, one fifth of our population is aged 60+; two in every 10 people.

There are variations across our city- East Belfast and North Belfast have a higher percentage of older people, but the percentage of older people in West Belfast is increasing. Between 2013-2015 and 2017-2019, there has been an increase in life expectancy at age 65 years for both men and women in Belfast, although the increase was only slight in women. In the same period life expectancy at age 65 years for both men and women in Belfast's most deprived areas were lower than for Belfast local government district (LGD).

The Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP) has been working collaboratively for the past 10 years to ensure Belfast is an Age Friendly City. In the development of our third age friendly plan we have been working with older people and our partners to evaluate our previous action plan. Through a series of engagement sessions with older people, we now know that most older people feel it is easy to 'get out and about' in Belfast with 74% of them now using public transport, however it is evident there are still some barriers .

Loneliness continues to be an issue for older people with friendships and participation in group activities being greatly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Older people have also told us that they are taking part in less physical activity and sitting down more than usual. Therefore, over the next four years, partners will be focusing on four thematic areas.

#### **1. Infrastructure**

We want infrastructure developments in Belfast to be designed in consultation with older people using agreed age friendly principles, ensuring that amenities are more accessible.

#### **2. Social inclusion, promoting connections**

We want older people to be more connected and involved through programmes, places and services.

#### **3. Health and wellbeing**

We want older people to be active partners in the design and delivery of health and social care services. We also want to support older people to live more active and socially connected lives.

#### **4. Financial stability**

We want improved access to financial support for older people to equip them to deal with the increased cost of living. We also want older people to have access to employment, support when in employment and information on planning for their retirement.

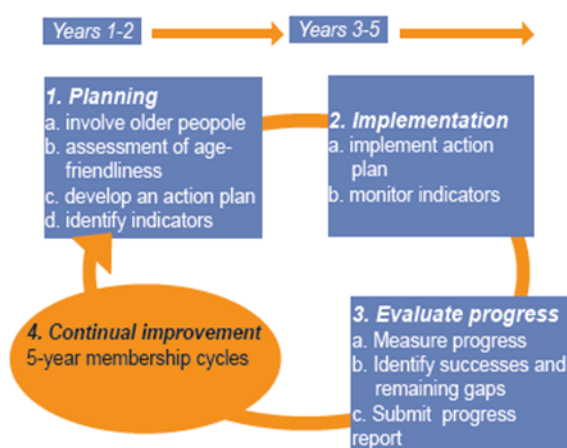
I look forward to building on the previous achievements of HASP, working collaboratively with older people and all partners to deliver on the key actions within this plan to ensure that Belfast remains an Age Friendly City ensuring that older citizens feel heard, included and supported.

# Context

## Age-friendly Cities and communities

The WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities was established in 2010 to connect cities, communities and organizations worldwide, with the common vision of making their community a great place to grow old in. The Global Network currently includes over 1333 cities in 47 countries, covering 298 million people worldwide.

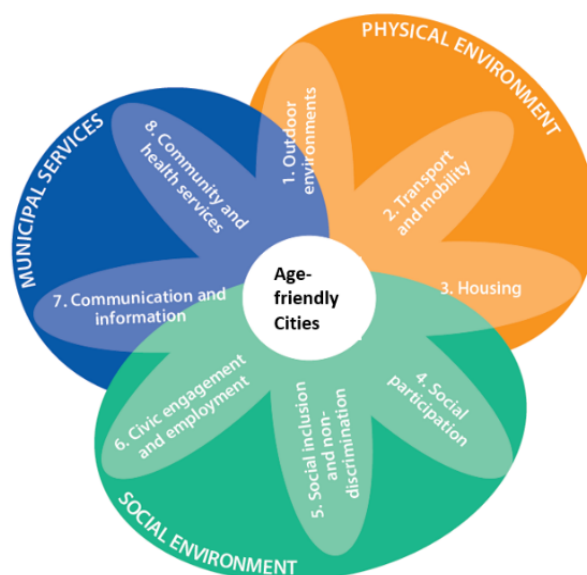
**Cycle of WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities®**



### An Age-friendly City must:

1. Establish mechanisms to involve older people throughout the age friendly process,
2. Develop a baseline assessment of the age friendliness of the city under eight domains,
3. Develop a 3-year city-wide action plan, and
4. Identify measurements to monitor progress against this plan.

The eight domains of age friendly cover all the aspects of community life that need to be considered to support citizens to age well. They can be summarised as actions to improve the physical environment, social environment, and delivery of key services. The pace of improvements and key themes in action plans are determined by what is needed in each city.



## Age Friendly Belfast

In 2012, Belfast City Council provided the initial leadership to explore Belfast becoming an Age Friendly City, and in May 2012, the Lord Mayor signed a declaration committing Belfast to this process by joining the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

The Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP) coordinates the work of many organisations and agencies working with, and for, older people in Belfast. HASP manages the development and implementation of the city's Age Friendly Plan on behalf of Belfast

City Council and the wider Community Planning Partnership.

In 2014, Belfast produced the first Age Friendly Belfast Plan and developed a second action plan for 2018-2021. In early 2022 we commenced the process of review and development of our third plan.

## Age Friendly Connections

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Belfast benefits from regional, UK-wide, and European connections to support our age friendly work.

The Age Friendly Network NI was launched in 2019 with the aim of promoting the age friendly ethos and supporting practitioners in the 11 local councils across Northern Ireland to advance age friendly planning and practices. All 11 councils are committed to this process and we are supported by Age NI, the Department for Communities and the Public Health Agency.

Belfast is also part of the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities, which is a growing movement with over 50 member places across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Learning through case studies, peer meetings and conferences enhances our efforts to become more age friendly.

Belfast also participates in the Healthy Ageing Task Group, which is part of the WHO European Healthy Cities network. This task group provides leadership, coordination and sharing of good practice on healthy ageing.

## Strategic Connections

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The Belfast Agenda, the city's first community plan, was created by Belfast City Council in partnership with its community planning partner organisations and published in

November 2017. The Belfast Agenda will continue to enhance and support ongoing implementation of the Age Friendly Belfast Plan.

A formal review and update of the Belfast Agenda has taken place and older people have been identified as a cross-cutting theme. This means that the needs of older people are considered when identifying action plans across a range of priorities for the city.

A strategic intent for older people has also been identified for the refreshed Belfast Agenda over the next 4 years 2022-2026:

**To support our older people to live healthy and socially connected lives, with a focus on those most in need.**

Department for Communities' Active Ageing Strategy 2016–2022 is also a key strategic context for this plan.

**"Our vision is one of Northern Ireland being an age friendly region in which people, as they grow older, are valued and supported to live actively to their fullest potential; with their rights respected and their dignity protected."**

This strategy aims to increase understanding of the issues affecting older people and promote and emphasise their rights, value and contribution.

The Department for Communities has begun the process of co-designing a new Active Ageing Strategy.

The Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government (PfG) provides the overall strategic context the Active Ageing Strategy. The Executive is committed to producing a long-term strategic programme for government and consulted on a draft Outcomes Framework in 2021. Appendix 1 outlines the connections between the proposed outcomes for the Age Friendly Belfast plan, the Belfast Agenda and the draft PfG Outcomes.

## Age Friendly Belfast Baseline Report

<https://www.makinglifebettertogether.com/age-friendly/>

The following word cloud summarizes what older people say is being done already to make a real difference in their lives.

**City** - structural and social developments in Belfast over recent years have generated feelings of pride in the city for older people, with some older people keen to get back into Belfast City Centre to meet up with others and enjoy new experiences.





## ***Listening to and co-designing with older people***

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Throughout the consultation period, it was apparent that the older people who engaged with this process want their needs to be respected and their opinions taken into account as the city develops. This is partly about the need to consult and engage in the first instance, but it is also about ensuring that views are listened to and acted upon.

We know that there is a balance to be struck between overwhelming people with information and also ensuring that they have the right information at the right time. The older people's forums and Greater Belfast Seniors Forum are excellent at meeting this need. However, there are groups which are not connected with the forums, and people who are not members of groups, so the challenge is to make sure that relevant information reaches them.

### ***Accessibility and inclusion***

We need to address additional barriers faced by older people who are:

- Are digitally excluded – don't have digital skills and / or internet connectivity
- Caring or providing support to spouses/family members,
- Coming from black and minority ethnic/asylum seeker backgrounds
- Experiencing language barriers,
- Living with dementia,
- Living on a low/fixed income
- Living with a long-term illness,
- Living with mobility issues,
- Living with a physical disability,
- Living with a sensory impairment, and
- Members of the LGBT+ community.



# Key Strategic Themes

A set of key strategic themes for Age-friendly Belfast 2022-2026 were identified through review and consultation. The following four themes are very similar to the 2018-2021 plan and this reflects the ongoing nature of these themes and also the impact of Covid-19 on older people.

- Infrastructure- helping people to get out and about,

- Social inclusion- promoting social connections,
- Health and wellbeing- promoting opportunities to be healthy, active and included and;
- Financial security- supporting people to manage the increasing costs of living.

## *Infrastructure, supporting people to get out and about*

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### *What we did*

Our partners have worked together to support and influence older people's use of public transport. It is the main mode of transport for many older people and the 60+ SmartPass and Senior (65+) SmartPass is viewed by older people as an invaluable support in enabling them to get out and about around the city and beyond.

A representative from Greater Belfast Seniors Forum is a member of the Translink Accessibility Working Group. Through this group older people (and disabled people) have provided input into the design of the Translink website, review of the Access Guide and future bus design.

Work has taken place to assess and influence the walkability of local areas as well as the city centre. With people spending more time in their local neighbourhoods during Covid-19, the walkability of local areas has been even more important. Seats have been added to sections of the Comber Greenway and the walkability tool now includes dementia friendly assessment.

Other achievements for older people included:

- The needs of older residents being proactively considered in key developments, including Connswater Greenway, Springfield Dam, Phase I of Belfast Rapid Transport (Glider),
- 20 Belfast City Council Parks have gained Green Flag status, including Roselawn cemetery. There has been increased use of parks by older people through age friendly walks, hosting of events and using community outreach to target older people's groups and networks,
- Work undertaken by the Department for Infrastructure and Belfast City Council to produce guidance and regulate the licensing of pavement cafes to ensure they are sensitive to the needs of street users, including those with mobility issues,
- A new road safety campaign 'Think Before You Park', aimed at highlighting the dangers associated with inconsiderate pavement parking, alongside a public consultation on pavement parking to help determine the need for more effective legislation
- Launch of the first Older Peoples Housing Strategy 2021/22-2025/26 by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, which includes an important theme of 'Planning for the Future'.

## Good Practice Case Study:

### Older People Involvement in Glider Design



Launched on 3 September 2018, the Glider is a modern, safe, efficient, and accessible public transport service which promotes increased use of public transport.

A collaborative approach to the development of this service, which directly involved older people from Belfast, meant they had the opportunity to influence the project at every stage. Older people participated in vehicle and stop design, shaped ticketing and passenger information, and influenced bespoke training for Glider Staff. Their feedback helped ensure changes to kerb heights, shelter and seating provision, audio-visual passenger information, ticketing facilities, and that colour contrasting was considered.

In particular, the training for Glider staff, which included interaction between older people and people with a disability, gave transport staff a unique opportunity to better understand their transport needs.

Engaging with and listening to people at the development and design stages of any project achieves buy in and helps ensure a project where the focus is on the customer.

Translink estimate that this approach contributed to the 25 per cent increase in public transport usage by older people and people with disabilities in 2018 compared to 2017.

## Good Practice Case Study:

### Walkability Assessments



By focusing on the needs of older people with various levels of mobility, it provides a built environment suitable for people using mobility aids, wheelchairs and with prams. The Walkability Assessment for Healthy Ageing (WAHA) tool was designed by Belfast Healthy Cities for use by older people and organisations to evaluate the age friendliness of the built environment on local streets and in parks. Walk assessments were conducted in neighbourhoods across Belfast to explore older people's perceptions of walkability across the city. The tool is designed to identify key elements in the built environment that affect older people's ability to be mobile and active, based on the WHO Checklist of Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities.

The aim of the project was to engage with older people in Belfast to support them to assess the built environment in their local area using the WAHA tool. A pilot was undertaken focusing on short, guided walks on routes familiar to walk participants, while gathering their views. The results of the pilot highlighted consistent provision of maintained pavements and dropped kerbs, sufficient public seating, good street lighting and pedestrian crossings in appropriate locations as key positive aspects that support older people to remain active in their local neighbourhood. Key barriers identified focused on maintenance of pavements, seating, and dog fouling. The project also highlighted the importance of the personal safety of older people.

The evidence collected through this pilot, and from any future assessments, is used to inform policy consultations and public realm projects to ensure the needs of older people are considered. It will also help to ensure that the city centre and neighbourhoods consider the needs of an ageing population in their designs going forward.



## Learning from elsewhere

### Take a Seat campaign, Manchester (UK)

A low-cost initiative aiming to raise awareness about how older people may struggle to get out and about because there is not enough seating available in shops and other public spaces. By applying a We are Age Friendly sticker in their window, participating shops can let older people know they will be made welcome and offered a chair if they need to rest. The project, which was inspired by a similar initiative conducted in New York, was initially set in motion by Southway Housing Trust, a charitable housing association in south Manchester and is now being rolled out across the Greater Manchester region.

### The Age Friendly Design Group (Manchester)

The Age Friendly Design Group is made up of retired architects, planners, design students and urban designers. They meet every eight weeks. Their objectives are to:

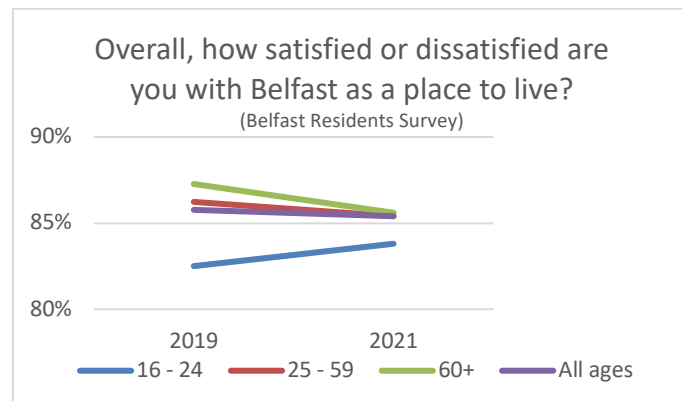
- Develop definitions of age friendly design,
- Develop a set of age friendly design guidelines for our city that will evolve over time,
- Test and hone these guidelines through a number of demonstrator projects,
- Learn and understand how age friendly design can work in practical application,
- Generate interest and ownership from a range of partners in age friendly design work,
- Present and promote reasons for age friendly design principles and criteria, and
- Influence how the city is currently designed so it is more age friendly in the future.

To date, the Manchester Age Friendly Design group has led the age friendly development of local parks, worked with older people and housing trusts to develop and implement age friendly home design projects, and participated in research to inform a practical Age Friendly Design Reference.

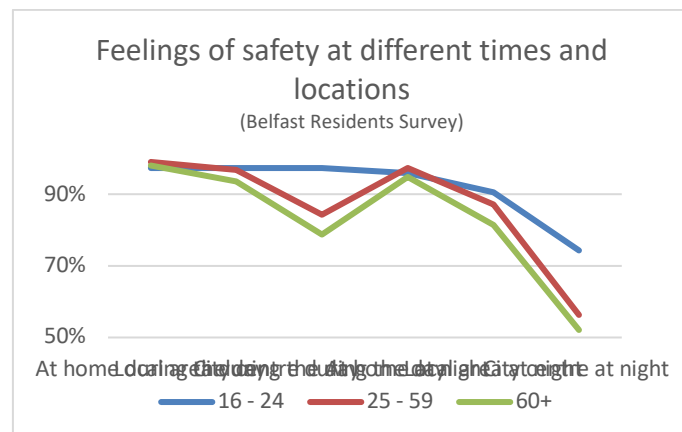
### Where we are now

In 2021, 85.4 per cent of residents aged 60 and over were satisfied with Belfast as a place

to live<sup>i</sup>. This was a slight reduction on 87.3 per cent in 2019. Nine out of 10 Belfast-based respondents (90.4 per cent) reported they were very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their “area” as a place to live<sup>ii</sup>. This is slightly less than across the whole of NI, where 95.3 per cent of respondents were very or fairly satisfied.



Older people are less likely to feel safe than other age groups. This is particularly noticeable when asked about feeling safe in the city centre both during the day and in the evening<sup>iii</sup>.



### What is needed

#### Who is most vulnerable/excluded?

Getting out and about in Belfast remains problematic for older people with mobility issues in particular.

### Access to amenities

Difficulty accessing amenities, and in particular toilets and seating in parks, public spaces and in the city centre, can be a barrier



to older generations choosing to spend time out and about. The removal of some seating due to COVID-19 and related safety measures has exacerbated what was already a challenge for older people. Similarly, we have heard that older people find there is less access to public toilets. As we emerge from restrictions, and more people are going out and about in their neighbourhoods and the city, these issues need to be re-examined.

The development and provision of new physical assets, parks and green spaces and recreation areas, need to take into account the needs of whole population. If we want to encourage older people to use more facilities, their needs must be considered in the design and development of these assets. Age friendly/dementia friendly design principles can be promoted, and these could be approached through an intergenerational lens which allows opportunities for older and younger people to meet and use the same spaces.

### **Public transport**

Prior to the pandemic, Age Friendly Belfast partners were working with Translink and local taxi firms to raise awareness with drivers on some of the challenges that older passengers might face. Older people have told us that whilst they are broadly happy with transport services, they still have concerns about the accessibility of buses, about using mobility aids on public transport and on having enough time to be safely seated before the bus moves off.

### **What partners have committed to do**

1. Develop a joined-up approach to engagement and co-design with older people on local and city centre developments.
2. Develop age friendly design principles, which can be used to inform new infrastructure developments.
3. Work to review and improve access to seating and toilets:

- reviewing provision of seating and toilets in parks and open spaces in Belfast and identify gaps (including provision of radar keys).
  - carry out an audit of current public toilet usage and identify any barriers to use.
  - exploring 'take a seat' pilots in several areas.
  - providing age friendly input into the development of parklets.
4. Revisit work to raise awareness and provide training for bus drivers on the needs of older people using their services.

### **Key programmes that are contributing to the Age Friendly Belfast Plan:**

- Work with Belfast City Council, the Department for Communities, and the Department for Infrastructure to co-design structural developments for the city, for example Belfast Street Ahead Phases 3 and 5, the Five Cs Public Realm Project and Belfast; A Bolder Vision
- Structural developments through the Belfast Region City Deal, for example Belfast Stories
- Belfast City Council's Disability Action Plan, including actions to engage with city stakeholders to put in place mechanisms to encourage businesses to support accessibility for disabled people and reviewing the temporary pavement café licensing scheme
- Belfast City Council Park Improvement Plans 2023-2025 (in support of the Belfast Open Space Strategy)
- Development of a Road Safety Strategy
- Sustrans work on sharing of paths and the One Path Initiative
- Developments through the Making Belfast an Active City – Belfast Cycling Network 2021
- Work with Translink on initiatives to encourage older people back on to public transport
- Consultation and involvement by older people in Belfast Rapid Transport Phase 2 and Belfast Central Transport hub

## ***Social inclusion, promoting social connections***

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### **What we did**

Belfast has developed a wide range of services which can support older people who may be on their own or isolated. Good morning calls and befriending services have provided a supportive voice or person, and community connectors provide support to engage more widely. During Covid-19 new approaches to befriending and connecting people developed and learning from these approaches has been shared through Age Friendly Belfast partners.

Belfast City Council, Engage with Age, Volunteer Now, older group leaders and a range of community and voluntary sector groups provide engaging and fun activities for older people to take part in. The yearly October Positive Ageing Month programme and regular age friendly events draw in new people who can then go on to be regular participants in cultural, leisure, community and lifelong learning programmes.

### **“it’s nice to go to bed knowing you have somewhere to go”**

The establishment of four Dementia friendly neighbourhood groups covering north, south, east and west Belfast has been a significant achievement. Covid-19 presented many challenges for this work, but concerted efforts by these neighbourhood groups and the Alzheimer’s Society led to online dementia friendly training from March 2020, creating over 120 dementia friends across Belfast and the development on virtual interactive training through Dementia Friendly East Belfast. Regular dementia friendly church services have also been established.

Other achievements for older people have included:

- The resilience and adaptability of older people’s groups and networks. Some connected online by using Zoom for meetings and others have set up informal check-in with member
- Belfast City Council’s Reuse IT and Get IT initiatives supporting older people to get online
- Work by Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Housing Associations to support work on digital inclusion and dementia friendly living for their tenants
- Development of Take 5 for emotional wellbeing senior champions and roll out of Take 5 sessions in local older people ‘s forums
- Completion of research to establish the need and recommended methods of training for staff and volunteers on loneliness and isolation
- The recruitment of new volunteers during Covid-19 and work through local communities to link with isolated older people



## Good Practice Case Study:

### Hug in a Box

As part of a campaign to connect with those struggling with isolation, loneliness, and lack of support, Dementia Friendly East Belfast delivered bespoke boxes containing dementia related activities, puzzles, crafts, and gifts to people living with dementia in East Belfast. Over 100 boxes were hand delivered to either the person living with dementia or their carers doorstep.

Working closely with the Dementia Navigator service in Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, they were able to reach out to people whose face-to-face supports had been reduced due to closure or suspension of services during the pandemic. The Hug in a Box scheme meant these people felt supported while remaining in their own homes.

This simple, yet highly effective project which began in East Belfast was replicated across the city. The content of boxes evolved based on feedback from recipients to ensure their needs and interests were met. Face-to-face delivery was a vital element of this initiative, as it was such an important source of support for carers and those living with dementia.

**A lady who is living with dementia commented on how she had not played dominoes for years and was so looking forward to sitting down with her husband and daughter to play a game that evening.**



## Good Practice Case Study:

### Cliftonville Men's Shed

Cliftonville Men's Shed is supported by North Belfast Senior Citizens Forum. The Shed, which was set up in 2018 with land leased from the Housing Executive at the Peace Wall in Manor St, is for older men aged 50, though most members are over 60. Between 10 and 20 men regularly attend the shed, some of whom have long term disabilities or debilitating illnesses, and some who are experiencing isolation or other challenges to their health and wellbeing.

For many of its members, the shed acts as an anchor, a place where they 'can do' and where they can share their skills, learn from others and avail of opportunities to participate in new activities.

The activities at the shed are guided by the interests of the men involved. Two members have trained as beekeepers and now tend to the 3 hives at the Shed. Some men carry out joinery work and have made 'Buddy Benches' for local primary schools. There is also a polytunnel and raised beds where members grow vegetables and herbs.

Most work with older people has been with women for a variety of reasons, and historically it has been difficult to engage men in programmes. The shed has proven an ideal way to provide connections and information about other services to men who would not normally have links with community and voluntary sector groups and to encourage them to participate. Involving men in their local communities through the men's shed is a step forward for an age friendly Belfast and a model which can be built upon to increase their participation.

## Good Practice Case Study:

### Engage with Age - the PAL Project

Every year Engage with Age receives in excess of 200 referrals for people who are experiencing loneliness or isolation. The PAL Project (People Addressing Loneliness) sets up sustainable activity groups for older people experiencing loneliness to ensure that when the funding ends the activity continues.

A range of groups were formed including Games Groups, Walking Groups, Social Groups, Book Groups, Dance Groups and more. Many of these groups survived the impact of Covid-19 and the pandemic lockdowns. Through these groups, older people who have experienced loneliness meet every week. A survey of over 170 participants showed that 86% said the groups improved their wellbeing, 73% said their circle of friends had increased because of the activity, and 61% said they were routinely in contact with more people every week. Participants said that:

*“Loneliness is a very dark place... and it was like [the project] opened the blinds and the light came in.”*

*“you go to somewhere that you’ve never been before, and it’s a strange place, and you meet all of these people and you don’t know them... the door opened, and it was like another world, a brilliant world to live in...”*

The project is led by older people, with support and guidance from Engage with Age. Group leaders make sure older people have ownership of their groups and decide the activities they want. They also discuss how loneliness feels and are encouraged to give new members a very warm welcome, so that everyone feels valued.

We have learned that:

- there is a lot of trial and error and ‘positive failure’ in forming groups

- if the welcome for new participants isn’t right then the person may not come back, so setting that culture is a priority
- longevity of support at the start is important to grow a sense of routine and permanence within the group

## Good Practice Case Study:

### Supporting People, Northern Ireland Housing Executive Digital Inclusion Project

Supporting People had previously provided funding for Amazon Dots which can play music, play quizzes, tell jokes, give weather reports to name only a few functions. The provider was able to evaluate the project after the devices had been in place for 6 months and noted:

- an increase in the amount of time residents spend together
- an increase in satisfaction levels from residents who can access Amazon Dots independently
- an increase the amount of time the support staff have available to provide other areas of housing support.

They decided to purchase Amazon Echo Show devices, which allow an additional video call facility. This enabled residents to make video calls to family and friends without the need for assistance from staff or other residents. Due to Covid-19 many residents were still cautious about going out and visiting in some schemes can still be restricted. Video calling enables residents to keep in touch with friends and family in a more tangible way than phone calls alone.

The Echo devices will be situated in the communal areas where the residents gather together to eat and socialise. Residents will be able to use the Echo devices to enhance social activities such as quizzes and creates an atmosphere that encourages everyone to take part. Use of the Echo devices will be evaluated after 6 months of use.

## Learning from elsewhere

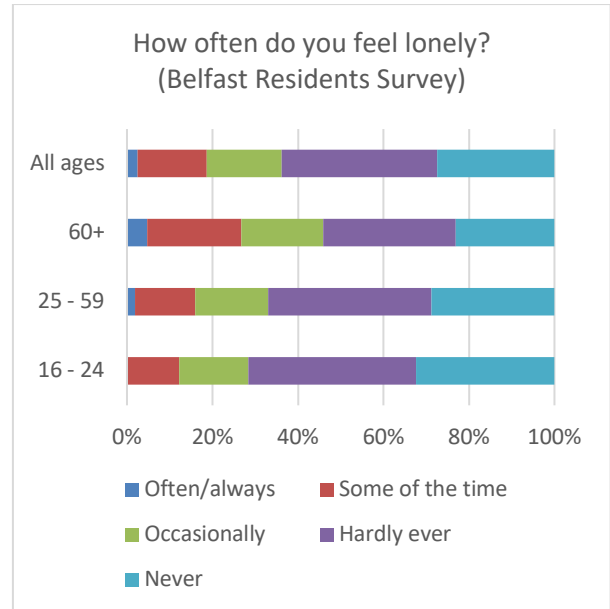
### Rock Through the Ages (Folkstone) – a musical get-together for all ages

Rock Through the Ages is a social participation initiative based on the PhD research of Dr Julia Jones, the CEO of Found in Music. Its primary aim is to harness the popular music taste of several generations and to facilitate events that encourage intergenerational social participation. These events were first run in Folkstone in 2011 – 2014 as part a piece of PhD research. The results clearly showed how pop and rock music themes could connect several age groups because the genre is now over 60 years old. Several generations have grown up with rock and pop music and can share an enjoyment of it.

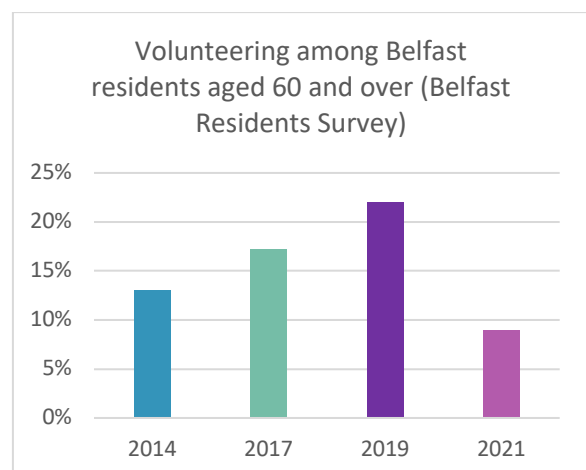
### Case Study: La Maison des seniors [Seniors House] (Dijon, France)

Launched in 2013, La Maison des Seniors (Seniors House) is a space dedicated to welcoming, informing, and helping anyone in need of support with an ageing-related issue. It aims to be a key resource for all the community, including older people, their families, and professionals. Residents of Dijon can stop by in person or phone to ask questions, meet with a professional, learn more about the city's services or take part in various cultural and leisure activities. The building also provides a physical place for people involved in the age friendly movement to meet and exchange information.

## Where we are now



People aged 60 and over were more likely to feel lonely often always and sometimes (26.8 per cent) and occasionally (19.1 per cent) than the general Belfast population (18.7 per cent and 17.6 per cent respectively)<sup>iv</sup>.



- Volunteering was rising steadily among people aged 60 and over until 2021 when it fell to 8.9 per cent. Those aged 60 and over experienced the sharpest drop in volunteering between 2019 and 2021 with

5.2 per cent reporting they had to stop or limit their activity<sup>v</sup> during Covid-19. Whilst this is understandable in terms of people reducing their risk of infection, efforts to support older people to return to, or take up, volunteering are important

- Alcohol-related admissions to hospital is greater for men compared to women in both West and North Belfast. This could be a factor in reducing loneliness in men and developing healthy coping mechanisms.

### **What is needed**

#### **Who is most vulnerable/excluded?**

People can be more vulnerable to loneliness or isolation when they live alone or have mobility problems/are housebound. People who experience additional barriers such as addiction, mental health challenges, language barriers or disability will all find it more challenging to form social connections.

*“poverty increases isolation – people think they can’t afford to go out”*

### **Loneliness**

Loneliness has always been a key concern for, and about, older people in the city, and this concern has been exacerbated by Covid-19. There is a need to rebuild confidence so that older people feel that it is safe for them to re-establish connections with people outside of their own homes. This might mean ensuring there is support for smaller local organisations for people to re-engage initially in smaller and more controlled groups before they have the confidence to be part of larger groups or events.

There is a strong lobby for hubs for seniors where they can access information, refreshments, stay warm and a safe comfortable place to rest. Advocates for such a space believe it will have broader appeal than organised groups as it will offer a

commitment-free opportunity to meet others or ask for advice/support.

### **Communication and information**

We have heard that people still rely on word of mouth to find out about the opportunities available to them. While the amount of information and support available has increased and is shared through different channels, we still need to reach out to engage new people to make people aware of what is happening for them in their area and the city.

*“good programmes for those that know about them and can get out”*

#### **What partners have committed to do**

1. Work together to support the recovery of groups and programmes with older people.
2. Coordinate an Age Friendly Belfast annual programme of activities.
3. Develop local connection hubs and a city centre hub where older people can drop in and access information.
4. Develop dementia carers cafes in all four dementia friendly neighbourhoods.
5. A recruitment drive to encourage older people to re-engage in volunteering, and to recruit new volunteers. Promotion of initiatives to manage and support older people’s participation in volunteering.
6. Celebrate older volunteers through a yearly older volunteer awards programme.



### ***Programmes that are contributing to the Age Friendly Belfast Plan:***

- A range of age organisations, community and voluntary sectors groups to connect older people, for example Good Morning schemes, CLARE CIC, Healthy Living Centres, Red Cross Community Connector Service and Volunteer Now Men's Volunteering Challenges
- Belfast City Council's community facilities, programming activity and grant funding
- A range of digital inclusion programmes through Belfast City Council, Department for Communities, Libraries, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and local providers
- Development of Take 5 benches, chatty seats, and chatty cafes
- Work through dementia friendly neighbourhood groups
- Partnership work to join up and invest in social connections programmes through an Older Active and Connected programme, funded through Public Health Agency
- Safe Seniors, Safer at Home and 'confidence in policing' programmes through Belfast's Police and Community safety Partnership
- Linking Generations NI Intergenerational network and programmes in Belfast
- Belfast's 10-year Cultural Strategy – A City Imagining



## Health and wellbeing

### What we did

Working with Age Friendly Belfast partners we have shared and promoted health and wellbeing messages and opportunities to older residents across the city to take part in regular programmes. The Age Friendly Belfast yearly calendar and Belfast City Council City Matters magazine have been very effective ways to share messages and direct people towards programmes. Covid-19 made this challenging, but walking groups continued across the city, taking advantage of the green spaces, parks, and greenways across the city.

Older people had previously stated that they didn't understand social support available to them in the community. Belfast Health and Social Care Trust in partnership with Age Friendly Belfast, produced an easy read Health & Wellbeing Information Booklet for seniors. This booklet has been very well received and used by older people in Belfast.

Other achievements for older people have included:

- Work by Greater Belfast Seniors Forum to raise awareness of suicide among older people and to promote the Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing,
- Physical activity and strength and programmes supported or provided through the Public Health Agency, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Belfast City Council, Better Gyms and Leisure Centres and local community providers,
- Development of the Keeping Well at Home and Good Vibrations resources through Age NI, the Age Friendly Network NI and the Northern Ireland Frailty Network
- Work by Belfast City Council and Volunteer Now to celebrate and promote the benefits of volunteering in older people.

### Good Practice Case Study:

#### The Health & Wellbeing Information & Support for Seniors in the Community booklet

Launched in January 2022, the *Health & Wellbeing Information & Support for Seniors in the Community* was created in response to the Age Friendly Belfast Plan 2018-2021. The Belfast Health and Social Care Trust had made a commitment to produce an easy read *Patient, Client and Carers' Guide on Community Care*. The booklet would provide information about services provided by the Trust for seniors living in Belfast.

For this information booklet to be meaningful, it was important that seniors who lived in Belfast were involved in its development. Seniors from the Greater Belfast Seniors Forum (G6), Cross Cultural Senior Citizen Forum and Good Morning Colin members were all involved through discussion groups, telephone interviews and questionnaires. Trust services and the community and voluntary sector also partnered in the booklet's development. All the contributors were then involved in coproducing the content, style and layout of the booklet, whilst also helping plan distribution and accessibility.

This partnership approach ensured the right information was included. The amount of information to be included increased as the process continued and the format for the information changed from a foldable A3 brochure to a 48-page booklet. The result is an information booklet about the health and social care services provided by the Belfast Trust alongside information about key services in the wider community to support older people with their health and wellbeing. Over seven thousand copies distributed across Belfast, through community and voluntary organisations, GP practices, Health and Wellbeing Centres and Trust services.







## Good Practice Case Study:

### BraveHEARTS

At the H.E.A.R.T. Project Healthy Living Centre, the aim is to promote health and wellbeing, mentally and physically and to encourage people to take responsibility for their own health. For the BraveHEARTS (50+ Men's group) and the SweetHEARTS (50+ Women's Group), age is no barrier to getting up and active. From walking water polo and Danderball, to circuits cycling and walking groups, the activities on offer are informed by what people want to do, not what others decide might be good for them.

Like all similar groups, during the pandemic, they needed to think out of the box and look at outdoor activities and different ways of doing things. Having a variety of activities on offer has helped with physical and mental health. Perhaps more importantly however just to have people out meeting others was a massive benefit for those who found themselves isolated. A sense of community was restored.



## Good Practice Case Study:

### Safer Together Project'

'Safer Together Project' was developed by the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service East, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Older Persons Social Work Service and Ulster University. It came about as a result of a meeting between the Fire Service and an older people's social worker to discuss home fire safety checks, which identified a need to increase awareness of the referral mechanisms and support available to older people from the Fire Service.

In the initial stages, the project focused on providing informal training to social workers on what fire risk is, how to identify risk and how to refer older people for a home fire safety check.

When a PhD student, who was also a member of the Fire Service came on board, the project evolved further. The focus groups highlighted that as well as developing resources to increase fire risk awareness, there was a need for items such as fire-retardant bedding and smoking aprons, as well as nightlights and panic alarms which would help protect older people in the event of a fire. These items can now be provided to those older people who are identified by social workers as being most at risk.

In the first year of the project, referrals for home fire safety checks increased by 45% which has enabled the case to be made for further funding.

## Learning from elsewhere

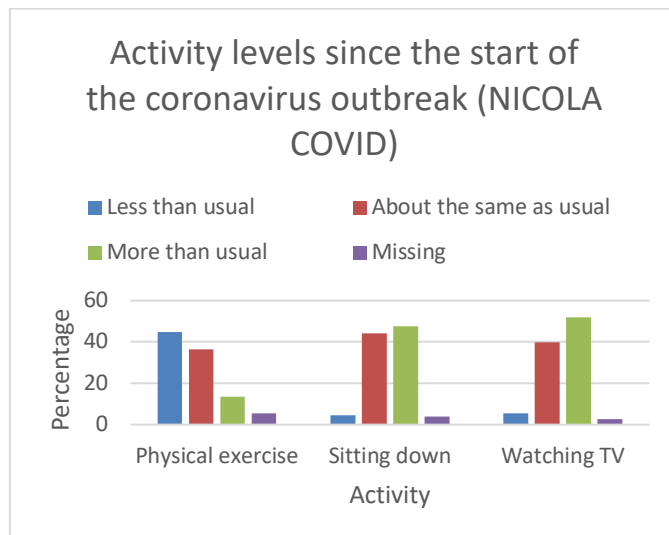
### The Elder Academy scheme (Hong Kong)

An education and social inclusion initiative was launched in early 2007 by The Labour and Welfare Bureau and the Elderly Commission in Hong Kong. The activities provide access to learning opportunities in schools and university campuses and are aimed primarily at older people who have had little or no education. The scheme optimizes the use of existing educational facilities and has been successful in promoting both lifelong and initial learning for older people, encouraging participation, and helping to maintain physical and mental wellbeing. School and university students are engaged in the scheme, thereby also promoting civic education and intergenerational understanding. Currently, some 125 elder academies in various districts and seven tertiary institutions offer a wide variety of courses.

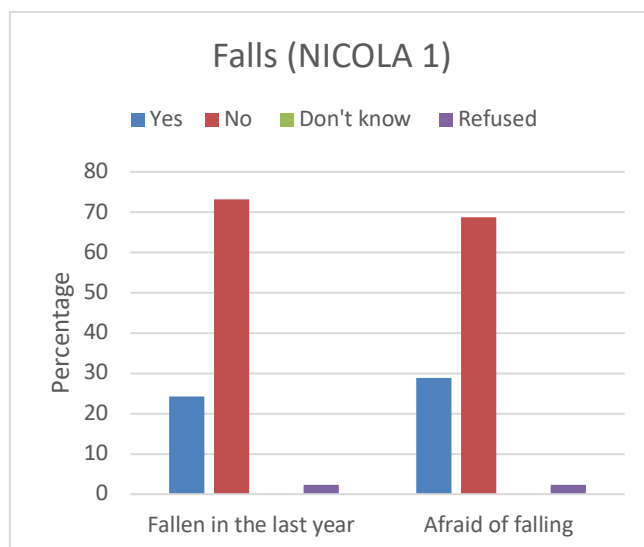
Another intergenerational scheme is run by the NGO Aberdeen Kai Fong Welfare Association. This focuses on community education, intergenerational learning, and volunteer development, and promoting cultural heritage. Older people interact with students of all ages in activities including creating stories and plays with primary school children; mentoring secondary school children and helping with homework; and secondary school children organising trips with older people to explore Hong Kong sites.

## Where we are now

During Covid, older people in Belfast<sup>vi</sup> reported taking part in less than usual physical exercise and sitting down or watching TV more than usual.



Among NICOLA research respondents, 24.3 per cent had fallen in the last year and 28.9 per cent were afraid of falling.



Compared to other parts of Northern Ireland, Belfast has higher rates of avoidable deaths and early deaths from circulatory disease and cancer. West Belfast has the highest rates followed by North Belfast.







### ***What is needed***

#### ***Who is most vulnerable/excluded?***

People who are already isolated may find it more challenging to be more active – sometimes it takes having a companion to encourage people out. Mobility and mental health issues can also be barriers.

#### ***Access to primary care***

Being able to see their doctor or get the treatment they need it is a source of real concern for older people in the city. The Greater Belfast Seniors Forum continues to lobby on these issues, which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. There are many older people for whom technology-based health care- online prescription requests, appointments by phone/video call – are no substitute for seeing a health care professional face to face.

#### ***The importance of strength and balance and moving more often***

Despite a range of physical activity programmes, physical activity levels in many older people in Belfast are well below what is recommended for good health and wellbeing, and people face challenges in keeping strong and active. Covid-19 has also had a significant impact on the strength and activity levels of older people and so there is a need to work with those who are most in need to help them improve their strength and balance and get more active.

#### ***What partners have committed to do***

1. Work with Greater Belfast Seniors forum to link with GP representatives and multi-disciplinary teams on a regular basis to ensure that the voice of older people is heard in discussions on access to services, and influences new developments.
2. Support 600-800 older people (most in need) to improve their mobility levels and to feel more connected and less lonely.

3. Promote key messages and connect up programmes for older people to increase their strength and mobility, including falls prevention.
4. Older people's involvement in the expansion of the 'Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing' approach.

#### ***Key programmes that are contributing to the Age Friendly Belfast Plan:***

- Greater Belfast Seniors Forum participation in the Healthy Ageing Reference Group with Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
- Links to Integrated Care Partnerships and Multi-Disciplinary Teams to support 2-way conversations between older people and health professionals
- Continued distribution and updating of the Health and Wellbeing Information Booklet for seniors
- Work through Belfast Health and Social Care Trust's Carer Support Service
- Older people's participation in parks and open spaces and programmes in Belfast City Council community centres and bowling pavilions
- Physical activity, strength and balance and falls prevention programmes supported or provided through Public Health Agency, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Belfast City Council, Better Gyms and Leisure Centres, Healthy Living Centres and local community providers
- Partnership work to tackle health inequalities through Belfast Community Planning Partnership and Belfast Health Development Unit
- Home safety work carried out through a range of partners including, the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service, Belfast City Council, the Safer Homes Scheme and the Policing and Community Safety Partnership (PCSP)
- The Connected Community Care Service, a citywide social prescribing service, connecting people to local health and wellbeing support services.

## Financial security, assisting with the increasing cost of living

### What we did

We have sponsored a yearly award in the Belfast Business Awards.

Won in 2021 by Sync Living, and in 2020 by Bank of Ireland, the Age Friendly Business Award recognised those businesses that provide exceptional customer care for older customers and which value an age diverse workforce.

Through communication in the council's City Matters Magazine and social media, we have promoted awareness of the Make the Call campaign, scam awareness initiatives, and advice services. All these initiatives, in different ways, contribute to the financial security of our older residents. Greater Belfast Seniors Forum and local forums have campaigned to raise awareness of advice services and to reduce the stigma of asking for help through food banks.

Other achievements for older people have included:

- Work with the Ulster Bank, Hourglass and the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland (COPNI) to raise awareness of financial abuse
- Development of the Warm and Well Project through the Living Here Board in Belfast's Community Planning Partnership, coordinated by National Energy Action
- Be Prepared information sessions across the city, which focused on financial security, benefits uptake and scam awareness
- Business in the Community and Age NI work with employers and employees through the Age at Work campaign aimed at helping older workers to remain in work or return to work. This approach enables older workers to have enough income, stay connected and have a fuller working life. It urges employers to commit to an MOT at

50, to help people with future plans and pension savings

- Work with Belfast's Police and Community Safety Partnership on Safe Seniors packs and avoiding scams.

### Good Practice Case Study:

#### Age NI Helpline

The Age NI Helpline provides advice to older people on a range of issues including benefit entitlements. Mrs P was contacted by Mrs P (aged 83) in relation to her benefit entitlements. Until recently, Mrs P had been the main carer for her severely disabled adult daughter. When Mrs P developed her own illnesses and they impacted on her personal care and support needs, Mrs P's daughter moved into a residential home and Mrs P now lives alone.

Mrs P was in receipt of a State Pension and Guarantee Pension Credit. She received a Carers Premium included in her Pension Credit award for looking after her daughter, so the fact that she was not caring for her daughter anymore meant that she would lose the Carers Premium, a loss of £37.70 per week.

No longer being able to care for her daughter was a life-changing event for Mrs P, the upset of which was further exacerbated by the fact that her income was going to be impacted and she was worried about finances.

Like many long-term carers, Mrs P had rarely focused on her own health and wellbeing. Advice workers were able to check Mrs P's eligibility for additional benefits and support her to successfully apply for them. The support provided by the helpline staff reduced some of the additional stresses caused by the change of circumstances and increased her income.



## Good Practice Case Study:

### Belfast Warm and Well



The Belfast Warm and Well (WAW) Project was developed by the Living Here Board in Belfast Community Planning Partnership. It is coordinated by National Energy Action (NEA) and aims to help local people who are struggling to keep their homes warm. The project works with local community and voluntary groups, to provide helpful independent and confidential advice and practical support to people aged 65 years or older; people living with disability or long term physical or mental health condition; pregnant women; households with young children (from new-born to school age); and people on a low income.

WAW has received calls from over 300 householders and provided practical assistance to 250 households. This assistance included organising boiler-checks, emergency out of hours referrals to restore heating to vulnerable households, providing oil filled radiators and Winter Warmth Packs, emergency fuel top-ups, and energy efficiency advice. In addition, project staff can make onward referrals for draughtproofing/insulation measures, benefit checks and food parcels.

With the unprecedented increase in energy costs combined with rising inflation impacting many vulnerable households, demand for assistance has risen significantly. Without the practical interventions provided by the WAW Project, many vulnerable householders who did not qualify for assistance under existing schemes would have been left having to continue to live in circumstances which could ultimately impact on their health.

As households continue to make tough financial choices, those households who have been struggling to keep the lights and heat on, will continue to struggle. This figure is most likely to continue climbing and therefore continuing measures to support these householders will continue to be critical.

It has been difficult to identify case studies from elsewhere on this theme, but the recent partnership response to Covid-19 has highlighted important learning

### Learning from Belfast Covid-19 community response

Covid-19 had a profound impact on the residents of Belfast of all ages, and on delivery of a range of services. A regional and citywide community response mechanism was established including:

- Community and voluntary groups leading local response efforts
- The development of a citywide helpline, remote contact centre and a central food distribution hub for Belfast residents
- A contact centre to process and coordinate responses to local needs
- Area based teams to manage welfare referrals and provide a link between partners
- The creation of a grant funding scheme to support emergency response and recovery activities.

The following results were achieved:

- 9,770 calls handled by the Belfast City Council contact centre
- 5,115 calls handled by local community run helplines,
- 107,407 food parcels and hot food were delivered over 16 weeks,
- 930 welfare referrals were managed by the area teams, and
- 9,320 deliveries or prescription pick-ups were made on behalf of residents.

During 2020-2021 Belfast City Council Provided almost £4.5 million additional funding to help organisations to deliver support for those individuals impacted by Covid-19 restrictions and supported 679 projects by providing £698,532.00 to deliver small scale projects across the city with grants ranging from £1,000 - £5,000.

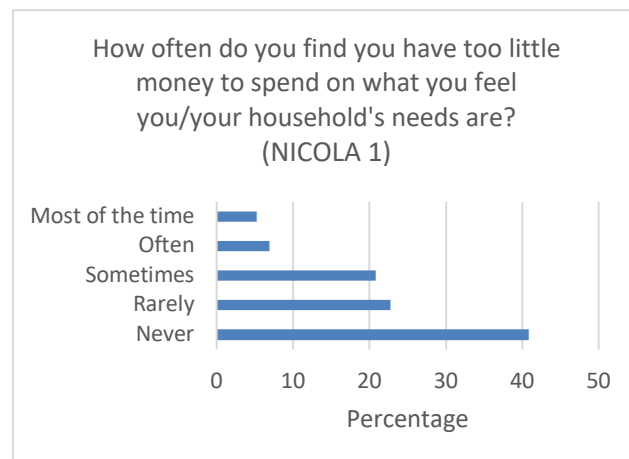
During 2021-2022 Belfast City Council provided £1 million additional funding to help organisations to deliver support for those individuals impacted by Covid-19 restrictions and cost of living issues and supported 414 organisations with £1,089,781.00 to deliver small scale projects across the city with grants ranging from £1,000 - £5,000.

### Learning for work on financial security with older people

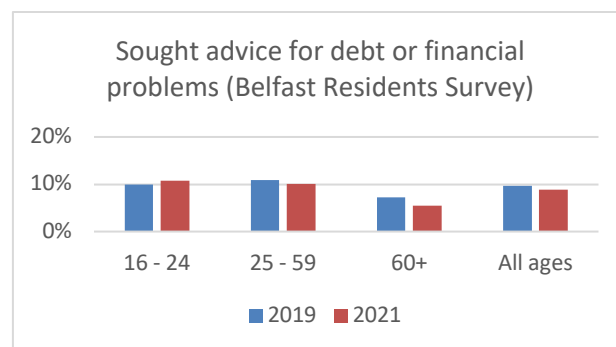
The Covid-19 response demonstrated at scale and pace, a whole-system approach to supporting vulnerable populations. The response tested new approaches to joint working across sectors at both the strategic / policy setting level and the operational / neighbourhood level. Whilst the scale and urgent timing of response is different, lessons from this joint working is needed to help the most vulnerable citizens in Belfast with the rising cost of living.

#### Where we are now

Over a third of older people<sup>vii</sup> stated that they do not have enough money for household needs sometimes, often, or most of the time. One in ten reported that this kept them from keeping their house in a reasonable state of decoration or from replacing or repairing broken electrical items, and 8.5 per cent reported that this impacted on their choice of food.



According to the Belfast Residents Survey, those aged 60 and over are least likely to have sought advice for debt or financial problems, falling from 7.2 per cent in 2019 to 5.5 per cent in 2021.



#### What is needed

Although there has been some increase in the uptake of some benefits, we still need to encourage older people to find out what they are entitled to and to access those supports. Older people tell us that the system is complex and at times overwhelming, that the forms are not age friendly and that where online application is the only option, they are deterred from applying. There is a continued need for support and advice for older people to navigate the benefit system.

#### Who is most vulnerable/excluded?

It is challenging to identify the people who are really in need of support as they may be among the more hidden/less heard members of our communities. People with a medical condition or disability who may need to keep

the heat on longer or power medical equipment are particularly vulnerable to rising fuel costs. Those who are on a fixed income are also vulnerable.

### ***Fuel and food poverty***

Rising fuel and food costs and rising inflation are issues which particularly impact on older people. While there are support systems available, these may not be adequate, or indeed people may not know the support is there. Increasing awareness of grants to assist with energy efficiency and signposting residents to the help available from foodbanks will be important during the current cost of living crisis. Of almost equal importance is de-stigmatising asking for advice or assistance.

### ***The need for further research***

There are fewer case studies and practical examples of projects in other Age Friendly cities on this theme. In order to better inform how HASP progresses on this theme, further research will be needed into measures taken to address food and fuel poverty amongst older people in other parts of Europe and the world.

### ***What partners have committed to do***

1. Work with older people to provide information and support on financial security in a way that is easy to understand and navigate.
  - information events in four localities
  - promotion of information through local older people's forums
2. Work to normalise and reduce stigma of older people accessing financial entitlements and addressing debt
3. Promote debt advice services to older people

4. Review and support the wider policy level work on food and fuel poverty. For example:
  - increase uptake of reducing food waste cookery sessions and promotion of fuel stamps
  - promote links to foodbanks and social supermarkets.
5. Offer access to employment support and employment for those aged 50+.
6. Promote and support of the Age at Work approach to recruit, retain and retrain workers aged 50+.

### ***Programmes that are contributing to the Age Friendly Belfast Plan:***

- Make the Call, Age NI helpline and various advice centre work to support older people to access entitlements
- Advice NI Rights for Seniors initiatives and the Debt Advice Service
- Repair cafes
- Belfast City Council Fuel stamps initiative
- The Warm and Well project and NEA Energy efficiency information sessions
- Belfast Safer Homes project
- Work with Police and Community Safety Partnership and the police service for Northern Ireland on Scam Awareness and Older Adults Cyber Safety work
- Work by age organisations to retain older people's access to local post offices and banks
- Promotion of advice services and scam awareness through the Greater Belfast Seniors Forum and local older people's forums
- Belfast City Council Employability and Skills/ Belfast Labour Market Partnership training/skills programmes which allow residents of all ages in the city to gain skills to secure employment across a broad range of sectors and employers
- The Economic Strategy for Belfast 2022-2030







## Summary of actions

Infrastructure, helping people to get out and about  Outcomes:	Key partners	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infrastructure developments in Belfast are designed in consultation with older people using agreed age friendly design principles</li> <li>Amenities and services in Belfast are more accessible for older people</li> </ul>		
Develop a joined-up approach to engagement and co-design with older people on local and city centre developments	Greater Belfast Seniors Forum, Older people's forums, the Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC) and the Department for Infrastructure	Years 3 and 4
Develop age friendly design principles, which can be used to inform new infrastructure developments	Age Friendly Network NI, Belfast City Council, Inclusive Mobility and Transport Advisory Committee (IMTAC) and older people's forums	Years 3 and 4
Work to review and improve access to seating and toilets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review provision of seating and toilets in parks and open spaces in Belfast and identify gaps (including provision of radar keys)</li> <li>Carry out an audit of current public toilet usage and identify any barriers to use</li> <li>Explore 'take a seat' pilots in several areas</li> <li>Provide age friendly input into the development of parklets</li> </ul>	Belfast City Council Age Friendly Officer, Department for Communities and Department for Infrastructure and local neighbourhoods	Years 1 and 2
Revisit the work to raise awareness of the needs of older people when using transport	Age Partnership Belfast and Translink	Years 1 and 2

<b>Social inclusion, promoting social connections</b> <b>Outcome:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>older people are more connected and involved through programmes, places and services</li> </ul>	<b>Key partners</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Work together to support recovery of groups/programmes with older people	Age Partnership Belfast, Belfast City Council and voluntary and community sector partners	Years 1 and 2
Co-ordinate an Age Friendly Belfast annual programme of activities	Belfast City Council Age Friendly officer and a range of city partners	Ongoing Years 1, 2, 3 and 4
Develop local connection hubs and a city centre hub where older people can drop in and access information	Older people's forums, community partners and Belfast City Council	Ongoing Years 1, 2, 3 and 4
Develop dementia carers cafes in all four dementia friendly neighbourhoods	Dementia friendly neighbourhood groups, supported by Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	Ongoing Years 1, 2, 3 and 4
A recruitment drive to encourage older people to re-engage in volunteering, and to recruit new volunteers. Promotion of initiatives to manage and support older people's participation in volunteering.	Volunteer Now and HASP partners	Ongoing Years 1 and 2
Celebrate older volunteers through a yearly older volunteer awards programme	Volunteer Now and Belfast City Council	Ongoing Years 1, 2, 3 and 4
<b>Health and wellbeing</b> <b>Outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older people are active partners in the design and delivery of health and social services to ensure access</li> <li>Older people, who are most in need, are supported to live more active and socially connected lives</li> </ul>	<b>Key partners</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Work with Greater Belfast Seniors forum to link with GP representatives and multi-disciplinary teams on a regular basis to ensure that the voice of older people is heard in discussions on access to services, and influences new developments	Age Partnership Belfast, Belfast Health & Social Care Trust and primary care teams	Ongoing Years 1, 2, 3 and 4

Support 600-800 older people (most in need) to improve their mobility levels and to feel more connected and less lonely	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, supported by Belfast Health Development Unit	Ongoing Years 1, 2, 3 and 4
Promote key messages and connect up programmes for older people to increase their strength and mobility, including prevention of falls	Age NI and Public Health Agency	Years 1 and 2
Involve older people's involvement in the expansion of the 'Take 5 Steps to Wellbeing' approach	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and Greater Belfast Seniors Forum	Ongoing Years 1, 2, 3 and 4
<b>Financial security, supporting people to manage the increasing costs of living</b> <b>Outcomes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved access to financial support for older people to equip them to deal with the increased cost of living</li> <li>Older people have access to employment, support in employment and information on planning for retirement</li> </ul>	<b>Key partners</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Work with older people to provide information and support on financial security in a way that is easy to understand and navigate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information events in four localities</li> <li>Promotion of information through local older people's forums</li> </ul>	Advice NI, Department for Communities Make the Call team and older people's forums	Years 1 and 2
Work to normalise and reduce the stigma of older people accessing financial entitlements and addressing debt	Age Friendly NI Network supported Belfast City Council Age Friendly Officer and Advice NI	Years 1 and 2
Promote debt advice services to older people	Advice NI, Belfast City Council Age Friendly Officer	Ongoing Years 1, 2, 3 and 4
Review and support the wider policy level work on food and fuel poverty e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increase uptake of reducing food waste cookery sessions and promotion of fuel stamps</li> <li>promote links to foodbanks and social supermarkets</li> </ul>	Belfast City Council Trussell Trust, FairShare NI and other community food providers	Ongoing Years 1, 2, 3 and 4

Offer access to employment support and employment for those aged 50+	Belfast City Council Employability and Skills Team/Belfast Labour Market Partnership	Ongoing Years 1, 2, 3 and 4
Promote and support the Age at Work approach to recruit, retain and retrain workers aged 50+	Business in the Community and Age NI	Years 1 and 2



## Leadership- making it happen

Leadership and governance for Age-friendly Belfast will be provided by the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership (HASP). They will co-ordinate the Age-friendly Belfast Plan against specific timescales with agreed resources.

HASP partners will oversee the delivery and performance management of the Age-Friendly action plan and report on progress to Belfast Community Planning Partnership.

A detailed action plan will be developed, and we will know that we are making a difference by using an outcomes based accountability approach (OBA).

This means that we will measure progress against the draft outcome framework outlined in the included Appendix 1.

HASP currently involves the following organisations:

- Age NI
- The Alzheimer's Society
- Belfast City Council
- Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
- Belfast Healthy Cities
- Dementia NI
- The Department for Communities
- The Department for Infrastructure
- Engage with Age
- Greater Belfast Seniors Forum
- North Belfast Senior Citizens Forum
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive
- The Public Health Agency
- Volunteer Now

## Appendix 1 - Draft Outcomes Framework

Key Strategic Theme	Proposed Thematic Outcomes	Belfast Agenda Outcomes	Programme for Government Draft Outcomes Framework
1. <b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infrastructure developments in Belfast are designed in consultation with older people using agreed age friendly design principles</li> <li>Amenities and services in Belfast are more accessible for older people</li> </ul>	Belfast is a vibrant, attractive, connected and environmentally sustainable city for older people	<p>People want to live, work and visit here</p> <p>We have an equal and inclusive society where everyone is valued and treated with respect</p> <p>We all enjoy long, healthy active lives</p>
2. <b>Social Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older people are more connected and involved through programmes, places and services</li> </ul>	<p>Belfast is a welcoming, safe, fair and inclusive city for older people</p> <p>Everyone in Belfast fulfils their potential</p>	
3. <b>Health and wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older people are active partners in the design and delivery of health and social services to ensure access</li> <li>Older people, who are most in need, are supported to live more active and socially connected lives</li> </ul>	Older people in Belfast experience good health and well being	<p>We have a caring society that supports people throughout their lives</p>
4. <b>Financial Security</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved access to financial support for older people to equip them to deal with the increased cost of living</li> <li>Older people have access to employment, support in employment and information on planning for retirement</li> </ul>	Older people in Belfast benefit from a thriving and prosperous economy	<p>Everyone feels safe – we all respect the law and each other</p> <p>Everyone can reach their potential</p>

<sup>i</sup>Belfast Residents Survey

<sup>ii</sup> NICOLA Study

<sup>iii</sup> Belfast Residents Survey

<sup>iv</sup> Belfast Residents Survey

<sup>v</sup> Belfast Residents Survey

<sup>vi</sup> NICOLA Study

<sup>vi</sup> NICOLA Study





# Age Friendly Belfast

For more information on Age-friendly Belfast contact:

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 Healthy Ageing Co-ordinator  
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Gillian McEvoy  
 Senior Health and Environmental Officer  
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 Telephone: 028 9032 0202 extension 3765  
 Mobile: 0771 3684 705





**Belfast**  
City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Dual Language Street Signs Policy</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
<b>Contact Officers:</b>	Ian Harper, Building Control Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval of the final version of the revised Dual Language Street Signs Policy to reflect the decision which it took at its meeting on 17th June, 2022. The final version of the revised policy was discussed at the Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum on 15 <sup>th</sup> September, where it was agreed that the policy be presented to the Committee for approval prior to its publication on the Council website.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve the final version of the revised Dual Language Street Signs Policy at <b>Appendix 1</b> to allow for its publication on the Council website.

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	The Committee, at its meeting on 17th June, 2022, agreed that the revised Dual Language Streets Signs Policy would be implemented following ratification by the Council at its meeting on 4th July. A copy of the relevant minute is attached at <b>Appendix 2</b> .
3.2	The SP and R decision was ratified by the Council and the policy is now live. Over 500 requests for dual language street signs under the new policy have been received since the Committee's decision. These have been logged and are being responded to.
3.3	The final version of the revised Policy includes the updated approach to carrying out Equality and Good Relations assessments which was agreed by Committee at its meeting on 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2022.
3.4	The changes relate primarily to the fact that each application will undergo an 'initial assessment' for any potential adverse impacts on equality, good relations or rural needs, rather than an 'equality screening' in the first instance. This was reported to the SP and R Committee on 17th June 2022 and agreed at that time.
3.5	<b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b> There are no finance or resource implications attached to this report.
3.6	<b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Implications</u></b> There are no equality or good relations implications attached to this report.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	<b>Appendix 1</b> – Final version of the Dual Language Street Signs Policy <b>Appendix 2</b> – Minute of SP and R Committee meeting of 17 <sup>th</sup> June 2022

# Appendix 1

## Dual Language Street Signs Policy

### 1.0 Legislation

The statutory basis for this function is contained within *Article 11 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1995*, which commenced on 15 March 1995. It provides for street naming, street numbering and the provision of street signs. It also gives Councils the discretionary power to erect dual language street signs or secondary nameplates in a language other than English.

### 2.0 Introduction

The legislation requires the Council, in deciding whether and how to exercise its discretion to erect a street name in a language other than English, to have regard to any views on the matter expressed by the occupiers of premises in that street.

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, to which the U.K. is a signatory, was taken into account when developing this policy, as was guidance published by the UN Special Rapporteur on the practical implementation of language rights of linguistic minorities. The Council's Language Strategy adopted by the Council in May 2018 sets out the Council's commitment to establish a transparent set of principles for promoting, protecting and enhancing the linguistic diversity of the city.

The European Charter establishes an obligation on state signatories not to create barriers in respect of the use of a minority language. The UN Special Rapporteur guidance notes that the threshold where it is reasonable and practical to provide such signs varies between 5 percent and 20 percent of the local population. While this policy applies to all languages, the Council recognises that Irish and Ulster Scots are recognised as minority languages in the European Charter.

For the purposes of this policy "Occupiers" shall be taken to be any person whose name appears in the current Electoral Register plus the owners or tenants in actual possession of commercial premises, but not employees in such premises.

These policy proposals were developed in close consultation with the City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services and are designed to promote consistent and reasonable responses. However, the policy should not be applied in such a way as to prevent due consideration being given to the particular circumstances of each application. See in particular Section 3(xi) below.

Having regard to the significant resource consequences of administering the implications of the policy, the policy will be reactive in nature. The policy will be managed and implemented based on the resources available and the established annual budget for street signage. The Council reserves the right to pause the processing of applications in the event that resources are not sufficient.

### 3.0 **Procedure**

The procedures for seeking and assessing the views of Occupiers and the criteria to be applied in deciding whether to erect a street sign in a language other than English are as follows:

- (i) Applications for the erection of a street sign in a language other than English must be made by an Applicant submitting an application form either by post or electronically to Belfast City Council.
- (ii) An application for the erection of a street sign in a language other than English may be made by an 'Applicant' which for purposes of this policy means: (a) an Occupier or Occupiers of the street for which the application is made, (b) an Elected Member of Belfast City Council who represents the District Electoral Area in which the street is located or (c) a developer of a new street. Any application submitted by a developer with regard to a new street will be considered by the Council in accordance with Section 3(xi) of this policy. With regard to streets without any Occupiers, applications for the erection of a street sign in a language other than English may only be made by an Elected Member who represents the District Electoral Area in which the street is located. The Council will have regard to Section 3(xi) of this policy when considering any such application.
- (iii) When an application is received, the Council will canvass by post all Occupiers of that street and seek their views on the request to erect a street sign in a second specified language. Options for a response will be 'Yes', 'No' and 'No Preference'. The Council will note for its records those Occupiers who do not reply. Reply will be by way of a pre-paid envelope and should be returned within one month of receipt.
- (iv) Each survey that is sent out by the Council to the Occupiers of a street for which an application is made will have a unique identifier number. Survey responses received by the Council for that application will be cross-referenced against that unique identifier and will be recorded. The Council may choose to audit certain responses to surveys. These measures are to provide assurance that each Occupier's view is taken into account.
- (v) Applications will be dealt with in the order that they are received.
- (vi) Each application will be subject to an initial assessment for any potential adverse impacts on equality, good relations and rural needs. This assessment will commence when the application is received and where any adverse impacts are identified, that information will be brought to Committee.
- (vii) Where fifteen percent or more of the Occupiers of that street have indicated that they are in favour of the erection of a second language street sign, then such a sign may be erected, subject to the residual discretion of the Council as specified in subsection (xi) below.
- (viii) If the minimum threshold of fifteen percent is not met, the Applicant will be given two weeks to advise the Council of any special circumstances in relation to the application. If such special circumstances relate to the processing of a survey, the Strategic Director of Place and Economy, in conjunction with the City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services will determine whether such exceptional circumstances exist to refer the matter to Committee. Where exceptional circumstances relate to matters other than the processing of a survey, the matter will be referred to Committee. If there are no special circumstances, the application will end.

- (ix) A report on all applications (other than those ended in the circumstances specified in subsection (viii) above) will be brought to Committee for a decision.
- (x) Consideration will to be given to “long streets” where opinion on whether to have a second language street sign may differ between readily identifiable, substantial lengths of the street. In these circumstances, the decision as to the erection of dual language nameplates in certain portions of the street will be made by Committee, exercising its residual discretion and taking into account advice from officers.
- (xi) The Council will retain a residual discretion to decide to erect or not to erect a street sign in a language other than English in certain circumstances. This will be done on a case by case basis. It may be appropriate to depart from the procedures in this policy when there are clear reasons for doing so. This may include taking into account:
  - (a) the views of the Occupiers of the street;
  - (b) the results of the initial assessment for the application, including any identified potential adverse impacts on equality, good relations and rural needs;
  - (c) consideration of the local context of the application;
  - (d) any other Council policies or strategies related to the application; and
  - (e) all material considerations relating to the application.
- (xii) The survey that is sent to Occupiers will include the name of the street as translated into the second language on the relevant application. The Council will make the appropriate arrangements for the translation from English to that second language. The translation will be carried out by an independent, competent body such as the appropriate Language Department at Queen's University or other appropriate, independent and competent institution.
- (xiii) With regard to the design and placing of the street signs the second language sign shall be located immediately below the English sign and the size of lettering shall be smaller than the English version to avoid any risk of confusion to the emergency services.

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**Strategic Policy and Resources Committee  
Friday, 17th June, 2022**

**B  
4103**

**City Hall: Proposed recovery plan –  
update on progress**

The Committee noted a report which provided an update in relation to the progress on the City Hall reopening and recovery.

**Dual Language Street Signs Policy  
Public Consultation and EQIA**

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the results of the public consultation to the proposed changes to the council's Dual Language Street Signs Policy and the conclusions reached in the accompanying Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA). A report on the consultation and the EQIA final decision report had been appended to the report.

The Chief Executive reported that the public consultation had opened online on the Your Say Belfast platform on 22nd November 2021 and had closed on 28th February 2022. The survey was available in both the English and Irish languages.

There was a total of 4.4k visits to the consultation page and 1,078 written responses (785 in the English language version and 293 in the Irish language version). Officers had arranged four online public information sessions, which had a total of 4 attendees and each political party on the Council had been offered a briefing session. Information sessions had also been held for stakeholder groups, which included Irish language groups and academia, the Ulster Scots Agency and the Council's Equality Forum, Migrant Forum and Disability Advisory Panel.

The consultation survey had focused on five proposed changes to the Dual Language Street Signs policy. For four of the five questions, respondents had been asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the proposed changes, and they could comment if they wished. For the remaining proposed change relating to the operation of the Council's residual discretion, respondents were asked to comment. Respondents were also asked to comment on any aspect of the proposed policy that had not been addressed by the preceding questions.

The survey also gave respondents the option to comment on the draft Equality Impact Assessment running concurrently with the consultation and on the draft Rural Needs Impact Assessment.

After discussion, the Committee:

- (i) noted the results of the public consultation and the EQIA; and
- (ii) agreed that the revised Dual Language Streets Signs Policy be implemented following ratification by the Council at its meeting on 4th July.

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Sustain Exchange Climate Business Conference Funding Agreement</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Debbie Caldwell, Climate Commissioner
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Richard McLernon, Climate Programme Manager - City

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	To inform Committee of a proposal by the Management and Leadership Network (MLN) to host a prominent climate business conference 'Sustain Exchange' in Belfast with up to 300 business leaders. To request approval for a funding agreement to be put in place between Belfast City Council and the event organiser with the value of £10,000. 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. The Management and Leadership Network is a network that provides managers and leaders in Northern Ireland with access to the thinking, insights and

	experiences of high-achievers and thought-leaders, to support and develop individual managers, companies and our economy.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to support this business focused climate conference by approving a funding agreement to the value of £10,000 be entered into with the event organiser, a report having previously been submitted to and approved by CMT.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>The United Nations COP 26 Climate Summit in Glasgow in November 2021 placed a sharp focus on the role of the business community on delivering on global net zero GHG emissions by 2050. It also challenged business to radically reduce their environmental impact both directly and indirectly through their supply chains. The extreme weather experienced across Europe and beyond this summer further evidenced the reality that the effects of climate are being felt now and the need for decisive action from the business and leadership community is now.</p> <p>It is a truly transformative time for businesses as they address climate risks and identify new opportunities in the green economy. The transition is not straightforward. Businesses need help in 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.</p>
3.2	<p><b>Purpose and Format of Event</b></p> <p>The event will be planned to deliver on the objectives above and will connect local business leaders with international thought leaders with those at the forefront of the transition locally. The event is expected to attract some 300 local leaders (primarily business leaders but also those from the public, NDPB and third sectors) and will either be delivered as an in-person-only event or a hybrid event which would see 120 leaders gather in-person with some additional 200 leaders attending the event via a live stream. Both delivery models will ensure the messages, around the importance of positive climate action, have reach and that partners get a level of profile, amongst the NI business / leadership community, to justify their investment.</p>
3.3	<p><b>Opening Address and Format</b></p> <p>The opening keynote address will be delivered by two world-renowned authorities on how to achieve 'net zero faster'. They will focus on the business threat of the climate crisis, the legacy of the imperative for businesses and leaders to act fast and meaningfully. The keynote speakers will</p>

	<p>be followed by a carefully selected line-up of local leaders who will be challenged to share their story (exemplar), insights (expert) or support offering (stakeholder).</p> <p>As exemplars these businesses will share their story and associated lessons in an engaging, informative, and entertaining manner. The speakers will encourage and empower other sectoral representative bodies (insurance, banking, hospitality transport and logistics etc) to consider their own climate impact and take the first steps on their pursuit of net zero faster.</p> <p><b>Management and Leadership Network Experience</b></p>
3.4	<p>Management and Leadership Network (MLN) have previous experience in hosting several large events with 500 + attendees.</p> <p>Virtual summits organised by Management and Leadership Network include:</p> <p>Galvanise NI May 2020 - 1400 Business leaders</p> <p>Re- launch July 2020- 900 business leaders</p> <p>Unlearn 2021 December 2020- 700 business leaders</p> <p>WELL – February 2021 – 1000 business leaders</p> <p>Leadership Summit - February 2020 Prior to first lockdown MLN hosted 500 paying business leaders at Titanic Belfast. BCC was a partner on this event which featured world class speakers including Lord David Puttnam at Titanic Belfast. Podium and MLN's virtual events have been created and delivered in a 3–4-week lead time (and have consistently attracted business leader audiences of 500+).</p> <p>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 Mini – Stern Report, and associated Housing and Transport Readiness Assessments, Climate Ambitions Report, Reset Agenda, internal climate mitigation and adaptation plans and /or the work of the Belfast Climate Commission, Resilience and Sustainability Board etc.</p> <p><b>Legacy Platform and Annual Event</b></p>
3.5	<p>The conference is an opportunity to highlight and celebrate the activity that is already underway in Belfast. As the host city it positions Belfast as a centre of excellence and activity when it comes to businesses and getting to net zero faster. The climate challenge will inevitably move further up the political and business agenda as we move through the decade and the pace of change on this issue is fast, so there is a need for annual event for the NI business/leadership community to share knowledge, experience and progress and supporting platforms available all year round to share resources.</p>

3.6	<p><b>Net Zero Faster - Branding</b></p> <p>The conference will be branded with the theme of 'Net Zero Faster'. It is designed to speak to and encourage participation from those businesses well on their way and those just starting their zero-carbon pathway. It acknowledges the challenges involved in committing to take meaningful action and will offer examples, insights and inspiration for individuals, businesses and policy makers. Podiem will complete a comprehensive evaluation report on the conference.</p>
3.7	<p><b>Date, Venue and Contingence</b></p> <p>The total cost of the conference will be in excess of £60k. Podiem has already secured some corporate sponsorship for the event from Danske bank and are in advanced conversations with Belfast Harbour along with other corporate partners of MLN (energy companies etc). The date and venue are currently being finalised, with Belfast City Hall a potential venue.</p>
3.8	<p><b>Venue</b></p> <p>The event will be hosted in a City Centre location (to encourage use of public transport and cycle networks) that can accommodate both in-person and virtual attendees.</p>
3.9	<p><b>Partner Contribution and Profile Benefits</b></p> <p>If the Council chooses to support the conference it would be profiled as an 'Event Partner' alongside several other lead event partners. 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 Council to deliver a presentation. Council would also promote the conference through its social media and other relevant communication channels.</p>
3.10	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>£10,000 to support this initiative has been allocated from within the existing City and Organisational Strategy budget.</p>
3.11	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>There are no direct equality or good relations/rural needs implications.</p>
4.0	<p><b>Documents Attached</b></p>
	<p>None</p>



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Asset Management</b> <b>i) Balmoral Estate – Deed of Variation</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Sinead Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Pamela Davison, Estates Manager

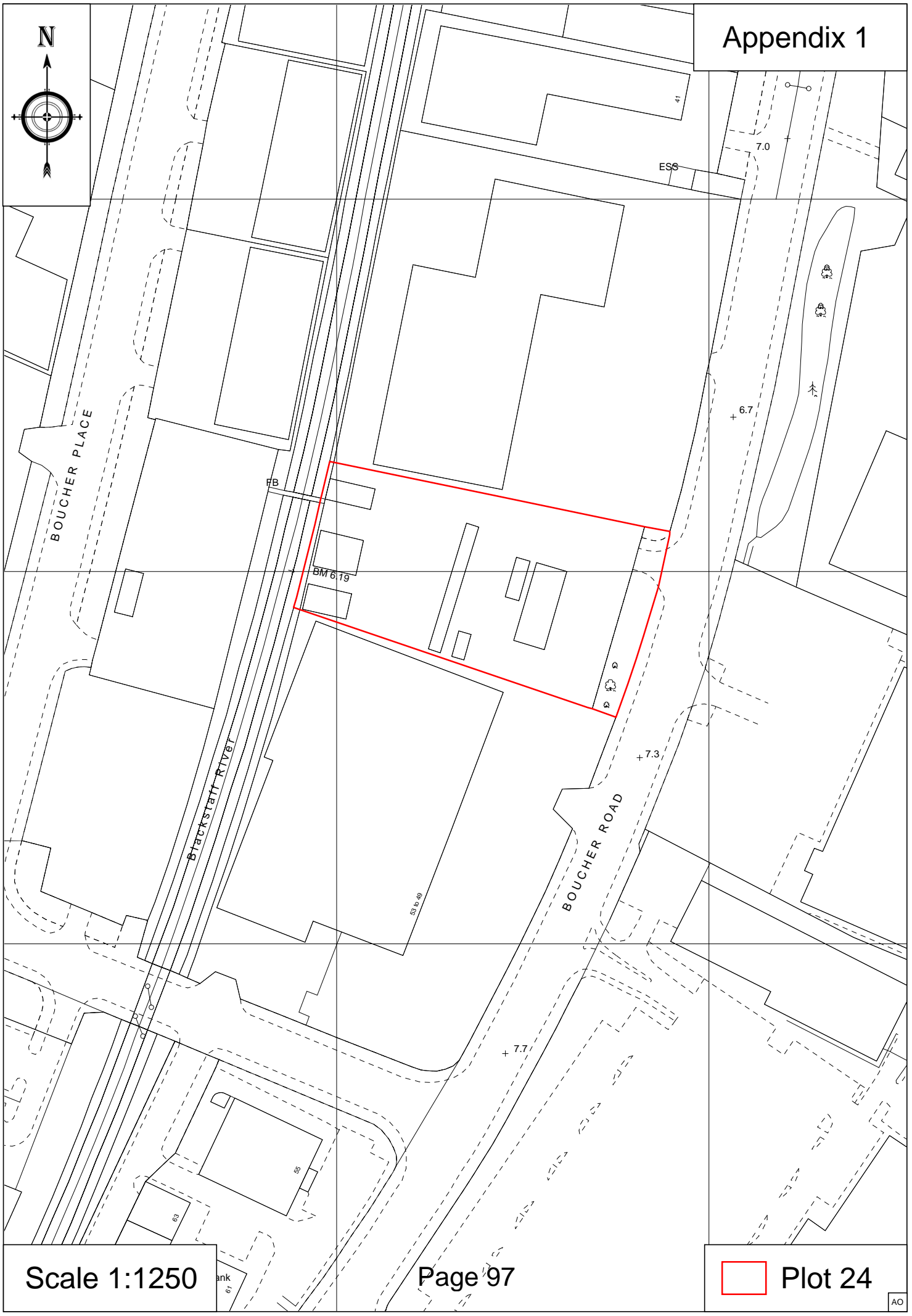
<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Committee on asset related disposal, acquisition, and estates matters.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <p><b>i. Balmoral Estate – Deed of Variation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- approve the extension of the current term of the ground Lease at Plot 24 Balmoral Estate to a term of 125 years, from 2022, and approve the variation of the user clause to include commercial use as a permitted use.</li> </ul>



<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><b>i) Balmoral Estate – Deed of Variation</b></p> <p><b><u>Key Issues</u></b></p> <p>Plot 24 Balmoral Estate is currently held on a 99-year ground Lease from 1<sup>st</sup> June 1980. The plot is Leased to Gilbert-Ash Limited who wish to assign their Lease. On the same day as the assignment takes place, the new tenant has requested an extension to the term of the existing Lease and a variation to the user clause to include commercial use as a permitted use. Estates have agreed a premium of £8,000 to extend the Lease. A Deed of Variation to the Lease will be entered into to formalise the extended term and the additional use, if approved by Members. A map showing Plot 24 Balmoral Estate is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.</p> <p><b><u>Financial and Resources Implications</u></b></p> <p>3.2 The Council will receive a single premium payment of £8,000. The Legal Services Unit will act on the instructions of the Estates Management Unit.</p> <p><b><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>3.3 None associated with this report.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Document Attached</b>
	Map showing Plot 24 Balmoral Estate



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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Update on Physical Programme</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Sinead Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Shauna Murtagh, Programme Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The Council's Physical Programme currently includes 170 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. This report requests movements on the Capital Programme for Alleygating Phase 5 and City Hall Stained Glass Windows.
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to consider the following proposed movements on the Capital Programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Alleygating Phase 5 Project</b> - agree the proposed list, as attached, and that the project be moved to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i>.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>City Hall Stained Glass Windows project</b> - Agree that the project be moved to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i> to allow the Outline Business Case to be developed.</li></ul>									
3.0	<b>Main Report</b>									
3.1	The Committee will be aware that the Council runs a substantial Physical Programme. This includes the rolling Capital Programme – a multimillion regeneration programme of investment across the city which improves existing Council assets or provides new council facilities. The Council also delivers externally focused funding streams such as BIF, LIF and SOF, as well as numerous capital programmes that we deliver for central government. Our funding partners include NHLF, SEUPB Peace IV, the Executive Office via Social Investment Fund and Urban Villages, DfC, DfI, DAERA, Ulster Garden Villages and others. When appropriate, the Physical Programmes Department is happy to arrange site visits to any projects that have been completed.									
3.2	<p><b>Proposed Movements – Capital Programme</b></p> <p>Members have previously agreed that all capital projects must go through a Three Stage process where decisions on which projects progress are taken by Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee. This provides assurance on the level of financial control and will allow Members to properly consider the opportunity costs of approving one capital project over another capital project.</p> <p><b>The Committee is asked to agree to the following movements on the Capital Programme:</b></p> <table><tr><th>Project</th><th>Overview</th><th>Stage movement</th></tr><tr><td><b>Alleygating Phase 5</b></td><td>Next phase of the alleygates programme</td><td>Move to Stage 3 - Committed</td></tr><tr><td><b>City Hall Stained Glass Windows – Health Service and LGBT community</b></td><td>The creation of two new stained glass windows at City Hall, in recognition of the Health Service in Belfast and the acknowledgement of the positive role of the LGBT community in Belfast</td><td>Move to Stage 2 – Uncommitted to allow the Outline Business Case to be developed</td></tr></table>	Project	Overview	Stage movement	<b>Alleygating Phase 5</b>	Next phase of the alleygates programme	Move to Stage 3 - Committed	<b>City Hall Stained Glass Windows – Health Service and LGBT community</b>	The creation of two new stained glass windows at City Hall, in recognition of the Health Service in Belfast and the acknowledgement of the positive role of the LGBT community in Belfast	Move to Stage 2 – Uncommitted to allow the Outline Business Case to be developed
Project	Overview	Stage movement								
<b>Alleygating Phase 5</b>	Next phase of the alleygates programme	Move to Stage 3 - Committed								
<b>City Hall Stained Glass Windows – Health Service and LGBT community</b>	The creation of two new stained glass windows at City Hall, in recognition of the Health Service in Belfast and the acknowledgement of the positive role of the LGBT community in Belfast	Move to Stage 2 – Uncommitted to allow the Outline Business Case to be developed								
3.3	<p><b>Alleygating Phase 5</b></p> <p>In August 2022, the Committee agreed to move Alleygating Phase 5 to a <i>Stage 2- Uncommitted</i> project on the Capital Programme. The Council has delivered four phases of the alleygating programme to date across the city which has seen the installation of 1081 gates, with both</p>									

	<p>Council funding and funding from external funders. As part of the 2021/22 rate setting process, Members will recall that £500,000 has been made available for Alleygating Phase 5 across Belfast. Following the August decision, each AWG has now had an opportunity to consider and recommend gate locations.</p>
3.4	<p><b>Members are asked to agree that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The attached list of alleygates (proposed and reserve) be taken forward under Phase 5 of the alleygating programme as recommended by the Area Working Groups;</li> <li>- Alleygating Phase 5 is moved to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> under the Capital Programme. The Director of Finance and Resources has confirmed that this project is within the affordability limits of the Council and agreed that a maximum of £500,000 be allocated, and;</li> <li>- The necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate 'framework' arrangements) be initiated with contracts to be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver.</li> </ul> <p><b>City Hall Stained Glass Windows – Health Service and LGBT Community</b></p>
3.5	<p>A Strategic Outline Case has been completed and an Outline Business Case will now be worked up on the City Hall Stained Glass Windows – Health Service and LGBT community project and presented back through internal governance and Committee approval process.</p>
3.6	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p><i>Financial</i> – Alleygating Phase 5 - £500,000 under the Capital Programme. <i>Resources</i> – Officer time to deliver as required.</p>
3.7	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>All capital projects are screened as part of the stage approval process.</p>
4.0	<p><b>Document Attached</b></p>
	<p>List of proposed alleygates for approval</p>

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## West

- Dunlewey Street, Clonard Street, Waterford Street, Harrowgate Street, Hawthorn Street, McQuillan Street & Finn Square
- Mizen Gardens, Lenadoon Ave, Kerrykeel Gardens & Glenveagh Park
- Springfield Road, Cupar Street Upper, Iris Drive, Kilmore Close & Dunmore Street
- Locan Street & Amcorma Street
- Island Bawn Street
- Beechview Park
- Mayo Street & Caledon Street
- Colinmill Road
- Distillery Street, Burnaby Walk, Ladymar Court, Ladymar Grove & Ladymar Park
- Downfine Gardens

## Reserve list

- Workman Avenue, Woodvale Avenue, Cuan Parade & Fort Parade

## North

### Agreed list

- Allworthy Avenue & Hillman Street
- Oldpark Avenue, Avoca Street, Summer Street, Roseleigh Street, Oldpark Square, Foyle Court & Rosepenna Street
- Deacon Street, Seaview Street, Parkmount Street, Northwood Parade, Northwood Drive & Northwood Crescent
- Atlantic Avenue & Glandore Avenue

### Reserve list

- Cliftonville Parade, Cliftonville Street, Cliftonville Drive,
- Stephen Street & Kent Street
- Seaview Street & Parkmount Street
- Hesketh Gardens

## South

- Botanic Avenue
- Shaftsbury Avenue
- Fernwood Street, Walmer Street, Deramore Avenue, Rushfield Avenue, Deramore Street
- Wellesley Avenue
- Roden Street, Empire Drive

### Reserve list

- Wolseley Street
- Gipsy Street, Primrose Street, Agra Street and Jameson Street
- Hugh Street

## East

- Rosebery Road, Ravenhill Avenue, Toronto Street, Delaware Street
- Jocelyn Street, Clara Street
- Rosetta Park, Knockbreda Road
- Reid Street

## Reserves

- Richard Street, Watt Street
- Jonesboro Park & Beersbridge Road



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Update on Area Working Groups</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Sinead Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Shauna Murtagh, Programme Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	To seek the Committee's approval of the minutes of the most recent round of AWG meetings.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>approve the most recent AWG minutes (<i>South – 22 August, West – 25 August, North – 30 August and East – 8 September</i>), as attached; and</li> <li>Physical Programme – agree the recommendations in respect of LIF, BIF and SOF projects including reallocations as laid out in paragraph 3.2 below.</li> </ul>

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<b><u>KEY ISSUES</u></b>
3.1	<p><b>Area Working Group Minutes</b></p> <p>Members agreed in June 2016 that the Area Working Group minutes would be presented to the SP and R Committee for approval going forward, in line with the Council's commitment to openness and transparency and to ensure a consistent approach with other Member-led Working Groups.</p> <p>The most recent AWG minutes are attached for approval.</p>
3.2	<p><b>Project Updates</b></p> <p><b>South AWG</b></p> <p><b>Belfast Investment Fund</b> - The South AWG agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it approve a request from the Urban Villages Initiative for a specific and total allocation of £584,167 for the Arts and Digital Hub project so that a Letter of Offer can be released. Members noted that an allocation for this project would form part of the £1.35m ringfenced for Sandy Row Area projects.</p>
3.3	<p><b>West AWG</b></p> <p><b>Social Outcomes Fund</b> - As the Shankill Mission project is no longer viable, £750,000 is now available for re-allocation. A discussion took place in respect of the reallocation of funds. The £750,000 was recommended for reallocation as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Berlin Swifts and Greater Shankill Community Council (Legion) projects – to meet the funding deficits on both projects with up to £113,000 to be allocated to Berlin Swifts and the final budget allocation for the Greater Shankill Community Council project to be agreed once the tender has been returned.</li> <li>– £50,000 is allocated to a small-scale environmental improvement project for the Shankill Road.</li> <li>– Out of the remaining allocation, Members agreed in principle to look at a number of other proposals in Woodvale Park namely MUGA upgrades and the development of a sensory garden with further detail to be brought back to Committee in due course.</li> </ul>
3.4	<p><b>North AWG</b></p> <p><b>Belfast Investment Fund</b> - The North AWG agreed that the remaining allocation of £71,413 which had become available from the underspends within the Grace Family Centre and Cancer Lifeline projects, be allocated to Cavehill Tennis Club for capital works relating to floodlighting and pitches.</p>

3.5	<p><b>East AWG</b></p> <p><b>Belfast Investment Fund</b> – The Working Group confirmed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- representatives of Castlereagh Presbyterian Church should be invited to the next meeting of the working group and that they wished to undertake a further site visit, and;</li> <li>– to undertake a site visit of Templemore, as it moved into completion stage and in advance of its proposed November completion date.</li> </ul>
3.6	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>All recommendations are based on reallocated funds under existing programmes.</p>
3.7	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>None</p>
4.0	<p><b>Documents Attached</b></p>
	<p>Minutes of the meetings of the four Area Working Groups</p>

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# **South Belfast Area Working Group**

Monday, 22nd August, 2022

## **MEETING OF SOUTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP**

**HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

Members present: Councillors Bunting, Gormley, Groogan,  
T. Kelly, Lyons, McDonough-Brown, McKeown,  
Murray and Spratt.

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;  
Mr. S. Leonard, Neighbourhood Services Manager  
(South Belfast);  
Mr. G. Bell, Project Officer - Off Street Parking/  
Alleygating  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer

### **Election of Chairperson**

The Working Group was reminded that, since this was its first meeting since the Annual Meeting of the Council in June, it was required to elect a Member to serve as Chairperson.

Accordingly, Councillor Bunting was proposed by Councillor T. Kelly and seconded by Councillor Murray, whilst Councillor McKeown was proposed by Councillor Groogan and seconded by Councillor Lyons.

Four Members then voted for Councillor Bunting and four for Councillor McKeown.

As there was an equality of votes, the Working Group agreed to defer the matter, in the event that those Members who were not present for the vote might attend before the formal part of the meeting had concluded.

(Councillor Groogan in the Chair.)

### **Apologies**

No apologies were reported.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 23rd May were approved by the Working Group.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Gormley declared an interest in relation to agenda item 3 - Update on Physical Programme, on the basis that he was a Board member of LORAG which owned

the Lockhouse referred to in project SLIF2-13. However, as the Working Group was not being asked to take a decision on that project, he was not required to leave the meeting whilst that item was being considered.

Councillor T. Kelly declared an interest in relation to agenda item 3 - Update on Physical Programme, in so far as it related to a request from Urban Villages for funding towards the Arts and Digital Hub project in Sandy Row. She confirmed that she had attended a meeting involving Mr. E. Poots MLA and Urban Villages to discuss plans for the Sandy Row area generally and did not participate whilst the report was being considered.

### **Update on Physical Programme**

The Director of Physical Programmes submitted for the Working Group's consideration the following report:

#### **"1. Introduction**

**The Council's Physical Programme covers projects under a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, the Local Investment Fund, the Belfast Investment Fund, Social Outcomes Fund and the new Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund. In addition, the programme covers projects which the Council is delivering in behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme.**

#### **2. Recommendations**

**The Working Group is asked to:**

- note the physical programme update for South Belfast, and;**
- recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it approve a request from the Urban Villages Initiative for a specific and total allocation of £584,167 for the Arts and Digital Hub project, to enable a Letter of Offer to be released.**

#### **3. Local Investment Fund (LIF)**

**Members are reminded LIF is a £9m fixed programme of capital investment in non-council neighbourhood assets, over two tranches: LIF 1 (2012-2015) - £5m total funding pot, allocated across each AWG areas; and LIF 2 (2015 -2019) - £4m allocation. Each LIF project proposal is taken through a Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. The table below outlines funding spend to date for each tranche, at key stages of the delivery process: 24 projects received 'In Principle' letters under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 21 have been completed; 1 project at delivery stage, 1 at pre-construction**



stage and 1 project still at initial stage. Further details of these are outlined below.

LIF breakdown – South	LIF 1		LIF 2	
<i>Stage/ Description:</i>	<i>No. Projects</i>	<i>Amount (£)</i>	<i>No. Projects</i>	<i>Amount/ (£)</i>
Number of Projects Completed	12 (92%)	£1,053,600	9 (82%)	£676,000
Number of Projects in Delivery			1 (9%)	£80,000
Number of Projects in Pre-construction			1 (9%)	£40,000
Number of Project in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)	1 (8%)	£30,000		
<b>Total Number of Approved Projects</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>£1,083,600</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>£796,000</b>

The table below provides an overview of progress and actions around the remaining live projects – Holylands Area Improvement Initiative (£80,000), Finaghy Bridge (£30,000) and The Lockhouse (£40,000). Members are asked to note the status of the live LIF projects and the ongoing actions.

LIF Ref	PROJECT	FUNDING	STAGE	STATUS	ACTION/RECOMMENDATION
SLIF2-07	Holylands Area Improvement Initiative	£80,000	Awarded	A contractor has been appointed to undertake these works – challenges remain in terms of supply. There is regular contact with the contractor and community group (QUBA) on the project status.	Continue engagement with the contractor, group and partners
SLIF2-13	The Lockhouse— Gateway to the River / Walkway	£40,000	Design stage	Partnership project with UV. Business Case is now approved – awaiting Letter of Offer. Further	Continued engagement with the group.

				potential funding from DfI and DfC. At design stage and planning application has been submitted.	
SLIF017	Finaghy Bridge	£30,000	Initial stage	DfI Roads are now taking the lead on design and the Council will contribute the LIF funding to DfI.	Continue engagement with DfI Roads.

#### 4. **Belfast Investment Fund (BIF)**

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration partnership projects, with a minimum £250k investment from Council BIF – South Belfast was allocated £5.5m; with additional £500k ringfenced for new areas (outer South) that had joined the District area under Local Government Reform. In South Belfast, 6 projects received an In-Principle funding commitment, thereby fully allocating its £5.5m, and £500k pot of funding. Each project is taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place.

##### ***Summary of BIF Allocated Projects***

<b>South</b>	Stage 3—Lagan Gateway—£2.1m; Lanyon Tunnels—£1.3m; Bredagh GAC- £700k Stage 1— Coffee Culture, Sandy Row Open Space project and BSCR IT Exam Centre project (Sandy Row Arts & Digital Hub) [Sandy Row area projects, formerly Gilpins]— £1.35m Stage 1— <i>Belfast Islamic Centre—no commitment</i>
<b>Balmoral DEA</b>	Stage 3 - Knockbreda Parish Church Hall—£250k Stage 2— Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC—£250k

Ref	Project	BIF funding	Stage	Status	Action/ recommendation
<b>BIF04</b>	<b>Lagan Gateway</b>	£2.1m	On ground	Phase 1 of the project complete and bridge is open. Handover and operation discussions are underway within Council regarding the lock. Design of Phase 2 of the project has started. Nature murals on the piers are already complete and remainder are underway. Potential match funding from DfI for Phase 2.	Continue engagement with the group and key stakeholders.
<b>BIF19</b>	<b>Bredagh GAC</b>	£700,000	Tender stage	Tender issued. Proposal involves refurbishment of existing building to provide a club house and community facility. Construction due to commence in Autumn 2022.	Continue engagement with the group.
<b>BIF07</b>	<b>Lanyon Tunnels</b>	£1.3m	Stage 3- Committed	Project has been impacted by the JR decision on the adjacent site to the tunnels – the adjacent site is a critical access point for the project, enabling range of connectivity outcomes and benefits. A new planning application was submitted in October 2021. The SIF programme has expired, and Urban Villages have been approached as potential funder in place of SIF. Ongoing discussions with group, DfC and TEO.	Officer engagement with Executive Office as key funder, and key stakeholders.
<b>BIF33</b>	<b>Linfield FC/ Boys Brigade and Belvoir FC</b>	£250,000	Stage 3- Committed	Proposal for Phase 1A of larger sports hub project – replacement of Belvoir FC's grass football pitch, road access works and resurfacing carpark. Planning consent for wider development in place. NIHE agreed in principle the land disposal and have	Continue engagement with the group.

				instructed their solicitor accordingly. The Boys Brigade and Project Promoter are working with officers Belfast City Council to fulfil the Due Diligence requirements.	
<b>BIF46</b>	<b>Coffee Culture</b>	£1.35m – total allocation for the Sandy Area projects (formerly Gilpins)	Stage 1- Emerging	Partnership project with UV. Letter of Offer approved. Property Purchase completed. Also includes SOF and DfC funding. BIF funding commitment agreed as the shortfall amount at SAWG March 2021. At design stage and planning application is being prepared. <i>Part of Sandy Row Area projects.</i>	Continue engagement with the group.
<b>BIF47</b>	<b>Sandy Row Open Space project</b>		Stage 1- Emerging	Work is progressing, location being confirmed with an exploration of potential opportunities in terms of final project, urban farm to allotments or a mixed development based on community needs. <i>Part of Sandy Row Area projects.</i>	Continue engagement with the group.
<b>BIF48</b>	<b>Sandy Row Arts and Digital Hub</b> (formerly BSCR IT Exam Centre project)		Stage 1- Emerging	Partnership project with UV. Property purchase progressing. At design stage and planning application is required. The business case process by UV has shown that there is a funding deficit of £121,152. UV have requested that the Council consider meeting this funding shortfall, amounting to a total BIF contribution of £584,187 so that the Letter of Offer can be released. <i>Part of Sandy Row Area projects.</i>	Agree in principle the allocation of BIF funding to address the funding deficit

### **Arts and Digital Hub – Request for Increased Allocation**

In March 2022, SP&R Committee agreed to the recommendation of SAWG that the Arts and Digital Hub project be allocated £463,015 of the £1.35m which had been ringfenced for Sandy Row area projects (formerly Gilpin's). Following completion of the Business Case process, a shortfall is identified of £121,152. Members are asked to consider a request from the Urban Villages Initiative for a specific and total allocation of £584,167 for the Arts & Digital Hub project so that a Letter of Offer can be released. Members are asked to note that an allocation for this project would form part of the £1.35m ringfenced for Sandy Row Area projects.

#### **5. Social Outcomes Fund**

SOF is £4m ringfenced capital investment programme with a focus on local community tourism projects. 3 projects in South Belfast received an In-Principle funding commitment. Similar to LIF and BIF, all projects are subject to Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. Members are asked to note the progress update of each project in the table below.

#### ***SOF – South Belfast projects overview***

<b>Project</b>	<b>SOF Award</b>	<b>Status and update</b>	<b>Recommendation/ Proposed Action</b>
<b>SOF02</b> <b>Coffee Culture</b> <i>UV partnership</i>	£100,000	As above at BIF46. Partnership project with UV. Letter of Offer approved. Property Purchase completed. Also includes SOF and DfC funding. BIF funding commitment agreed as the shortfall amount at SAWG March 2021. At design stage and planning application is being prepared.	Continue engagement with the group and key stakeholders.
<b>SOF04</b> <b>Sandy Row Community Forum</b>	£80,000	Development of a Tourism Trail to complement the Transport Hub. Due Diligence complete. The project concept has been developed and costed. Belfast South Community Resources have signed off the project concept. Council will act as delivery agent for the project and will assist in the maintenance of signage as part of the council-wide upkeep of tourism signage. The project is ready to start on site subject to DfI clearance which is expected imminently.	Continue engagement with the group

## 6. Capital Programme

The Capital Programme is a rolling programme to either enhance existing Council assets or build / buy new assets or facilities. Table below provides an update on current live projects South Belfast area. Members are asked to note status and update.

### *South Belfast – Capital Programme Overview*

Project	Status and update
Playground Improvement Programme 2021/2022 (City wide)	Stage 3 – <i>Committed</i> . Ormeau (Park Road) playground. Project completed.
Alleygating Phase 5 – City wide	Stage 1 – <i>Emerging</i> . Request to August SP&R to move to Stage 2 – <i>Uncommitted</i> . Engagement underway with Members to confirm locations.
Palm House, Botanic Gardens	Stage 1 – <i>Emerging</i> . Link to Tropical Ravine

## 7. Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund is a £10m capital fund to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long term difference in their communities. Members will recall that the fund was originally £8m and has been bolstered by an additional £2m via the reallocation of year end surpluses. The fund has attracted significant interest and an exceptionally high volume of applications was received. The Fund encompasses a three-stage process as approved by Council. Stage 1 is the application phase; Stage 2 is the development phase and Stage 3 is the delivery phase. The fund closed to applicants in May 2022. Members were advised that they would be updated on the outcome of the Stage 1 – Application stage once all the applications were collated and reviewed by an assessment panel against the agreed project assessment matrix. An intensive period of eligibility review, validation, panel assessment and moderation has now been completed with final checks now underway. Reports will be brought to Members shortly via the AWGs as per the agreed process. Activity remains in line with the timeframe previously presented to Members.

## 8. Externally Funded Programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for several government department on key capital investment programmes, namely Social Investment Fund (SIF) and Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office as well as a number of schemes with DfC and DfI. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to South Belfast.

### Social Investment Fund

The table below provides a status update on the remaining SIF project in South Belfast. Officers continue to liaise with TEO officials in relations to this project.

#### ***SIF – South Belfast Projects Overview***

Project	Status and update
<b>Lanyon Tunnels</b> ( <i>no Letter of Offer in place</i> )	Project has been impacted by the JR decision on the adjacent site to the tunnels – the adjacent site is a critical access point for the project, enabling range of connectivity outcomes and benefits (SIF business case dependent on connectivity). Members are asked to note that discussions remain ongoing with Executive Office under Urban Villages and DfC.

### Urban Villages Initiative

Table below is the status update on UV projects in South Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined South Belfast geography (Sandy Row; Donegall Pass and Markets).

#### ***UV – South Belfast Projects Overview***

Project	Status and update
<b>Coffee Culture</b> <i>SOF and BIF</i>	As above at BIF46. Partnership project with UV. Letter of Offer approved. Property Purchase completed. Also includes SOF and DfC funding. BIF funding commitment agreed as the shortfall amount at SAWG March 2021. At design stage and planning application is being prepared.
<b>The Lockhouse— Gateway to the River / Walkway</b>	As above at SLIF2-13. Partnership project with UV. Business Case is now approved – awaiting Letter of Offer. Further potential funding from DfI and DfC. At design stage and planning application has been submitted.
<b>Sandy Row Arts and Digital Hub</b> <i>BIF (formerly IT Exam Centre)</i>	As above at BIF48. Partnership project with UV. Property purchase progressing. At design stage and planning application is required. The business case process by UV has shown that there is a funding deficit of £121,152. UV have requested that the Council consider meeting this funding shortfall, amounting to a total BIF contribution of £584,187 so that the Letter of Offer can be released.
<b>Accidental Theatre (Shaftesbury Square)</b>	Business Case at preliminary stage and progressing.
<b>School of Music Redevelopment</b>	Urban Villages has confirmed that this project has been removed from the Programme.

### DfC Funded Projects

Listed below is the status update on project funded by Department for Communities in South Belfast.

### ***DfC – South Belfast Projects Overview***

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status and update</b>
<b>Belfast Islamic Centre – Renovations of Aldersgate House, University Rd</b>	The Council is the delivery agent for this project. Working in conjunction with BIC and DfC the project has progressed to tender. After a period of delay to rectify some issues the project has now commenced on site as of the 15 August. A delivery agreement between DfC, BIC and BCC is in development. Further progress updates will be brought back in due course to the AWG.
<b>Holylands Alleygating and Cleansing Project</b>	DfC funding in the sum of £120,000 has been confirmed and project progressing.
<b>Strangford Playing Fields</b>	Feasibility study completed. Potential funding sources are being explored with discussions ongoing with DfC.

### **DfI Funded Projects**

**Listed below is the status update on project funded by Department for Infrastructure in South Belfast.**

### ***DfI – South Belfast Projects Overview***

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status and update</b>
<b>Finaghy Bridge</b>	As above at SLIF017. Design stage.
<b>Lagan Gateway</b>	As above as BIF04. Underway.
<b>Covered cycle stands Phase 1</b>	<i>Via Revitalisation Programme (DfC, DfI)</i> Belvoir Activity Centre – due to be installed in late August Mary Peters Track – due to be installed in September
<b>Covered cycle stands Phase 2</b>	<i>Via DfI Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i> Botanic Gardens, Ormeau Park - Currently in production and due for installation by May 2023. Potential additional locations: Cherryvale Park, Shaftesbury Centre, Musgrave Park.
<b>Expansion of Belfast Bikes Network</b>	<i>Via Revitalisation Programme (DfC, DfI)</i> The new station at Olympia in South is due to be installed in Autumn. Further stations are also under development via the Council funded scheme.

The Committee adopted the recommendations and noted that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 19th August, had agreed to name the Lagan Gateway Bridge in memory of Noah Donohoe.

### **Election of Chairperson**

At this point, Councillor Spratt joined the meeting and voted in favour of Councillor Bunting acting as Chairperson of the Working Group.

As the formal part of the proceedings had now ended, Councillor Bunting was, accordingly, elected to serve as Chairperson for the period to end on the date of the Local Government Elections in May, 2023.

(Councillor Bunting in the Chair.)



### **Workshop - Alleygating Phase 5**

The Working Group then proceeded to hold a workshop, with the aim of identifying locations in South Belfast which would benefit from the erection of alleygates, under Phase 5 of the Council's Alleygating Scheme.

Chairperson

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# West Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 25th August, 2022

WEST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP  
HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillor Corr, McCoubrey, Matt Collins, Michael Collins, Donnelly, Garrett, Hutchinson, McCann, Verner and Thompson.

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes  
Ms. A. McGlone, Neighbourhood Integration Manager;  
Ms. K. Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager;  
Ms. E. McCullough, Neighbourhood Integration Manager  
Mr. F. Smith, Project Sponsor and  
Mrs. G. Boyd, Democratic Services Officer.

## **Election of Chairperson**

The Working Group was reminded that, since this was its first meeting since the Annual Meeting of the Council in June, it was required to elect a Member to serve as Chairperson.

Accordingly, Councillor McCann was proposed by Councillor Corr and seconded by Councillor Spratt. The vote was deemed carried and Councillor McCann was appointed to serve as Chairperson until the date of the Local Government Elections in May, 2023..

## **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors Beattie and McCabe.

## **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 26th May were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

## **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Thompson asked that her membership of the Greater Shankill Community Forum be noted for the record.

## **Update on Physical Programme**

The Members of the working group considered the content of the report below;

### **“1. Introduction**

**The Council’s Physical Programme covers projects under a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, the Local Investment Fund (LIF), the**

Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Social Outcomes Fund (SOF) and the new Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF); in addition, the programme covers projects that the Council is delivering in behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme.

## 2. Recommendations

Members are asked to

- note the physical programmes update for West Belfast.
- Note the correspondence received from Shankill Mission and consider any proposals of the £750,000 now available for re-allocation

## 3. Local Investment Fund

Members are reminded LIF is a £9m fixed programme of capital investment in non-council neighbourhood assets, over two tranches: LIF 1 (2012-2015) - £5m total funding pot, allocated across each AWG areas; and LIF 2 (2015 -2019) - £4m allocation. (LIF 1 – West - £1,127,500 + Shankill £490,000 and LIF 2 - £1,400,000).

Each LIF project proposal is taken through a Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. The table below outlines funding to date for each tranche, at key stages of the delivery process: 49 projects have received In Principle support under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 47 have been completed and 2 projects at delivery stage. In total, 95% of all LIF West projects have now been completed. Further details of these are outlined below.

LIF breakdown – West	LIF 1		LIF 2	
Stage/ Description	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)	Projects	Amount/ Value (£)
Number of Projects Completed	25 (100%)	£1,617,500	22 (92%)	£1,301,788
Number of Projects On-going Delivery			2 (8%)	£98,212
Number of Projects in Pre-construction				
Number of Projects in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)				
<b>Total Number of Approved Projects</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>£1,617,500</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>£1,400,000</b>

The below table is a brief overview of the remaining live projects are shown below.

LIF Ref	Project	LIF Funding	Stage	Status	Action / recommendation
WLIF2-08	Berlin Swifts Football Club	£65,085	On Ground	Modular changing building has been installed however utility connections remain outstanding. Ongoing meetings with the EA to confirmed preferred option. A price for connections to the sewerage system has been received from NI Water but is significantly above cost estimates reflecting ongoing issues in the construction sector. Project is therefore facing a funding deficit. Officers investigating options to bridge funding deficit .	Continue engagement with the groups and project partners.
WLIF2-04	St John Bosco Boxing Club	£40,000	On Ground	Project completion expected late August/early September. Project delayed due to movement of gas pipe work and associated approvals.	Ongoing liaison with the group, Sport NI, DfC and DoF.
WLIF-29	Davitt's GAC	£16,000	Complete	Works complete and payment to be made	Continue engagement with the groups and project partners.

#### 4. Belfast Investment Fund

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration, partnership projects, with a minimum £250k investment. The West AWG had a total allocation of £9m comprising £5.5m from the original allocation, an additional £1.2m which was ring-fenced for projects in the Shankill area when this became part of the West AWG following the Council elections in 2015 and £2.5m which was ringfenced for projects in the Colin area following LGR.

6 projects have received an In-Principle funding commitment under BIF accounting for the full allocation. Each of the 'In Principle' projects are taken through a 3-stage approval

process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place. Table below provides a summary of BIF allocated projects.

**Summary of BIF allocated projects**

<b>West</b>	Stage 3—Davitts GAC—£1m; Raidió Fáilte—£950k; St Comgall's- £3.5m; Colin Glen Forest Park—£2.5m Stage 2—Glencairn Community Project— £700k; St Mary's CBS— no commitment Stage 1— Royal British Legion—£300k; An Sportslann; Suffolk Community Forum; Belfast Hills- Black Mountain Access—no commitment
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**5. Social Outcomes Fund**

SOF is £4m ringfenced capital investment programme with a focus on local community tourism projects. 5 projects in West Belfast received an In-Principle funding commitment. Similar to LIF and BIF, all projects are subject to Due Diligence process prior to any funding award.

**SOF – West Belfast projects overview**

<b>West</b>	Stage 3— James Connolly Interpretative centre—£650,000; Rock Centre —£200,000; Belfast Orange Hall Museum- £80,000; Roddy McCorley Museum - £1,350,000 Stage 1— Shankill Mission - £750,000
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An overview of the remaining SOF projects is outlined in the table below –

SOF ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action /recommendation
SOF05	Roddy McCorley Museum	£1,350,000	On Ground	Development of a modern interpretative museum and existing grounds. Project progressing well. Estimated completion late September 2022.	Continue engagement with the group

SOF07	Shankill Mission	£750,000	Initial stage	Proposed development of a social economy training hotel. Initial stage. Overall scheme approx. cost at £7m.	Members are asked to note the attached correspondence received from Shankill Mission withdrawing the project.
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Members are asked to note there has been ongoing liaison with Argyle Business Centre who are the project promoters of the Shankill Mission Hotel project regarding the viability of the project. Members are asked to note the correspondence received from the Board of Argyle thanking Members for their support of the project but noting the challenges in the current economic climate and therefore formally withdrawing from the process. The correspondence received requested that the Council allocate £100,000 towards revenue costs however the Director noted that the Council cannot fund these types of costs except where they are capitalizable against a project. Members are asked to note the update and consider any proposals in respect of the £750,000 which is now available for re-allocation in the Shankill area.

#### 6. Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund is a £10m capital fund to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long term difference in their communities. Members will recall that the fund was originally £8m and has been bolstered by an additional £2m via the reallocation of year end surpluses. The fund has attracted significant interest and an exceptionally high volume of applications was received. The Fund encompasses a three-stage process as approved by Council. Stage 1 is the application phase; Stage 2 is the development phase and Stage 3 is the delivery phase. The fund closed to applicants in May 2022. Members were advised that they would be updated on the outcome of the Stage 1 – Application stage once all the applications were collated and reviewed by an assessment panel against the agreed project assessment matrix. An intensive period of eligibility review, validation, panel assessment and moderation has now been completed with final checks now underway. Reports will be brought to Members shortly via the AWGs as per the agreed process. Activity remains in line with the timeframe previously presented to Members.

#### 7. Capital Programme

The Capital Programme is the rolling programme of enhancing existing Council assets or building / buying new ones. Members are reminded of the 3-stage approval process in place for every project on council's Capital Programme, as agreed by SP&R Committee. Table below provides an update on current live

projects West Belfast area. Members are asked to note the status and updates provided.

#### **West Belfast – Capital programme overview**

Project	Status and update
<b>City Cemetery – National Lottery Heritage Fund</b>	Stage 3 – Committed, on the ground. Contractor works are progressing well. The new service yard is completed. The restoration of the Mortuary Tower & exterior of Foxes Lodge is completed. Visitor centre is completed and work is ongoing in preparation for opening. In tandem with this the restoration works on several of the site's key assets such as the Centre Steps and Victorian Fountains is well underway. Design and procurement works are underway with regards to Dual Language signage throughout the site.
<b>Access to the Hills –</b> connections from Cavehill to Divis Mountain and Black Mountain	Stage 2- Uncommitted. OBC procurement underway.
<b>Black Mountain/ Upper Whiterock Greenway</b>	Stage 2- Uncommitted. OBC completed and circulated to stakeholders for comments.
<b>Colin Greenway</b>	Stage 2- Uncommitted. OBC underway.
<b>Alley-gates Phase 5</b>	Stage 2 – Uncommitted. Consultation underway and MTC in place
<b>Playground Programme</b> (Areema and Sally Gardens)	Stage 3 – committed. Works programmed with MTC for completion within 22/23 financial year.
<b>Belfast Bikes</b> (New Station at Kennedy Centre)	DFI funded (see below)

Members are asked to note the updates provided.

#### **8. Externally funded programmes**

The Council is the delivery partner for several government department on key capital investment programmes, namely Social Investment Fund (SIF) and Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office as well as several schemes with DfC. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to West Belfast.

##### **Urban Villages Initiative**

The table below shows the status on UV projects in West Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined West Belfast geography (Colin area).

Project	Status and update
<b>Páirc Nua Chollann</b> (New Park in Colin)	Council is acting as Delivery Partner. A finishing contractor has been appointed and a delivery programme and cost plan have been agreed.



	The project is being actively managed and ongoing monitoring is in progress. It is anticipated that the project will complete in late September 2022.
<b>Colin Valley Football Club</b>	Council is acting as Delivery Partner. Contractor on site and project programme progressing well. Planning for press release / launch event ongoing. Anticipated completion December 2022.
<b>Healthy Living Centre (Sport in the Community (PCA)</b>	Council is acting as Delivery Partner. Council agreed 25 year lease and 25 year Deed of Dedication has been confirmed. Final lease to be signed off. Design Team appointed. Planning application approved. Letter of Offer is approved. Contractor appointed and expected on site in September 2022.
<b>Colin Community Health and Wellbeing Hub</b>	Council is acting as Delivery Partner. This is a developing project in the Colin UV area and the project promoter is Colin Neighbourhood Partnership. The project is still at business case stage and remains subject to TEO approval. This project is classified as transformational scale.

### **PEACEIV – Capital Projects**

**Members are asked to note updates on the capital projects that are related to the PEACEIV Programme;**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status and update</b>
<b>Forth Meadow Community Greenway</b>	<p><i>Section 1 – Glencairn – Works complete and handed over to City and Neighbourhood Services. Signage package to be installed to include feature panels, narrative panels and beacon lights (currently in fabrication)</i></p> <p><i>Section 2 – Forth River/ Springfield Road – Anticipated start date of September 2022.</i></p> <p><i>Section 3- Falls Park/Whiterock – Works partially completed due to complete within next few weeks.</i></p> <p><i>Section 4 – Bog Meadows – Phase 1 complete, Phase 4 underway, anticipated completion mid November 2022.</i></p> <p><i>Section 5 – Westlink to City Centre - currently at detailed design stage.</i></p> <p>Members will be aware that the Council has now gained planning permission for Section 2 at August planning committee.</p>
<b>Black Mountain Shared Space Project</b>	Procurement stage with tender returns in September 2022 and an anticipated start on site in October 2022. Planning due to be considered at Planning on 31 <sup>st</sup> August. SEUPB have granted the project an extension to December 2023 and the construction programme is still in line with this timeframe. Further project update to be provided on receipt of tender return and planning decision.
<b>Shankill Women's Centre</b>	Contractor onsite with works ongoing. Artwork on hoarding unveiling took place on 11 August 2022, work completed by cross- community Shankill Women's Centre Empowering Young Women's Project, Shankill Women's Centre Volunteer Group, Small Wonders After Schools, Edenderry Nursery and Hydebank Wood College. Work

	supported by contractor as part of their social clause requirements.
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### **DfC funded projects**

Members are asked to note the projects match funded by Department for Communities which include Páirc Nua Chollann nearing completion, Berlin Swifts Football Club, Forth Meadow Community Greenway underway, Black Mountain Shared Space Project and Whiterock 3G pitch carpet replacement (the latter is now complete).

### **DfI funded projects**

Below is the status update on project funded by Department for Infrastructure in West Belfast.

### **DfI – South Belfast projects overview**

Project	Status and update
<b>Covered cycle stands Phase 1</b>	<i>Via Revitalisation Programme (DfC, DfI)</i> Grosvenor Community Centre – due to be installed in September
<b>Covered cycle stands Phase 2</b>	<i>Via DfI Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i> Pairc Nua Chollan, Andersonstown Leisure Centre - Currently in production and due for installation by May 2023. Potential additional location: Brook Leisure Centre.
<b>Belfast Bikes</b> (New Station at Kennedy Centre)	<i>Via DfI Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i> Approvals in place and works to be completed by early September 2022”

The Director of Physical Programmes drew members attention to the ongoing liaison regarding the viability of the project with Argyle Business Centre which was the project promoter of the Shankill Mission Hotel project. She highlighted the correspondence received from the Board of Argyle thanking Members for their support of the project but noting the challenges in the current economic climate and therefore formally withdrawing from the process. The correspondence received requested that the Council allocate £100,000 towards revenue costs, however, the Director noted that the Council can fund these types of costs except where they are capitalizable against a project.

The Director of Physical Programmes advised the Working Group that, as the Shankill Mission project was no longer viable, £750,000 was now available for re-allocation. A discussion took place in respect of the reallocation of funds.

Moved by Alderman Mc Coubrey,  
Seconded by the Councillor Verner and

Resolved – that the £750,000 reallocated as follows:

- recognising that both Berlin Swifts and Greater Shankill Community Council (Legion) projects are committed projects where significant

work has already been undertaken, that monies are reallocated to meet the funding deficits on both projects with up to £113,000 to be allocated to Berlin Swifts and the final budget allocation for the Greater Shankill Community Council project to be agreed once the tender had been returned;

- that £50k be allocated to a small-scale environmental improvement project for the Shankill Road; and
- that out of the remaining allocation, agree, in principle, to look at a number of other proposals in Woodvale Park namely, MUGA upgrades and the development of a sensory garden with further detail to be brought back to the Working Group and Committee in due course.

A Member raised a query in relation to the completion and handover of Páirc Nua Chollann (New Park in Colin). He asked for details on how the space would be animated and what engagement had taken place with local groups such as the community safety partnership. The Neighbourhood Integration Manager informed members of the working group that there was a 1st draft of the animation plan and there had been various local groups as part of this process. The neighbourhood Integration Manager agreed to contact Councillor Garrett to discuss further engagement in relation to the animation of the space.

### **CNS – Neighbourhood Services Portfolios Update**

The area working group considered the following report:

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

**The purpose of the report is to update Area Working Group members on the recent changes at Neighbourhood Services Manager (NSM) level in terms of portfolios.**

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

**Members are asked to note the content of the report, and the changes outlined within it, in relation to areas of responsibility (at NSM level), and key contact points (more detailed information included in the presentation at Appendix 1) within the Neighbourhood Services section of City & Neighbourhood Services Department.**

#### **3.0 Main report**

##### **3.1 Key Issues**

**As we emerge from the pandemic and the need to restore services to pre-Covid levels, and following the departure of the fourth Neighbourhood Services Manager, Alison Allen back in February 2022 it was agreed that it would be timely to review the areas of responsibility and operational alignment, managed by each of the four Neighbourhood Services Managers to support and improve coordination going forward.**

As a result of this review it was agreed at Director level within City and Neighbourhood Services, and then at Strategic DMT and CMT that, from April 2022 onwards, Neighbourhood Service Managers (NSMs) would be responsible and accountable for specific service/portfolio areas rather than geographical areas as they were previously.

3.2 Neighbourhood Service Managers (NSMs) are responsible and accountable for the service/portfolio areas as outlined below – namely

- Stephen Leonard for Open Space and Street Scene,
- Cate Taggart for Community Services and Community Support,
- Kelly Gilliland for Community Funding and Neighbourhood Integration,
- and the NSM currently being recruited will have responsibility for Community Safety, Good Relations and Partnership Working. *NB Kelly Gilliland is currently responsible for this portfolio area until someone is appointed.*

3.3 NSMs are supported by Lead Officers (LOs)

- Edel Mullan for Open Space and Street Scene.

Under Community Provision:

- Cormac McCann for Community Services and Community Support,
- Margaret Higgins for Community Funding and Neighbourhood Integration,
- Jim Girvan for Community Safety,
- There are also a number of service or programme area focussed posts who report direct to NSMs, namely Nicola Lane as Good Relations Manager, Stevie Lavery as Programme Manager and Noel Munnis as Partnerships Manager (See Appendix 1).

3.4 Member or partner enquiries, regardless of area of origin, should now be directed to the relevant NSM, Lead Officer or Manager within the service area.

3.5 Open Space and Street Scene Managers (OSS Managers) – David Salters (North), Currently vacant/being recruited (South), Liam McKinley (West) and Colin Willets (East) will continue to be available to assist with queries or concerns in relation to street cleansing or in relation to maintenance and upkeep of our parks and open spaces.

3.6 Neighbourhood Integration Managers (NIMs) – Eimear McCullough (North), Denise Smith (South), Alice McGlone (West) and Kathy Watters (East) will remain area focussed. The role of the NIMs is

to work at a neighbourhood level to transform and integrate, both internally within Council, and externally alongside partners where it is clear that Council has a key role to play.

3.7 NIMs will work alongside colleagues, partners and/or members, on a specific timebound basis, to develop projects and initiatives with the aim of transforming how we provide support and services at a neighbourhood level. These priorities will be identified within our City & Neighbourhood Services business plan for 2022/23-2024/25 as well as via the Belfast Agenda Refresh (22-26) community planning process currently underway.

3.8 In summary, we are hopeful that this new way of working, with clear accountability and reporting lines, will result in greater clarity, improved communication, reduced duplication and better coordination going forward.

The presentation included at Appendix 1 outlines in more detail (and with visuals where available) how each of the portfolio/service area teams are comprised.

#### **Financial and Resource Implications**

None

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

None.”

The Neighbourhood Services Manager agreed to send a copy of the City and Neighbourhood services structure chart along with the contact number for each officer to the members of west area working group.

The Working Group noted the contents of the report.

Chairperson

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# North Belfast Area Working Group

Tuesday, 30th August, 2022

## NORTH BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillors Bradley, Cobain, Magee, Maskey, McCullough, Murphy, O'Hara, Pankhurst and Whyte.

In attendance: Mr. M. Doherty, Project Manager;  
Ms. E. McCullough, Neighbourhood Services  
Integration Manager; and  
Ms. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Election of Chairperson**

The Area Working Group noted that it was required to elect a Chairperson for the coming year.

Moved by Councillor Maskey,  
Seconded by Councillor Magee and

Resolved – that Councillor Bradley be elected to serve as Chairperson to the North Belfast Area Working Group until the date of the Local Government Elections in May, 2023.

### **Apologies**

No apologies for an inability to attend the meeting were reported.

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 25th May, 2022 were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings.

### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of Interest were reported.

### **City and Neighbourhood Services – Neighbourhood Services Portfolios Update**

The Neighbourhood Services Integration Manager provided the Working Group with an update on the recent changes to the Neighbourhood Services Managers' portfolios.

She reported that a review had been carried out with regard to the areas of responsibility and operational alignment, managed by each of the four Neighbourhood Services Managers, to support and improve coordination going forward. The outcome of the review, agreed by both the Departmental and Corporate Management Teams, was that the

Neighbourhood Services Managers would be responsible and accountable for specific service/portfolio areas rather than geographical areas.

She outlined the portfolios of each of the Neighbourhood Services Managers and the Lead Officers who supported them. She also referred the Working Group to the key contacts within the City and Neighbourhood Services Department for Open Space and Street Scene and Neighbourhood Integration.

She concluded by stating that it was hoped that the new alignment of Neighbourhood Service Managers, with clear accountability and reporting lines, would result in greater clarity, improved communication, reduced duplication and better coordination going forward.

The Working Group noted the update.

### **Physical Programmes Update**

The Working Group considered the undernoted report:

#### **“1. Introduction**

The Council's Physical Programme covers projects under a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, the Local Investment Fund (LIF), the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Social Outcomes Fund (SOF) and the new Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF); in addition, the programme covers projects that the Council is delivering in behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme.

#### **2. Recommendations**

Members are asked to note the physical programme update for North Belfast

Members are asked to note the remaining allocation of £71,412.61 which is now available from the underspends within the Grace Family Centre and Cancer Lifeline projects.

#### **3. Local Investment Fund**

LIF is a £9m fixed programme of capital investment in non-council neighbourhood assets, over two tranches: LIF 1 (2012-2015) - £5m total funding pot, allocated across each AWG areas; and LIF 2 (2015 -2019) - £4m allocation with the North being allocated £1.127m under LIF1 and £800,000 under LIF2.

Each LIF project proposal is taken through a Due Diligence process prior to any funding award. The table below outlines funding to date for each tranche, at key stages of the delivery process: 43 projects in total have received In Principle support under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 34 have been completed; 2 are at delivery stage; 2 are at pre- construction stage and 5 remain at due diligence / initial



stages. In total, 79% of all LIF North projects have now been completed.

LIF breakdown – North	LIF 1		LIF 2	
Stage/Description	Projects	Amount/Value (£)	Projects	Amount/Value (£)
Number of Projects Completed	22(88%)	£956,500	12 (67%)	£566,400
Number of Projects On-going Delivery	1(4%)	£40,000	2(11%)	£133,467
Number of Projects in Pre-construction			1(6%)	£21,667
Number of Projects in Initial Stage (Due Diligence)	2(8%)	£131,000	3 (17%)	£76,667
Total Number of Approved Projects	25*	£1,127,500	18**	£798,201

\*This includes additional funding for a LIF 2 project, Ballysillan Youth for Christ.

\*\* This includes additional funding for two LIF 1 projects, Marrowbone Parochial Hall and Jennymount Church.

The table below provide an overview of progress and actions around the remaining live projects. Members are asked to note the status of the current LIF projects and the ongoing actions.

LIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action / recommendation
NLIF066	Wishing Well Project	£40,000	Complete	Project completed.	Continue engagement with group re final account and monitoring and evaluation.

NLIF2-14	Star Neighbourhood Centre	£58,467	On Ground	<p>Project on site. Electrical works complete. Art piece has been installed.</p> <p>Quotations from supplier for playground equipment received.</p>	Continue engagement with the group.
NLIF2-22	Sailortown, St. Joseph's Church Refurbishment	£75,000	On Ground	<p>Project is progressing on site. Heaters procured and installed. Structural Engineer surveyed the internal roof structure and identified necessary works. Contractor for roof work has been appointed and work started 7 February 2022. Work scope has increased on work on gallery and group is applying for additional funding from others.</p>	<p>Continued engagement with group. Ongoing discussion with HED about scope of the works.</p>

NLIF2-21	Somme Group – cross community memorial	£21,667	Tender preparation	<p>Funding agreement and maintenance agreement in final stage of preparation for signature by Group.</p> <p>Tender/quotation to be issued for works, on award of tender street</p> <p>works licence can be prepared as dates for works are required to be included</p>	Continued engagement with group meeting late August.
NLIF014	Westland Community Centre - new buildings (Link to UV Project)	£65,000	Due Diligence stage	<p>Project originally agreed for LIF January 2013. Since SIF support was withdrawn in 2019 Westland Community Group are being supported by partners, including UV, NIHE and BCC to build capacity, and provide programming</p> <p>funding support. A revised community centre scheme has been agreed as an emerging UV capital project. A governance model is being explored and the Business Case is progressing.</p>	Continued engagement with group and the Executive Office in regarding to UV business case process and Due Diligence information.

NLIF2-19	Women's Tec	£46,667	Due Diligence stage	Agreed February 2017. Group is renewing their lease at the former Skegoniell Primary School. They have now signed the lease and it is with the Education Authority for signature.	Continued engagement with the Group
NLIF2-03	Ardayne Shankill Health Partnership	£15,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed in June 2018. Project remains at Due Diligence stage – lease issues to be resolved.	Propose letter sent to Group seeking confirmation of continued involvement in the programme
NLIF057	Ardayne Holy Cross Boxing Club (Link to uv project – ABC Trust H&W Hub)	£66,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed April 2014 - This project is within the overall UV development of St Gemma's School - ABC Trust. Construction has commenced on ABC Trust (Phase 1). Further information required to complete the LIF DD as the Boxing Club will be part of Phase 2.	Continued engagement with Group and with UV
NLIF2-05	Mercy Primary, Crumlin Road	£15,000	Due Diligence stage	Agreed June 2016 -. Group's governance documents being assembled.	Continued engagement with Group.

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration partnership projects, with a minimum

£250k investment from Council BIF – North Belfast was allocated £5.5m. In North Belfast, 7 projects have received an In-Principle funding commitment under BIF, thereby fully allocating its £5.5m: and 2 projects are on the longer BIF list. Each of the ‘In Principle’ projects are taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place.

Members are asked to note the status update of these projects provided below. The table provides a summary of BIF allocated projects i.e. project stage; project title; and funding allocated.

**Summary of BIF allocated projects**

<b>North</b>	<p>Stage 3 - Cancer Lifeline—£650k; Grace Family Centre —£1.6m; Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church Ireland -£1.5m</p> <p><i>Stage 2- Malgrove- £500k, Marrowbone Park £750k; Cultural Community Hub - £350k, Midland Boxing Club £400k</i></p> <p><i>Stage 1 - Cliftonville Community Forum, Sunningdale Community Centre - no commitment</i></p>
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BIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
BIF22/34	Basement Youth Club/ Elim Church (Old Grove)	900,000  £500,000 Department of Education	Design stage	<p>The updated Economic Appraisal and Business Plan has been sent to the Department of Education. This new proposal would see the demolition and rebuild of the building previously used by Basement Youth Club and owned by Elim Church on Gainsborough Drive.</p> <p>Engagement is ongoing between BCC Officers and central government's Economic Branch regarding the updated EA. Engagement is also ongoing</p>	Continue engagement with the group and stakeholders.

				between Basement/Elim and the Department Solicitor's Office regarding the viability of a leave between the parties.	
BIF15	Malgrove	£950,000	Design stage	Business case completed - preferred pavilion option (2017) is for a 4-team changing at estimated cost of £1million. AWG allocated an additional £450,000 to this project in March 2022, bringing total to £950,000. Aim to submit a planning application for the whole sporting complex by early Autumn 2022.	Continue engagement with the group and Belfast City Council estates team, to get design signed off and planning application submitted in Autumn 2022
BIF45	Midland Boxing Club	£580,000	Uncommitted - Tender Stage	Planning permission obtained Dec 2021. Land transfer from Northern Ireland Housing Executive was approved by council in Feb 2022. Additional funding was secured in March 2022: An additional £150,000 of BIF funding and an additional £30,000 from Garfield Weston Trust. All tenders returned in April 2022 were high and	Continue engagement with the group, design team and funders.

				<p>resulted in a funding deficit. Value engineering was carried out alongside the contractor who came in with the most competitive bid. This contractor subsequently withdrew in June 2022. The project was retendered, and a value engineering exercise has been competed with a new contractor. PMU are currently working with the group to agree a phased approach, to enable works to commence in Autumn 2022.</p>	
BIF41	<p>Marrowbone Millennium Park (Link to UV Project)</p>	£750,000	On ground	<p>Partnership project with UV and DfC. A Letter of Offer was approved in November 2021 and a subsequent addendum has been agreed. Project governance structures are now in place with regular project meetings occurring. A contractor has been appointed and commenced on site on 08-08-22. Anticipated completion date is Autumn 2023. Official PR and sod cutting date</p>	<p>Continue engagement with the group and stakeholders.</p>

				to be agreed with funders, with anticipated date to be mid-September. The NIHE/ Council lease agreement regarding land transfer is awaiting final signoff. Registration of the Deed of Dedication for Council land completed.	
BIF43	Cultural Community Hub	£350,000	Uncommitted – Due Diligence stage	Proposed new cultural hub community facility. Project will comprise of a 130sqm permanent brick facility on derelict Orange Lodge owned site. DD information being assembled.	Continue engagement with the group and stakeholders.

Members are asked to note the remaining allocation of £71,412.61 which is now available from the underspends within the Grace Family Centre and Cancer Lifeline projects.

## 5. Capital Programme

The Capital Programme is the rolling programme of enhancing existing Council assets or building / buying new ones. Members are reminded of the 3-stage approval process in place for every project on council's Capital Programme, as agreed by SP&R Committee. Table below provides an update on current live projects North Belfast area. Members are asked to note the status and updates.

### North Belfast – Capital programme overview

Project	Status and update
Belfast Zoo – Programme of Works (Works to the Large Cats Enclosure, Sea Lion, etc)	Stage 3 - Committed Project. On ground. Sea Lion works complete, H&S works have been completed. Picnic area has been constructed. Work on new lion enclosure will start in autumn.
Boodles Dam – Abandonment of the Dam	Stage 3 – Committed Project. Works complete.



Playground Improvement Programme 2021/2022 (City wide)	Stage 3 – Committed Project. Cavehill Adventurous playground. Works completed.
North Foreshore - Development Sites Infrastructure Works	Stage 3 – Committed Project. On Ground. Storm Drainage Infrastructure Installation and Landfill Gas Ring Main tenders being reviewed.
Reservoir Safety Programme	Stage 3- Committed Project. Works to Alexandra Park, Waterworks Upper and Waterworks Lower. Consultants appointed and undertaking investigative work to assess the existing condition of the reservoirs and associated structures. Public consultation expected end 2022 and planning application submitted 2023.
Alleygating Phase 5 – City wide	Stage 3 – Committed Project. Update to be brought to future AWG
LTP - Girdwood Indoor Sports Facility	Stage 2 – Uncommitted Project. Continued development of OBC for new leisure facility. Continued liaison with key stakeholders around options for new facility and overall development of the Girdwood site.
Cathedral Gardens (including Belfast Blitz)	Stage 2 – Uncommitted Project. OBC being worked up
Relocation of Dunbar Link Cleansing Depot	Stage 2 – Uncommitted Project. OBC being worked up
Glencairn Park/ Ligoniel Park Greenway	Stage 2- Uncommitted. OBC to be worked up.
Access to the Hills – connections from Cavehill to Divis Mountain and Black Mountain	Stage 2- Uncommitted. OBC to be worked up. Funding has been received from DAERA Environmental Challenge Fund for wider feasibility study for the whole area of the Belfast Hills.

## 6. Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund is a £10m capital fund to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long term difference in their communities. Members will recall that the fund was originally £8m and has been bolstered by an additional £2m via the reallocation of year end surpluses. The fund has attracted significant interest and an exceptionally high volume of applications was received. The Fund encompasses a three-stage process as approved by Council. Stage 1 is the application phase; Stage 2 is the development phase and Stage 3 is the delivery phase. The fund closed to applicants in May 2022. Members were advised that they would be updated on the outcome of the Stage 1 – Application stage once all the applications were collated and reviewed by an assessment panel against the agreed project assessment matrix. An intensive period of eligibility review, validation, panel assessment and moderation has now been

completed with final checks now underway. Reports will be brought to Members shortly via the AWGs as per the agreed process. Activity remains in line with the timeframe previously presented to Members.

## 7. Externally Funded Programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for several government department on key capital investment programmes, namely Social Investment Fund (SIF) and Urban Villages (UV) from the Executive Office as well as a number of schemes with DfC. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to North Belfast.

### Urban Villages Initiative

The table below shows the status on UV projects in North Belfast – note the UV programme has a defined North

Belfast geography (Ardoyne and Greater Ballysillan).

<u>Project</u>	<u>Status and Update</u>
<b>Marrowbone Millennium Park (links to BIF programme)</b>	<b>As Above</b>
<b>Ballysillan Playing Fields</b>	<b>Partnership project with UV, DfC and DfI Living with Water Programme. A Letter of Offer was agreed in November 2021 and governance structure are now in place. At design stage and the planning application was submitted in January 2022 with expected approval in Autumn 2022. Land transfers issues are progressing. It is anticipated that a contractor will be appointed in late 2022 pending planning approval.</b>
<b>Beann Mhadagain Family Centre</b>	<b>TEO has advised that this project has been withdrawn from the UV Programme.</b>

<p><b>Sunningdale Community Centre</b></p>	<p>Council is acting as delivery agent, proposed on Council land. The project is being fully funded by TEO UV Programme. The Business Case has been approved however no letter has yet been issued. Sunningdale is being incorporated as a community interest company. This is a legal process and is taking some time to establish. TEO has advised that it is unable to issue a letter of offer until the community interest company has been incorporated. Sustainability issues that had previously been highlighted have been explored and Council is satisfied these have been resolved. Land transfer legals are progressing and Council is considering an in-principle agreement to transfer lands. The Design Team has been appointed.</p>
<p><b>Ardoyne Youth Enterprises (AYE) Social Enterprise Project</b></p>	<p>Council is acting as delivery agent. The Business Case has been approved and a draft Letter of Offer has been issued to Council by TEO for consideration. TEO has identified a funding gap in the sum of £500,000. TEO and the Project Promoter are exploring additional funding opportunities to support this project. Design Team to be appointed and works to be commenced by January 2023 prior to expiry of planning approval.</p>
<p><b>ABC Trust Health and Leisure Hub (links to LIF programme)</b></p>	<p>Partnership project with UV DfC, DfI and Flax Trust. A Letter of Offer has been approved. Project governance structures are now in place with regular project meetings occurring. Complex legal matters have been resolved and a tripartite MOU has been developed with the project promoter. A contractor has been appointed and is on site. Anticipated completion date October 2024.</p>

Westland Community Centre (links to LIF programme)	Partnership project with UV. This is an emerging project. A governance model is being explored and the Business Case is progressing.
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#### Peace IV

Members are asked to note the update on Peace IV - Forth Meadow Community Greenway project.

Project	Status and update
Forth Meadow Community Greenway project	<p><i>Section 1 – Glencairn – Works complete and handed over to City and Neighbourhood Services.</i></p> <p><i>Section 2 – Forth River/ Springfield Road – Anticipated start date of September 2022. Section 3- Falls Park/Whiterock – Works partially completed due to complete within next few weeks. .</i></p> <p><i>Section 4 – Bog Meadows – Phase 1 complete, Phase 4 underway, anticipated completion mid November 2022.</i></p> <p><i>Section 5 – Westlink to City Centre - currently at detailed design stage. Members will be aware that the Council has now gained planning permission for Section 2 at August planning committee.</i></p>

#### DfC funded projects

Members are asked to note the update on projects funded by Department for Communities.

Project	Status and update
Girdwood Indoor Sports Site—ICT	Continued development of OBC for new leisure facility. Continued liaison with key stakeholders around options for new facility and overall development of the Girdwood site.
Voice of Young people In Care (VOYPIC) and Include Youth	Council is acting as delivery agent. On Ground. Refurbishment of 100 Great Patrick St, Belfast to provide a modern, fit for purpose youth space. Contractor started on site in January 2022. Funded by DfC and the group.

<b>Ballysillan 3G Pitch (Carpet Replacement)</b>	<b>Project completed. Replacement of 3G carpet. Match funded by DfC.”</b>
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Moved by Councillor Whyte,  
Seconded by Councillor Maskey and

Resolved – that the remaining allocation of £71,412.61 which had become available from the underspends within the Grace Family Centre and Cancer Lifeline projects, be allocated to Cavehill Tennis Club for capital works relating to floodlighting and pitches..

Chairperson

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# East Belfast Area Working Group

Thursday, 8th September, 2022

## MEETING OF EAST BELFAST AREA WORKING GROUP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Alderman Sandford (Chairperson),  
The Lord Mayor (Councillor Long);  
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Alderman Haire);  
Aldermen Copeland, Dorrian and Rodgers; and  
Councillors de Faoite, Flynn, Hanvey, Howard,  
M. Kelly, Kyle, Maghie, Newton and Smyth.

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;  
Ms. K. Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager;  
Ms. K. Watters, Neighbourhood Integration Manager;  
Mrs. G. Boyd, Democratic Services Officer;  
Mrs. C. Donnelly, Democratic Services Officer.

### **Election of Chairperson**

The Working Group was reminded that, since this was its first meeting since the Annual Meeting of the Council in June, it was required to elect a Member to serve as Chairperson.

Accordingly, Councillor Long was proposed as Chairperson and was seconded by Councillor McMullan. The vote was deemed carried.

Councillor Long was, accordingly, elected to serve as Chairperson for the period to end on the date of the Local Government Elections in May, 2023. Alderman Sandford thanked the Members of the working group for their support during his time as Chair of the working group.

(Councillor Long in the Chair.)

### **Apologies**

Apologies for an inability to attend were received from Councillors Kelly and Smyth.

### **Minutes**

The Working Group agreed that the minutes of the meeting of 31st May were an accurate record of proceedings.

### **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Kyle asked that it be noted that he was chair of the Lagan Village Youth and Community Association. Councillor Newton asked that it be noted that his company provide support to Ulster Rugby.

## **Presentations**

### **Northern Ireland Civil Service Sports Association (NICSSA)**

The Chair welcomed Kieran Devlin and Gerry Kelly from the NICSSA Sport and Leisure. Mr Devlin thanked the Members of the working group for the opportunity to present to them their plans in terms of the capital development Programme to improve people's mental and physical health and well-being. They informed the Members that there were a number of priorities, including the development of shared sport facilities, growing participation, improving accessibility and to contribute to society. He added that they had been liaising with local groups in relation to their plans, including Cricket NI, Ulster GAA, Ulster Rugby and Netball NI.

A Member asked if there had been consideration given to accessibility in terms of changing places facilities. Mr. Devlin informed the meeting that they had submitted their plans to DSNi and changing places would be built into the project as mandatory.

After discussion, the members of the area working group noted the contents of the presentation. The Chair thanked Mr. Devlin and Mr. Kelly for their presentation to the group before Mr. Devlin and Mr. Kelly left the meeting.

Noted.

### **Ulster Rugby**

The Chair welcomed Jonny Petrie and David Johnston of Ulster Rugby to the meeting. Mr Petrie thanked the members of the area working group for the opportunity to present to them their plans and priorities for the near future. Mr. Petrie advised Members of the working group that Ulster Rugby was responsible for the leadership, development and growth of the game of Rugby Union within the 9 counties of Ulster. He advised that their purpose was 3 fold as the Governing Body for Rugby Union in Ulster, elite playing functions for both male and female athletes and running the Kingspan stadium.

He went on to explain that Ulster Rugby occupied a unique position within mainstream sports as one that transcended the traditional community divide in Northern Ireland and that Ulster Rugby delivered a range of work in the fields of participation, social inclusion, health, education and justice. Mr Petrie stated that they were committed to strengthening their portfolio through innovative and sustainable programmes, via an Ulster Rugby Foundation.

He indicated that Ulster Rugby's aim was to inspire lifelong participation in Rugby, the community game people wanted to play. They believed that lifelong participation in Rugby could have a lasting and positive impact on people's lives. He informed the Members that they worked alongside clubs, schools, charities, local authorities and government departments to develop and promote opportunities to participate, coach and volunteer in Rugby.

Mr Petrie explained that Ulster Rugby faced a number of challenges, including jurisdictional challenges. Ulster Rugby faced also the unique challenge of being part of an all-island organisation (IRFU), but which fell within the jurisdiction of a different government to that of its counterparts. Clubs in the Republic of Ireland were at a competitive advantage as a result of higher levels of public funding and tax relief. Along with that challenge they also faced challenges in terms of their facilities and funding.

He explained that they had procured external consultancy and technical support and had developed a Facilities and Funding Strategy. The Strategy set out how they, as the



National Governing Body, would drive improvements and investment in rugby facilities, rugby participation and rugby performance across the province and, in doing so, how they would enhance the sustainability and resilience of rugby, embedding it as the community game that people wanted to play. He said that their top 3 priorities were enhancements to the Kingspan stadium, investment in a high performance centre and supporting the 50 clubs registered with Ulster Rugby to improve their facilities.

Several Members raised concerns they had received from residents living in the vicinity of the Kingspan stadium. They said that parking on match nights was still a major issue, particularly in the Cregagh Estate and at the front gates of Cregagh Primary School. They also raised the issues of litter and on street drinking. Mr Petrie agreed to invite East Belfast Councillors to their committee meetings and to look at enhanced match day enforcement teams.

The Chairperson thanked Mr. Petrie and Mr. Johnston for their presentation, and both men left the meeting.

Noted

### **Update on Physical Programme**

The Members of the working group considered the content of the report below;

#### **“1 Introduction**

**The Council's Physical Programme covers projects under a range of funding streams including the Capital Programme, the Leisure Transformation Programme, the Local Investment Fund (LIF), the Belfast Investment Fund (BIF), Social Outcomes Fund (SOF) and the new Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund (NRF); in addition, the programme covers projects that the Council is delivering in behalf of other agencies. This report outlines the status of projects under the Physical Programme**

#### **2. Recommendations**

**Members are asked to note this update and:**

- Note the projects that have recently been completed - Lisnasharragh Community Schools under BIF, Clarawood Playground under the Capital Programme, Pro-Kick Gym under Urban Villages, and Phase 1 of Covered Cycle Stands via DfI and DfC.**
- Note the update in respect of Castlereagh Presbyterian Church BIF project and the correspondence received as attached at Appendix 1 and confirm if they wish to undertake a further site visit, and;**
- Agree if they wish to undertake a site visit of Templemore as it moves into completion stage**

#### **3. Local Investment Fund**

**In May 2022, Members confirmed the reallocation of the remaining LIF funding allocation for the area. The total LIF allocation for LIF 1 and 2 is now allocated, totalling £2,327,500. A total of 19 projects**

received in- principle support under LIF1 and LIF2, of which 18 have been completed, 1 project remaining at initial stage - the Lagan Village Youth and Community Association.

LIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action / recommendation
ELIF2-17	Lagan Village Youth and Community Association	£15,000	Initial stage	Approved by SP&R Committee in October 2020. DfC funding commitment received of £35,000. The land for the project has now been transferred to the Group. A successful application was made to the Alpha fund for an additional £25,000. Design team have been appointed with planning approval granted. Subject to final Due Diligence approval anticipated soon, the works are expected to be completed in Autumn/Winter 2022.	Continue engagement with the group

Members will recall that a recommendation was agreed by Committee in June 2022 that remaining funds be reallocated as follows:

- £70,000 to Cycling Ireland towards the Henry Jones BMX/cycle track project;
- £70,000 to the Cregagh Sports Club;
- £30,000 to provide storage facilities for Bloomfield Football Club, Clonduff Football Club, East Belfast Football Club and Glentoran Academy;
- and the remainder was ringfenced for Bloomfield Community Association.

These proposals are currently going through the agreed LIF process.

#### 4. Belfast Investment Fund

Members are reminded BIF is a £28m investment fund for regeneration, partnership projects, with a minimum £250,000 investment from Council. In East Belfast 9 projects have received an in-principle funding commitment under BIF. There are 5 projects on the longer BIF list. Each of the 'In Principle' projects are taken through a 3-stage approval process, including a rigorous Due Diligence process before any Funding Agreement is approved and put in place. Table below provides a summary of BIF allocated projects i.e. project stage; project title; and the funding allocated.

##### Summary of BIF allocated projects:

<b>East</b>	Stage 3—Willowfield—£560k; H&W Welders—£2.37m; Strand—£1.8m; Bloomfield—£440k Stage 2— <i>Lagan Village Youth &amp; Community—no commitment</i> Stage 1— <i>East Belfast Mission; Belmont Bowling Club; Bloomfield Presbyterian Church; St. John's Orangefield, Church of Ireland, Tullycarnet Community Support Services—no commitment / on long list</i>
<b>Outer East</b>	Stage 3 —TAGIT- £434k; Braniel—£390k; Hanwood—£396k; Castlereagh Presbyterian Church—£382k; Lisnasharragh Community Schools—£398k

The table below provides an overview of the remaining projects. Members are asked to note the actions and recommendations

BIF Ref	Project	Funding	Stage	Status	Action/ Recommendation
BIF12	Strand Arts Centre	£1,800,000	Stage 3 – design stage	In November 2021, Members noted the increase in cost estimates following the RIBA Stage 2 Design Report. The total cost estimate is £5,320,000 which includes construction inflation and theatre/ cinema specifics. The total project budget exclusive of these items is estimated at £4,657,000. Members agreed to progress to RIBA Stage 3 and submit to Planning – which was secured in August 2022. Additional funding from the Heritage	Continue engagement with the group. Council acting as grantee for development grant from the Heritage Fund.

				Fund has been secured. A Levelling Up application was also recently submitted with a decision anticipated in Autumn 2022.	
<b>BIF13</b>	<b>Bloomfield Community Association</b>	£440,000 plus £60,009 reallocation - £500,009	Stage 3 - Committed – In Principle	A new Economic Appraisal/ Business Plan was completed in July 2021. Cost of preferred option is £745,054. An application for match funding has been submitted to DfC but is contingent on budget availability. Officers are continuing to look at other options in relation to the funding deficit.	Continue engagement with the group and partners.

#### **Outer East BIF Projects**

<b>BIF Ref</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Funding</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Action/ Recommendation</b>
<b>BIF37</b>	<b>Lisnasharragh Community Schools Project</b>	<b>£398.00</b>	<b>Complete</b>	<b>Project complete</b>	<b>Post project evaluation</b>
<b>BIF25</b>	<b>Braniel Church</b>	<b>£390.00</b>	<b>Stage 3 - On Ground</b>	<b>Works progressing well. Planned completion February/March 2023</b>	<b>Continue engagement with the group</b>
<b>BIF38</b>	<b>Castlereagh Presbyterian Church</b>	<b>£382.00</b>	<b>Stage 3 – Due Diligence</b>	<b>Costs of works currently estimated at £325.200 to cover building works including new heating system. Church approval for works now in place.</b>  <b>See update below</b>	<b>Continued engagement with the group</b>

### **BIF 38 Castlereagh Presbyterian Church**

At the last AWG Members asked for an update on the Castlereagh Presbyterian Church to be brought into the next AWG and as part of this had requested that additional information be requested from the Church in respect of whether there would be any congregational funding or whether they had investigated other external funding streams and who the end users of the facilities would be. Officers subsequently liaised with the Group on this basis and a response was received from the Group (correspondence is attached at Appendix 1).

Members are asked to note that the Church has noted that they could *'provide some funding to assist with the programme'* however there is no commitment at this stage to a specific amount. In terms of the beneficiaries there is further detail but no specific detail on the numbers/targets etc.

It is recommended that the Castlereagh Presbyterian Church be invited into the next meeting of the AWG to present their updated plans specifically in terms of their funding strategy and contribution, as well as the outcomes of the project. Members are also asked to consider if they wish to undertake a site visit to the project in advance of this meeting, particularly for those Members who were unable to visit previously. The Church have highlighted in their correspondence that they are very happy to facilitate a visit. If Members agree, officers will work with Democratic Services to secure a suitable date.

### **5. Social Outcomes Fund**

SOF is £4m ringfenced capital investment programme with a focus on local community tourism projects. There is one project under SOF for East Belfast - Eastside Visitor Centre – with an In-Principle funding commitment. Similar to BIF, all projects are subject to Due Diligence process prior to any funding award.

Project	SOF Award	Status and update
<b>Eastside Visitor Centre</b> <i>SOF and UV</i>	£700,000	<i>Business case stage.</i> Partner project with Urban Villages. The project proposal is for the extension of the existing visitor centre at C.S. Lewis Square. Status remains as reported previously - Final draft OBC completed and is in the UV approval process. Council officers are investigating charges against the site and UV economists are continuing a VFM exercise.

### **6. Capital Programme**

The Capital Programme is the rolling programme of enhancing existing Council assets or building / buying new assets. Members are reminded of the 3-stage approval process in place for every project on council's Capital Programme, as agreed by SP&R Committee. The table below provides an update on current live

projects in East Belfast. Members are asked to note the status and update.

**East Belfast – Capital programme overview**

<b><u>Project</u></b>	<b><u>Status and update</u></b>
LTP- Templemore- NLHF	<p><i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> On Ground. Construction on the leisure side of the building is anticipated to be completed by early November. GLL are currently working up programme for opening. The completion of the Heritage side of the building is anticipated to be March 2023.</p> <p><b>Propose that Members undertake a site visit as the project is nearing completion</b></p>
New Crematorium	<p><i>Stage 3 – Committed.</i> RIBA Stage 3 Design has been completed and a planning application has been submitted to Lisburn and Castlereagh Council In June 2022. Technical Design is currently being progressed.</p>
Sydenham Greenway	<p><i>Stage 2 - Uncommitted.</i> OBC to be worked up.</p>
Shared Youth and Community Facility Inner East	<p><i>Stage 1- Emerging.</i> Officers to work jointly with the EA to develop business case/ plan on a potential youth facility at the council owned Ballymacarrett site. Strategic options study and discussions ongoing, initial mapping exercise complete and with Council officers for review.</p>
Ballymacarrett Area Masterplan	<p><i>Stage 1- Emerging.</i> Linked to Connswater Community Greenway. Link to the UV/DfI funded Ballymacarrett Walkway Environmental and Cycling Infrastructure Improvement project.</p>
Playground Improvement Programme 2021/22 (City wide)	<p><b>Project complete</b> at Clarawood Playground.</p>
Alleygating Phase 5 – City wide	<p><i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted.</i> Engagement underway with Members to confirm locations.</p>

**7. Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund**

The Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund is a £10m capital fund to help groups deliver capital projects that will make a real, long term difference in their communities. Members will recall that the fund was originally £8m and has been bolstered by an additional £2m via the reallocation of year end surpluses. The fund has attracted significant interest and an exceptionally high volume of applications was received. The Fund encompasses a three-stage process as approved by Council. Stage 1 is the application phase; Stage 2 is the development phase and Stage 3 is the delivery phase. The fund closed to applicants in May 2022. Members were advised that they would be updated on the outcome of the Stage 1 – Application stage once all the applications were collated and

reviewed by an assessment panel against the agreed project assessment matrix. An intensive period of eligibility review, validation, panel assessment and moderation has now been completed with final checks now underway. Reports will be brought to Members shortly via the AWGs as per the agreed process. Activity remains in line with the timeframe previously presented to Members.

## 8. Externally funded programmes

The Council is the delivery partner for a number of government departments on significant capital investment programmes, namely Social Investment Fund (SIF) and the Urban Villages Initiative (UV) funded by the Executive Office, and number of schemes with DfC. The following is an overview of projects within each programme relevant to East Belfast.

### Social Investment Fund

<u>Project</u>	<u>Status and update</u>
Pro-Kick Community Gym	<b>Project complete.</b> Council acted as Delivery Partner. This project has successfully been completed and handed over to Pro-kick. The new gym opened to the public at the start of August 2022. The official launch organised by UV as funder will take place on 12 Sept.
<b>Pitt Park redevelopment</b> <i>Council asset</i>	<p><i>Project underway.</i> This UV funded project is on a Council site and the Council is acting as the delivery partner. The business case for the park redevelopment has been approved. The design team has been appointed. Contractor procurement is underway and it is anticipated that a contractor will be appointed by Nov 2022. A planning application for some elements of the works is being prepared and will be submitted imminently. Transfer of lands from NIHE has now been ratified by full Council in September.</p> <p>Members are asked to note that recent community engagement information sessions have taken place with final designs shared with localcommunity groups. This has been led by UV in partnership with the Council. UV are organising a Pitt Park stakeholder information session, to be held in October 2022 - date to be confirmed. This session will be supported by the Council and</p>

	chaired by an independent facilitator.
<b>Pop EastSide- Landmark East SOF project 'Eastside Visitor Centre'</b>	<i>Business case stage.</i> Partner project with Urban Villages. The project proposal is for the extension of the existing visitor centre at C.S. Lewis Square. Status remains as reported previously - Final draft OBC completed and is in the UV approval process. Council officers are investigating charges against the site and UV economists are continuing a VFM exercise.
<b>Hosford Community HomesInclusion Hub (formerly East Belfast Mission Accommodation project)</b>	<i>Business case stage.</i> Council is acting as Delivery Partner. The project is renamed Hosford Community Homes Inclusion Hub. The Business Case has been approved. Urban Villages are now providing the full funding package and no funding gaps remain. The draft LOO is with the Council for review. Design team procurement is underway until September 2022.
<b>Portview (formerly Eastside Souk)</b>	Emerging project at feasibility stage.
<b>Titanic People Exhibition</b>	<i>Business case stage.</i> Design options, surveys and costs have been reviewed and concerns remain regarding building safety, associated costs in making the site secure, viability of the project given available investment and project outcome measures. LIF funding was withdrawn in 2021. Members stressed their desire to continue to work with the Group to explore alternative funding sources and how the project can link with other projects in the area. The Council is waiting on a detailed project proposal and Business Case from UV. Options in relation to the funding gap are being explored with other funding bodies including DfC.

#### **DfC and DfI funded projects**

**Below is the status update on project funded by Department for Infrastructure and/or the Department for Communities in East Belfast.**



**Dfl and DfC – East Belfast projects overview**

<b><u>Project</u></b>	<b><u>Status and update</u></b>
<b>Prokick Community Gym</b>	<b>Project complete</b> – as above under Urban Villages. DfC contribution
<b>Lagan Village Youth and Community Centre</b>	Initial stage. As above at ELIF2-17. DfC contribution.
Playground Improvement Programme - <b>Clarawood Play Park</b>	<b>Project complete.</b> DfC contribution.
<b>Covered cycle stands Phase 1 –East</b>	<i>Via Revitalisation Programme (DfC, Dfl)</i> <b>Project complete.</b> Belmont Park – complete. Inverary Community Centre – complete
<b>Covered cycle stands Phase 2 –East</b>	<i>Via Dfl Active Travel Enablers Blue and Green Infrastructure Fund</i> – Avoniel Leisure Centre - supplier/contractor appointment stage - due to be installed by Spring 2023.  – Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre - supplier/contractor appointment stage - due to be installed by Spring 2023.
<b>Expansion of Belfast Bikes Network - East</b>	<i>Via Revitalisation Programme (DfC, Dfl)</i> – Lisnasharragh Leisure Centre - complete – Upper Newtownards Road - design and planning stage – Castlereagh Road – design and planning stage”

The Director of Physical Programmes advised the Working Group of a number of projects which had recently completed, including the Lisnasharragh Community Schools project under BIF. The Director updated the Members in respect of Castlereagh Presbyterian Church BIF project and referred to the correspondence received from them. The Members confirmed that representatives of Castlereagh Presbyterian Church should be invited to the next meeting of the working group and that they wished to undertake a further site visit.

The Members agreed to undertake a site visit of Templemore as it moved into completion stage and in advance of its proposed November completion date. The Members were advised that an update on the Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund would be brought to Members shortly via the AWGs as per the agreed process. In relation to the externally funded projects, the Director drew Members’ attention to the completion of the Pro-Kick Gym under Urban Villages, and Phase 1 of Covered Cycle Stands via Dfl and DfC. A Member asked if the side panels of these cycle stands could be used to promote active travel or other cycling information. The Director agreed to take this suggestion on board and explore if it would be feasible.

Noted

## **Neighbourhood Services Portfolios Update**

The area working group considered the following report:

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

The purpose of the report is to update Area Working Group members on the recent changes at Neighbourhood Services Manager (NSM) level in terms of portfolios.

### **2.0 Recommendations**

Members are asked to note the content of the report, and the changes outlined within it, in relation to areas of responsibility (at NSM level), and key contact points (more detailed information included in the presentation at Appendix 1) within the Neighbourhood Services section of City & Neighbourhood Services Department.

### **3.0 Main report**

#### **3.1 Key Issues**

As we emerge from the pandemic and the need to restore services to pre-Covid levels, and following the departure of the fourth Neighbourhood Services Manager, Alison Allen back in February 2022 it was agreed that it would be timely to review the areas of responsibility and operational alignment, managed by each of the four Neighbourhood Services Managers to support and improve coordination going forward.

As a result of this review it was agreed at Director level within City and Neighbourhood Services, and then at Strategic DMT and CMT that, from April 2022 onwards, Neighbourhood Service Managers (NSMs) would be responsible and accountable for specific service/portfolio areas rather than geographical areas as they were previously.

#### **3.2 Neighbourhood Service Managers (NSMs) are responsible and accountable for the service/portfolio areas as outlined below – namely**

- Stephen Leonard for Open Space and Street Scene,
- Cate Taggart for Community Services and Community Support,
- Kelly Gilliland for Community Funding and Neighbourhood Integration,
- and the NSM currently being recruited will have responsibility for Community Safety, Good Relations and Partnership Working. *NB Kelly Gilliland is currently responsible for this portfolio area until someone is appointed.*

**3.3 NSMs are supported by Lead Officers (LOs)**

- Edel Mullan for Open Space and Street Scene.

Under Community Provision:

- Cormac McCann for Community Services and Community Support,
- Margaret Higgins for Community Funding and Neighbourhood Integration,
- Jim Girvan for Community Safety,
- There are also a number of service or programme area focussed posts who report direct to NSMs, namely Nicola Lane as Good Relations Manager, Stevie Lavery as Programme Manager and Noel Munnis as Partnerships Manager (See Appendix 1).

**3.4 Member or partner enquiries, regardless of area of origin, should now be directed to the relevant NSM, Lead Officer or Manager within the service area.**

**3.5 Open Space and Street Scene Managers (OSS Managers) – David Salters (North), Currently vacant/being recruited (South), Liam McKinley (West) and Colin Willets (East) will continue to be available to assist with queries or concerns in relation to street cleansing or in relation to maintenance and upkeep of our parks and open spaces.**

**3.6 Neighbourhood Integration Managers (NIMs) – Eimear McCullough (North), Denise Smith (South), Alice McGlone (West) and Kathy Watters (East) will remain area focussed. The role of the NIMs is to work at a neighbourhood level to transform and integrate, both internally within Council, and externally alongside partners where it is clear that Council has a key role to play.**

**3.7 NIMs will work alongside colleagues, partners and/or members, on a specific timebound basis, to develop projects and initiatives with the aim of transforming how we provide support and services at a neighbourhood level. These priorities will be identified within our City & Neighbourhood Services business plan for 2022/23-2024/25 as well as via the Belfast Agenda Refresh (22-26) community planning process currently underway.**

**3.8 In summary, we are hopeful that this new way of working, with clear accountability and reporting lines, will result in greater clarity, improved communication, reduced duplication and better coordination going forward.**

The presentation included at Appendix 1 outlines in more detail (and with visuals where available) how each of the portfolio/service area teams are comprised.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

**None**

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

**None.”**

The Neighbourhood Services Manager agreed to send a copy of the City and Neighbourhood services structure chart along with the contact number for each officer to the members of East area working group.

The Members of the working group noted the contents of the report.

**Verbal update from Landscape Planning  
and Development Team**

The Neighbourhood Integration Manager gave a verbal update in respect of the Landscape Planning and Development Team. She advised that Inveraray Community Centre external improvements had been completed as had Clarawood Play Park. She informed Members that the King George V playing fields had been allocated £54,000.00 for a bitumen trim trail around the park boundary.

Noted

Chairperson



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Belfast City Council Statement of Accounts 2021/22</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Trevor Wallace, Head of Finance Helen Lyons, Corporate Finance Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, the Statement of Accounts of the Council, including the Annual Governance Statement, for the period ending 31 March 2022.
1.2	The Statement of Accounts are an important element of the council's overall corporate governance framework as they provide assurance to Members and ratepayers on the stewardship of the council's finances and its financial position.
1.3	The Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022, which can be accessed from the Council website <a href="#">here</a> , have been prepared in line with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 based on International Financial

	Reporting Standards and the Department for Communities Accounts Direction, Circular LG 02/22 dated 7th January, 2022 and 23rd March, 2022.
1.4	I can confirm that the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 has been prepared in the form directed by the Department for Communities and in my opinion the Statement of Accounts give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year and the financial position as at the end of the financial year.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. approve the Council's Statement of Accounts and incorporated Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2022; and</li> <li>ii. agree that this report should not be subject to call-in (as indicated above) because it would cause an unreasonable delay which would be prejudicial to the Council's and the public's interests given that the statement of accounts must be published by 30th September, 2022.</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<u>Key Issues</u>
	<b>Normal Approval Process</b>
3.1	<p>The Committee will be aware that the normal approval process allows for the Statement of Accounts to be presented to the Audit and Risk Panel to allow them to review the annual statement of accounts. Specifically, to consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed and whether there are concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that need to be brought to the attention of the council prior to this report going to the SP and R Committee.</p> <p>However, the Audit and Risk Panel was postponed on 13th September, in line with agreed protocol for the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II. The meeting has now been reconvened for Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September, at which the Statement of Accounts will be discussed, any issues raised by the panel will be verbally reported to this Committee.</p>
	<b>Audit Opinion</b>
3.2	<p>It is the Local government Auditors' opinion that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with relevant legal and statutory requirements and the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting</li> </ul>

	<p>in the United Kingdom 2021-22, of the financial position of Belfast City Council as at 31 March 2022 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the statement of accounts have been properly prepared in accordance with the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and the Department for Communities directions issued thereunder; and</li> <li>the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with the Department for Communities directions made under the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015; and</li> <li>the information given in the Narrative Report for the financial year ended 31 March 2022 is consistent with the financial statements.</li> </ul>																		
	<b>Reserves</b>																		
3.3	<p><b>General Fund</b></p> <p>The credit balance on the General Fund has increased to £62,218,726 (of which £48,145,477 relates to specified reserves). The movement on the reserves balance is summarised in Table 1 below:</p> <p><b><i>Table 1: Summary of Reserves Position</i></b></p> <table> <tr> <td>Opening Balance</td><td>£54.9m</td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>In year movement in reserves</td><td><u>£ 7.3m</u></td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td><b>Closing Balance</b></td><td><b>£62.2m</b></td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Specified Reserves at year end</td><td><u>£48.1m</u></td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td><b>Balance Available</b></td><td><b><u>£14.1m</u></b></td></tr> </table>	Opening Balance	£54.9m			In year movement in reserves	<u>£ 7.3m</u>			<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>£62.2m</b>			Specified Reserves at year end	<u>£48.1m</u>			<b>Balance Available</b>	<b><u>£14.1m</u></b>
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<b>Balance Available</b>	<b><u>£14.1m</u></b>																		
3.4	<p><b>Capital Fund            £12,220,031</b></p> <p>The Capital Fund is made up of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Belfast Investment Fund (£1,368,532) -created to support key partnership projects to regenerate Belfast and help lever substantial funds from other sources</li> <li>Local Investment Fund (£800,741) to fund smaller local regeneration projects</li> <li>City Centre Investment Fund (£7,688,069) to support the Belfast City Centre Regeneration Investment Plans</li> <li>Social Outcomes Fund (£2,362,689) to support City Centre projects which might not generate a direct financial return but would enhance the overall City Centre offer and support the attraction of investment.</li> </ul>																		

3.5	<b>Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund    £10,000,000</b>  This fund is to support neighbourhood regeneration and tourism projects in local neighbourhoods.															
3.6	<b>Leisure Mobilisation Fund    £621,287</b>  This fund is to support the Leisure Transformation Programme and will cover programme level costs including communications, engagement and procurement costs.															
3.7	<b>Capital Receipts Reserve £1,068,583</b>  These are capital receipts which have originated primarily from the sale of assets and which have not yet been used to finance capital expenditure.															
3.8	<b>Other Fund Balances and Reserves    £1,731,811</b>  This relates to the Election Reserve (£735,037) which has been set up to smooth the cost of running council elections, the BWUH Subvention Fund (£703,151) to support national and international organisations in bringing their conferences to Belfast and the BWUH Sinking Fund (£293,623) to support planned maintenance and future capital works at the new exhibition centre.															
3.9	<b>Debt</b>  The overall level of trade debtors had increased this year from £5.2m at 31 March 2021 to £7.1m at 31 March 2022. Whilst, the COVID 19 pandemic had an impact on overall debt levels, the main reason is an increase in public authority debt at year end. An analysis of trade debtors, inclusive of VAT, for the last two years is shown below:  <b>Table 2 : Analysis of Trade Debtors</b> <table><tr><td></td><td><b>31 March 2022</b></td><td><b>31 March 2021</b></td></tr><tr><td>Less than three months</td><td>£5,450,710</td><td>£3,963,319</td></tr><tr><td>Three to one year</td><td>£1,070,718</td><td>£481,307</td></tr><tr><td>More than one year</td><td>£553,310</td><td>£772,373</td></tr><tr><td><b>Total</b></td><td><b>£7,074,738</b></td><td><b>£5,216,999</b></td></tr></table>		<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>	Less than three months	£5,450,710	£3,963,319	Three to one year	£1,070,718	£481,307	More than one year	£553,310	£772,373	<b>Total</b>	<b>£7,074,738</b>	<b>£5,216,999</b>
	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>														
Less than three months	£5,450,710	£3,963,319														
Three to one year	£1,070,718	£481,307														
More than one year	£553,310	£772,373														
<b>Total</b>	<b>£7,074,738</b>	<b>£5,216,999</b>														
3.10	<b>Creditors</b>  The Department for Communities has set councils a target of paying invoices within 30 days. During the year the council paid 71,202 invoices totalling £187,290,662.															
	The average time taken to pay creditor invoices was 17 days for the year ended 31 March 2022. The Council paid 57,882 invoices within 10 days, 66,649 invoices within 30 days, and 4,553 invoices outside of 30 days. The council endeavours to process invoices as quickly as possible and has an improvement plan to support this process.															



3.11	<p><b>Annual Governance Statement (AGS)</b></p> <p>The Statement of Accounts include Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for the year 2021/22, which has been prepared in line with the Accounts Directive provided by the Department for Communities, NIAO guidance and is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework ‘Delivering Good Governance in Local Government’. Specifically, the AGS sets out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• scope of responsibility of the Council in relation to governance</li> <li>• the purpose of the governance framework</li> <li>• the governance framework in place</li> <li>• review of effectiveness of the governance framework</li> <li>• update on the significant governance issues from prior year</li> <li>• significant governance issues to be disclosed for current year</li> </ul>
3.12	<p>The AGS is approved by the Chair of the Strategic Policy and Resources, the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Resources. It is subject to review by the LGA (NIAO) as part of their annual audit.</p>
3.13	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>None</p>
3.14	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>None</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Document Attached</b>
	<p>Detailed Statement of Accounts titled “Belfast City Council Statement of Accounts 2022” (can be accessed in paragraph 1.3 above)</p>

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Update on Contracts</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Noleen Bohill, Head of Commercial and Procurement Services

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek Committee approval for tenders and Single Tender Actions (STA) over £30,000; and</li> <li>• to ask the Committee to note contract modifications to contract term and retrospective Single Tender Actions (STAs)</li> </ul>
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>approve the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (<b>Table 1</b>);</li> <li>approve the award of STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Appendix 1 (<b>Table 2</b>);</li> <li>approve the modification of the contract as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (<b>Table 3</b>); and</li> </ol>

	iv. note the award of retrospective STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Appendix 1 ( <b>Table 4</b> )
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<u>Competitive Tenders</u>
3.1	Section 2.5 of the Scheme of Delegation states that Chief Officers have delegated authority to authorise a contract for the procurement of goods, services or works over the statutory limit of £30,000 following a tender exercise, where the council has approved the invitation to tender.
3.2	Standing Order 60(a) states any contract that exceeds the statutory amount (currently £30,000) shall be made under the Corporate Seal. Under Standing Order 51(b) the Corporate Seal can only be affixed when there is a resolution of the Council.
3.3	Standing Order 54 states that every contract shall comply with the relevant requirements of national and European legislation.
	<u>Single Tender Actions (STAs)</u>
3.4	<p>The following STAs are being submitted for approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a contract for £40,000, for up to 4 years, awarded to FIAT Donnelly Group for procurement of Fiat Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) approved parts and components, warranty support and specialist repairs ensuring they are safe and road worthy as part of Council fleet. Therefore, ensuring that parts and components are replaced and fitted in keeping with the manufacturer warranty, operational safety terms and conditions. The supplier has the sole distributor rights for these OEM parts and services for Northern Ireland and therefore the only suitable supplier.</li> <li>• A contract for £60,000, for up to 4 years, awarded to Mercedes Benz Truck &amp; Van, for procurement of Mercedes Benz Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) approved parts and components, warranty support and specialist repairs ensuring they are safe and road worthy as part of Council fleet. Therefore, ensuring that parts and components are replaced and fitted in keeping with the manufacturer warranty, operational safety terms and conditions. The supplier has the sole distributor rights for these OEM parts and services for Northern Ireland and is, therefore, the only suitable supplier.</li> <li>• a contract for £180,000 (fully funded), for up to 6 months, awarded to Energy Systems Catapult, for procurement of a Local Area Energy Plan 'LAEP' for Belfast and Queens Island. The LAEP approach is bespoke to Energy Systems Catapult. Energy Systems Catapult is the only supplier in the market who has the experience, knowledge, and</li> </ul>

capability to provide this service. The STA was approved in August for £110,000 but an additional £70,000 funding has become available. The contract is not yet awarded.

3.5 The following retrospective STAs were awarded:

- an increase in contract value of previously approved STA from £60,000 to £100,000. STA (T2286) for the provision of largescale outdoor event for 2 months was awarded to Belfast International Arts Festival in April 2022. The STA was agreed in line with Service Level Agreement with Tourism NI which named Belfast International Arts Festival as the supplier of exclusive artistic product. This STA was originally approved for a total value of £60,000; however, this only included first staged payment. The total contract value/spend has been confirmed as £100,000.

Modification to Contract term

3.6 The following contract terms were modified:

- a 3-month extension and an increase in contract value by £10,000 for contract T1795 - Provision of portorage services, awarded to Delivery Services and Storage Ltd. A modification is required to extend the current contract whilst the new tender process is carried out.
- a 2-month extension and an increase in contract value by £75,000 for T1846 - Collection and treatment of mixed waste materials (timber and hard plastics), awarded to MacNabb Bros and R Heatrick Ltd. The extension is required to bring the contract period into line with the expiry dates of other waste disposal/recycling contracts for plasterboard and paints and varnishes which expire on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The new tender will include all waste streams using 4 lots to maximise economies of scale.
- a 2-month extension for contract T1990 (b) - Cinematography for PEACE IV programme services, awarded to Morrow Communications. A modification is required to extend the current contract to facilitate the completion of the project.
- a 2-month extension for contract T1858 - PEACE IV – Supporting Connected Communities project, awarded to NI Alternatives. A modification is required to extend the current contract to facilitate the completion of the project.

	<b>Financial and Resource Implications</b>
3.7	The financial resources for these contracts are within approved corporate or departmental budgets
	<b>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</b>
3.8	None
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	<p>Appendix 1</p> <p>Table 1 - Competitive Tenders</p> <p>Table 2 - Single Tender Actions</p> <p>Table 3 - Modification to Contract</p> <p>Table 4 - Retrospective Single Tender Actions</p>

**Table 1: Competitive Tenders**

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Estimated Total Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services
Installation of solar reflective film to glazing system to all bar / restaurant areas within the Waterfront Hall 3 levels including glazed roof	Up to 10 weeks	£100,000	S Grimes	Required to reject the solar heat and glare during summer months.
Technical Professionals providing in-depth technical research and guidance to help Digital Services advance the initiatives/projects that support execution of the IT strategy  *Previously approval Aug 22 for £53k but revised total now £92k	Up to 2 years	£92,000	R Cregan	*Use proven Reference Architecture to develop technology Architecture  *Receive organisation-specific guidance through calls with analysts  *Leverage industry best practices to avoid costly mistakes  *Enables Digital Services to stay current with changing markets and technologies
Procurement and implementation of Qlik Sense SaaS application, along with support and maintenance for Qlik Sense, QlikView, Nprinting and GeoAnalytics	Up to 3 years	£185,000	R Cregan	The current support and maintenance contract for the Council's on premise Qlik applications is up for renewal on 30/11/2022
Collection and treatment/recycling of mixed materials from recycling centres to include timber, hard plastic, plasterboard and paints and varnishes  *Previously approved May 2022 for £2m but revised total now £2.6m to include additional waste streams (i.e. plasterboard and paints and varnishes)	Up to 4 years	£2,600,000	C Matthews	To ensure the Council's waste is disposed/ recycled in line with current environmental legislation, best practice and circular economy principles.
Contract for the placement of planning notices in the local press	Up to 5 years	£120,000	K Bentley	Fulfilment of statutory obligation to advertise planning notices under Article 8 of the Planning (General

## Appendix 1

				Development Procedure) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.
Hire of grounds maintenance equipment with operator	Up to 3 years	£100,000	C Matthews	Hire of a range of specialist grounds maintenance equipment with operators primarily to support pitches and bowling greens maintenance.
Procurement of consultancy team to develop an Outline Business Case for the Innovation for Societal Impact Challenge Fund under the Belfast Region City Deal's Digital Pillar  *Tender previously approved in June 2022 for £100k and up to 6 months	Up to 12 months	£125,000	J Tully	An Innovation for Societal Impact fund is a key element of the overall suite of BRCD (City Deal) Innovation Challenge Funds as outlined in the digital pillar Programme Business Case.  <i>An option now included to extend the contract for a further 6 months and further £25,000, if required</i>
Develop an Outline Business Case (OBC) for a £20m risk capital, Venture Fund, funded by the Belfast City Region Deal  *Tender previously approved in June 2022 for £50k and up to 3 months	Up to 9 months	£60,000	J Tully	An equity debt fund is a key element of the innovation Challenge Fund as outlined in the digital pillar Programme Business Case.  <i>An option now included to extend the contract for a further 6 months and further £10,000, if required</i>
Design contest to support the delivery of Belfast Imagining 2024	Up to 22 months	£2.5m	J Greer	Use the competitive Design Contest process to seek out and develop proposals from the market to support the delivery of civic and culturally led programmes, events and projects for Belfast Imagining 2024. The £2.5m will include the payment of prize monies to applicants to develop their proposals and the award of subsequent service contracts to deliver the successful projects.
Supply of tractors, support services and spare parts  (Initial purchase of new tractors over next 2 years plus ongoing support services and parts over life of tractors - estimated 10 years)	Up to 12 years	£160,000	C Matthews	Replacement of tractors that are past end of life/ operational use and are now uneconomical to continue to maintain. New contract will include replacement tractors via open competition and ongoing support services and spare parts.



**Table 2: Single Tender Actions**

Title	Duration	Total Value	SRO	Description	Supplier
Fiat Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) approved parts and components, warranty support and specialist repairs	Up to 4 years	£40,000	C Matthews	<p>To ensure that FIAT vehicles being used by the Council have only approved OEM parts and components replaced in all safety related vehicle areas on a like for like basis in keeping with the vehicle manufacturer terms and conditions.</p> <p>The supplier has the sole distributor rights for these OEM parts and services for Northern Ireland and therefore the only suitable supplier.</p>	FIAT Donnelly Group
Mercedes Benz Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) approved parts and components, warranty support and specialist repairs	Up to 4 years	£60,000	C Matthews	<p>To ensure that Mercedes Benz vehicles being used by the Council have only approved OEM parts and components replaced in all safety related vehicle areas on a like for like basis in keeping with the vehicle manufacturer terms and conditions.</p> <p>The supplier has the sole distributor rights for these OEM parts and services for Northern Ireland and therefore the only suitable supplier.</p>	Mercedes Benz Truck & Van
<p>Procurement of a Local Area Energy Plan for Belfast and Queens Island</p> <p>*Fully funded</p> <p>*STA previously approved in August 2022 for £110k but revised total value is now £180k due an additional £70,000 funding has become available. The contract is not yet awarded.</p>	Up to 6 months	£180,000	J Tully	<p>The Local Area Energy Plan approach is bespoke to Energy Systems Catapult. Energy Systems Catapult is the only supplier in the market who has the experience, knowledge and capability to provide this service.</p>	Energy Systems Catapult

**Table 3: Modification to Contract**

<b>Title of Contract</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Modification</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>
T1795 - Provision of portage services	Up to 5 years	Additional 3 months and £10,000	N Largey	Modification required to extend the current portage contract whilst the new tender process is carried out	Delivery Services and Storage Ltd
T1846 - Collection and treatment of mixed waste materials (Timber and hard plastics)	Up to 4 years	Additional 2 months and £75,000	C Matthews	The extension is required to bring T1846 timber and hard plastics into line with the expiry dates for the plasterboard and paints and varnishes contracts (30/11/2022).	MacNabb Bros and R Heatrick Ltd
T1990 (b) - Cinematography for PEACE IV programme services	Up to 4 years	Additional 2 months	S Toland	Modification required to facilitate the completion of the project.	Morrow Communications
T1858 - PEACE IV – Supporting Connected Communities	Up to 4 years	Additional 2 months	S Toland	Modification required to facilitate the completion of the project.	NI Alternatives

**Table 4: Retrospective Single Tender Actions**

<b>Title of Contract</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>SRO</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Supplier</b>
T2286 - Provision of largescale outdoor event  *STA previously approved in April 2022 for £60k but revised total value is now £100k  (Fully funded)	Up to 2 months	£100,000	J Greer	An initial STA was agreed in line with Service Level Agreement with Tourism NI which named Belfast International Arts Festival as the supplier of exclusive artistic product.	Belfast International Arts Festival



Subject:	<b>Minutes of Meeting of Shared City Partnership</b>
Date:	23rd September 2022
Reporting Officer:	David Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Nicola Lane, Good Relations Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present to the Committee the key issues discussed at the Shared City Partnership meeting held on 20th September.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	<p><b>PEACE IV Programme – Building Positive Relations (BPR) Update</b></p> <p>The Partnership recommends to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report and agree the following recommendations:</p> <p><b>PEACE IV</b></p> <p><b>Secretariat</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o note the request for an Expression of Interest from SEUPB for funding up to £100k for Good Relations activity and to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that the Council should not submit an EOI given current pressures.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>BPR3</b> <b>Transform for Change-NICVA</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve the request to progress payment of 30% of the NICVA contract end payment in line with the deliverables completed and supporting evidence that has been submitted.</li> <li>To approve the extension to November 2022 for the delivery of community led Action Plans, in principle.</li> </ul> <p><b>BPR5</b> <b>LINCS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To extend the project to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022 to allow for closure event take place</li> </ul> <p><b>Traveller Support Project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve a further extension to the project until the end of October 2022 to allow completion of all elements of the Traveller Support project.</li> </ul> <p><b>Morrow Communications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve an extension to the above project to 31st December, 2022 to allow for a closure event to take place.</li> </ul> <p><b>Good Relations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To note the request for the Partnership to engage with Rubicon Consulting in the development of the Audit.</li> <li>To approve the request to invite Dr Lucy Michael to the next meeting of the Partnership to present on the draft findings of the research on the lived experience of ethnic minority communities in Belfast</li> <li>To approve funding of £10,000 to Duncairn Community Partnership for the Interactive Trail project in Alexandra Park subject to no recurring costs under the Good Relations Action Plan.</li> </ul> <p><b>PEACE PLUS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To approve the updated stakeholder engagement plan and key milestones for developing the plan</li> </ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Shared City Partnership is a Working Group of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee which consists of Elected members and representatives from various sectors across the city. The minutes from the Partnership are brought before the Committee for approval on a monthly basis.</p>
3.2	<p>The key issues on the agenda at the September meeting were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A presentation on Belfast Stories</li> <li>PEACE IV -Update on Secretariat</li> <li>PEACEV IV - Update on CYP Theme</li> <li>PEACE IV - Update on SSS Theme</li> <li>PEACE IV Update on BPR Theme</li> <li>Update on Good Relations Audit</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal for Interface Project (BCC9) Strategic Intervention Fund</li> <li>• Update on PEACE PLUS – Local Community Peace Action Plan &amp; Workshop</li> </ul> <p>More details regarding the above issues and recommendations are included in the attached minutes.</p>
3.3	<p><b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b></p> <p>All financial implications are covered through existing budgets</p>
3.4	<p><b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b></p> <p>The recommendations of the Partnership promote the work of the Council in promoting good relations and will enhance equality and good relations impacts.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents attached</b>
4.1	Minutes of meeting of Shared City Partnership of 20th September, 2022.

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## **SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP**

**Tuesday 20th September, 2022**

### **MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

Members present: Councillor Kyle (Chairperson); Councillors Carson, Hutchinson and Lyons.

External Members: Ms. A. Roberts, Community and Voluntary Sector;  
Ms. A. Tohill, Good Relations, TEO;  
Mr. A. Hannaway, NIHE;  
Mr. S. Hamilton, Belfast Chamber of Commerce;

In attendance: Ms. N. Lane, Good Relations Manager;  
Ms. D. McKinney, PEACE IV Programme Manager;  
Mr. S. Lavery, Programme Manager;  
Ms. W. Langham, Programme Director, Belfast Stories;  
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer; and  
Mrs. S. Steele, Democratic Services Officer.  
Ms. T. Hogg, Blu Zebra;  
Ms. B. Enslin, Blu Zebra and  
Mr. C. Boylan, Locus Management.

#### **Apologies**

Apologies for the inability to attend were reported on behalf of Councillors McCullough, McMullan and O'Hara, and Ms. A. Ford, Ms. B. Arthurs, Mr. J. Donnelly, Mr. A. Irvine, Ms. G. Duggan, Mr. P. Anderson, Ms. J. Irwin, Mr. W. Naeem, Mr. I. McLaughlin, Mr. P. Mackel and Mr. Mark McBride.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 8th August 2022 were taken as read and signed as correct.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

#### **Presentation on Belfast Stories**

The Members were reminded that they received a report at the meeting on 8 August 2022 and agreed to invite the Belfast Stories team to the September meeting to provide an update on the public consultation for the Belfast Stories Programme.

The Belfast Stories Programme Director presented the Members with an update on the public consultation for Belfast Stories. The Members were asked to note the contents of the report and to provide feedback and input to the Belfast Stories public consultation which started in August and which would run until mid-November 2022.

The Programme Director presented the background to Belfast Stories which sought to establish Belfast as a cultural destination by creating a home for the city's stories and, in time, a world-class visitor attraction for locals and visitors alike. Belfast Stories would be a transformative new experience in the city centre, sharing the stories of the people and the place (past, present and future), told through exhibitions, screen and social spaces. Due to open its doors in 2028, Belfast Stories would transform the currently vacant site at the corner of Royal Avenue and North Street, including the restoration of one of Belfast's most beloved heritage buildings - the art deco former Bank of Ireland. Sharing people's stories was foundational to the city of Belfast's transformative journey toward new perspectives and connections as individuals and communities. The Programme Director emphasised that stories were at the core of Belfast's cultural life and vision for the future of tourism and that here was a unique opportunity for the city to create authentic and creative expressions of Belfast which connected its past, present and future. Belfast Stories would be a visible manifestation of this ambition that, in turn, would support the development of assets across Belfast and actively encourage visitors to further explore the city and beyond. She added that the key driver for Belfast Stories would be to bring more footfall to the city, to attract tourists and boost the local economy.

The Programme Director highlighted that the ambition was that Belfast Stories was to be for everyone. It was important that the process from the outset supported the delivery of a building that was welcoming, accessible and that everyone could see themselves reflected in the stories. One way this would be supported was through an Equity Steering Group. The steering group included "missing voices" – people whose identity or circumstances meant that they were less often heard – and people who might face additional barriers to visiting or experiencing Belfast Stories. The steering group would help engagement with other people at risk of missing out so that equality, diversity and inclusion were at the heart of Belfast Stories. It was intended that this group would be retained throughout the development, design and construction phases of the project and support the ongoing co-design process.

The Programme Director advised the Members that the design team would be appointed in 2023, with construction commencing in 2025. She explained that the public consultation would not be the end of the conversation and it was an important step before the progress of gathering stories began from early 2023. Engagement would continue with different people and organisations to help shape Belfast Stories right up until it opened – and beyond. However, she advised it was important to ensure that this first consultation clearly sets the level of commitment to co-design and engagement to ensure that Belfast Stories was shaped by as diverse a range of stories and voices as possible. The Belfast Stories team would therefore be keen to engage with the Shared City Partnership to help identify any gaps in current plans and how these might be addressed in the coming months and as part of the long-term engagement plan that would be produced following an analysis of consultation feedback.

The Programme Director informed the Members that the public consultation, which had been launched on 10th August 2022, was open for 14 weeks and would gather ideas and evidence that would help shape the project. This public consultation would focus on:

1. Raising awareness of Belfast Stories so that people were excited and wanted to continue to be engaged in its development; and
2. Making sure that Belfast Stories was for everyone. This meant making sure that the building would be welcoming and accessible and everyone could see themselves reflected in its stories.



During the public consultation respondents would be asked to share their thoughts in 3 main ways on the draft documents below:

- a. Equality impact assessment
- b. Rural needs impact assessment and
- c. Framework for gathering stories.

The Programme Director provided an overview of the consultation activities categorised as either general public or sectoral for those people working in or volunteering in key sectors. The programme of activities includes public exhibitions in locations across the city, including North, South, East and West Belfast, the Shankill and the City Centre. Information sessions and workshops would also be held in those locations. This activity would be further supplemented with pop-up events specifically designed to reach people who might be less likely to participate in formal consultation activities. This would include a 2 - week programme of events in 2 Royal Avenue over mid-term break from 24 October to 4 November 2022.

Currently, the programme consisted of structured information and feedback sessions via workshop format which were broken down into events for the following key sectors:

- Community and voluntary
- Tourism
- Heritage
- Arts
- Screen (film)

The Members were advised they could find out more information on the planned activity on the [Your Say Consultation Platform - Belfast Stories](#) on the Belfast City Council website as well as Facebook and Instagram.

The Chairperson thanked the Programme Director for her presentation which was followed by questions from the Members. In response to a query around funding, she clarified that the Council would be providing funding of £35m and £65m had been ringfenced from the Belfast Regional City Deal. She added that there would be a need to look for additional funding given high inflation to put the project in a strong position. In relation to a comment that good relations was an important element of the project, the Programme Director informed the Members that the Belfast Stories team were working with Queen's University Belfast to measure this and would welcome input from TEO and T:BUC to reach this ambition. A Member commented that it would be helpful if the Programme Director could deliver a Belfast Stories presentation to TEO. The PEACE IV Programme Manager also asked the Programme Director to link in with her in relation to stories captured through the various PIV projects.

A Member raised concerns around the need to work with all political parties to achieve buy-in and that there was a need also to look at Belfast becoming a compassionate city before 2028. The Programme Director responded that meetings with Party Group Leaders would be organised and workshops for the Members would take place to identify opportunities for joined up thinking. She added that the outcomes of those meetings would therefore resonate with the compassionate city approach and there would be a significant Good Relations piece to the project as this was not just a building but a journey. There was further discussion around how the programme could be inclusive in terms of the current social fabric of the city.

The Members noted the contents of the report and consultation document and agreed to a further presentation from the Belfast Stories team on the public consultation findings in February 2023.

### **PEACE IV - Update on Secretariat**

The PEACE IV Programme Manager provided the Members with an update in respect of the Secretariat activity associated with the implementation of the Peace IV Local Action Plan.

The PEACE IV Programme Manager advised the Members that programme activity was continuing at various stages of delivery as outlined in the Thematic Reports. The Members noted that ongoing modifications and mitigations would be required to enable delivery partners to deliver activity. Supporting information and evidence for project closure reports for CYP2, CYP3 Personal Change and CYP4 had now been submitted and the closure process was progressing. The Members were requested to note the process for the project closure report comprising of:

- A review of deliverables by the thematic project manager;
- Analysis and evaluation of all monitoring information and confirmation that all data has been received by the monitoring and verification officer; and
- A final review of both deliverables and monitoring by the PEACE IV Programme Manager.

She anticipated that final payments would be progressed during September 2022 for the CYP projects. The Members also noted that some issues relating to CYP3 Sports project had been escalated to the PEACE IV Programme Manager and Leisure Manager and both were working to resolve all issues and progress project delivery.

The PEACE IV Programme Manager reported that clarifications from the accountable departments on the Business Case had been addressed by the PEACE IV team during August, although approval had not yet been confirmed. She added that, given the Business Case was to progress to the SEUPB Steering Committee for approval, the timeframe provided by SEUPB for approval by August 2022 had not been met. With the ongoing challenges for delivery, the mitigations outlined in the business case were critical. The Members were further updated that written approval of the Business Case had just been confirmed by SEUPB and that clarifications on the conditions of approval were being sought.

The PEACE IV Programme Manager updated the Members on the programme workplan which had included a cross community bus tour across the city called 'Conversational Commutes', which had taken place on 11th August 2022 involving participants through the Age Friendly/Seniors Forum, had been well received. The delivery partner had advised that due to a change in personal circumstances they were unable to deliver a follow up tour.

A Diversity and Inclusion workshop, aimed at young people, had taken place on Wednesday 14th September 2022, 10.00 am to 12.00 pm at the Oh Yeah Centre.

The International Day of Peace event which was taking place on 21st September 2022 at the Hilton Hotel was oversubscribed.

The Members were advised that correspondence was received from SEUPB on 23rd August 2022 seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) for the delivery of targeted interventions from all Councils, aimed specifically at Good Relations activities in the local area. The funding available would be circa €100,000 and must be spent and defrayed by 1st December 2023. She explained that the funding must be activity-based with only Good Relations activity eligible and could not be used for any large-scale capital spend. To avail of the funding, an Expression of Interest form would need to be returned to SEUPB by Friday 9th September 2022 to include a short summary of any broad concept plans that had been developed. SEUPB advised that there was no obligation to agree to apply for this funding and, as available funding was currently being collated, there was no guarantee they would be able to fulfil any or all requests.

The PEACE IV Programme Manager advised the Members of the current issues affecting the delivery of PEACE IV. As previously reported, resources within the PEACE IV team continue to be stretched.

The Programme Manager reported that a key priority for August was the collation, verification, and submission of the Period 31 claim. The claim valued at £750k had been submitted to SEUPB, which brought current programme expenditure to £7.87m. To date SEUPB had reimbursed £5.9m to date and therefore the total outstanding claims value was £1.9m.

The Members noted the contents of the report and the request for an Expression of Interest from SEUPB for funding up to £100k for Good Relations activity. The Members considered the above issues and agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that the Council should not submit an EOI.

### **PEACE IV - Update on CYP Theme**

The Partnership considered the undernoted report.

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

**To provide the Shared City Partnership (SCP) with a progress report in respect of the Children and Young People’s (CYP) theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.**

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

**The Partnership is requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that they note the contents of the report and related appendices.**

#### **3.0 Main report**

##### **3.1 Project Updates**

##### **CYP 1 – TECH CONNECTS, GIGA Training (Afterschool’s and Digital Arts Academies: Tech Camps) (6-11, 12-16 yr. olds)**

**The delivery agent, GIGA Training has completed all summer sessions for both lots of the project. A closure / celebration event,**

attended by Cllr Kyle as Chair of the Shared City Partnership took place on 25 August 2022 at Girdwood Community Hub.

Initial monitoring data indicates that over 900 young people have completed the project, including those who participated in activity with the previous delivery agent.

Members are requested to note the anticipated performance of GIGA training is achievement of approximately 99% of the target numbers.

Delivery Agent	Sessions	Target	Completed YTD	Variance
GIGA Training	6-11-Year-Olds	494	496	+2
GIGA Training	12-16-Year-Olds	365	362	-3
Previous Delivery agent	Tech Connects 2018/2019	133	133	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>991</b>	<b>-1</b>

### **CYP 1 – TECH CONNECTS, Belfast Metropolitan College (Digital Insights Programme) (17-24 yr. olds)**

The delivery agent has made efforts to remove participation barriers for young people by modifying the programme to local delivery, rather than within the college environment. This aims to increase participation by removing the travel barrier. Members should note the increase in participants to 133 registrations, with 18 young people who have completed the full 26 hours contact time. To date the remaining 115 participants have achieved hours ranging between 4 to 18, with Belfast Metropolitan College seeking to re-engage these young people to complete the full 26 hours required. As previously reported, this project has been exploring a potential extension to December to allow for further delivery of sessions to participants to reach 26 hours contact time as contingency.

<b>Total</b>	<b>133 from a target of 160</b>	<b>27 remaining (Contract ends September 22)</b>
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### **3.2 CYP 2 – Playing our Part in the City**

Final supporting evidence from Active Communities Network has now been submitted which supports the final report. This is being reviewed and finalised by the Secretariat. Members should note that project closure is likely to be delayed to September 22 due to resource pressures.

<b>Total</b>	<b>610 young people from a target of 640 123 Parents from a target of 100</b>	<b>Progressing to Closure</b>
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### **3.3 CYP3 – On the Right Track – Sports and Personal Change elements**

Cross border residentials have recommenced and this has been welcomed by the young people. Delivery of sessions is continuing and scheduling to October 2022 is underway to increase the participant numbers. An additional 100 participants have been recruited for the programme during this period, with final monitoring data to be reviewed and confirmed. Additional administrative support to help with data entry has also been provided by Council.

As previously reported the business case for the reduction in targets has not yet been approved and will be submitted to the SEUPB steering committee and accountable departments for consideration.

<b>Total</b>	<b>800 from a target of 1800</b>	<b>1000 remaining (Contract ends December 22) Potential to extend to March 2023.</b>
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#### **Personal Change – Delivered by Extern**

Following review of the final report submitted by Extern, additional supporting information and evidence has been requested from the delivery partner before progressing to final payment and closure.

<b>Total</b>	<b>42 from a target of 42</b>	<b>0 remaining – Progressing to Closure</b>
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### **3.4 CYP 4 – Cooperation Ireland (Young Advocates)**

A final signed closure report together with supporting evidence has now been submitted by the delivery partner and is being reviewed by Officers in order progress to the issue of final payment.

<b>Total</b>	<b>87 from a target of 80</b>	<b>+ 7 achieved – Progressing to closure</b>
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### **3.5 CYP 5 – NIHE Local Area Network Partner Delivery**

NIHE have made several requests for the reclassification of participants between Core and Peer participants. Core participants are required to complete 100 hours engagement whereas Peer participants complete 30 hours. Following the recent approval to reclassify 18 participants as peer, members are requested to note

that SEUPB has highlighted that no further changes between core and peer participants will be considered. This is due to the overall reductions requested in the business case, as original core hours were 200.

Members should also note the increase to 202 for Peer Participants, the core participants now at 143. To aid participation and increase numbers, groups are being paired on a cross community basis rather than on a geographical network basis, by way of example the Frank Gillen Youth Club has been paired with Annadale & Haywood Youth as a cross community partner.

<b>Total</b>	<b>345 from a target of 900 (If Business Case target is 304.)</b>	<b>555 remaining (Contract ends December 22)</b>
	<b>143 Core Participants 202 Peer Participants</b>	<b>If Business Case is approved NIHE will be + 41 over target based on current recruitment.</b>

### **3.6 Financial and Resource Implications**

Period 31 claim, valued at £111K has been submitted to SEUPB for reimbursement. As such total expenditure to date is £1.92m with £1.48m reimbursed by SEUPB.

Claims for Periods 28-31 valued at £444K remain outstanding and yet to be verified by SEUPB.

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

The draft plan has been equality screened and discussed at the Equality Consultative Forum on 13 May 2015. The Equality Consultative Forum was further consulted on 18 Nov 2020.”

The Partnership agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that they note the contents of the report and related appendices.

### **PEACE IV - Update on SSS Theme**

The PEACE IV Programme Manager provided an update on the progress report in respect of the Shared Spaces and Services (SSS) theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan. She advised that the implementation of both the capital and programming elements of the Shared Space and Services theme was continuing. Project progress and delivery were highlighted in the Progress Report (Appendix I).

The PEACE IV Programme Management referred to the Capital Works at Forth Meadow Community Greenway and advised that the process for the naming of the new bridge at Springfield Dam would be similar to the process followed for the Divis Back Path. Community panel members would engage with the local community and provide name options for the naming panel to consider in line with Council policy and peace building criteria. The Panel would then agree a short list of names which would then go to public vote. The Members were requested to note the proposed panel for the naming of the new bridge as

outlined in Appendix V. An initial meeting of the Panel took place on 6 September 2022. Council officers would support the panel in terms of process, policy, reporting and approvals.

**PEACE IV Network Scheme – Capital Works:** The Members were advised that the Section 2 planning application was resubmitted once again and agreed at the Planning Committee on 16th August 2022. The resubmission would ensure that due process was followed and to mitigate against potential future challenges. Works remain due to start on site in September 2022.

Following delays, previously reported, work in Section 3 was ongoing and remained on target for completion late September 2022.

Works on Section 4 were continuing, with work in Phase 2 (Ulster Wildlife / St Galls GAA) beginning w/c 15 August and remained on target for completion in September 2022.

The collation of information on all the gates along the route of Forth Meadow Community Greenway, confirming current opening, closing and key holding arrangements, was still ongoing. The Council's City and Neighbourhood Services' Open Space and Streetscene Service was being liaised with on the current and future arrangements.

Signage was still being considered in line with Council's language policy and a potential dual language approach in some sections. The Members would be updated when more information was available.

McCadden was being consulted with on updating branding documents to reflect diversity in terms of ethnic minorities and those with a disability, as this is in addition to their current contract.

### **Public Art Pieces**

The artist, Sara Cunningham-Bell, had finished the public engagement which, as reported in August, would contribute to the final design of the flagship art piece sculpture and smaller floor art. Work on the sculpture commenced on 26th July 2022 and the progress being made was outlined in Appendix IV. The artist would also be linking with schools again in September for input around the design / pattern on one of the figure's satchel.

### **Programming**

Implementation of the programming aspects were progressing.

### **Shared History, Heritage and Identity Content / Narratives for Shared Space**

<b>Deliverable targets</b>	<b>Targets achieved</b>
300 individuals	224 recruited

The project had been reengaging with groups and some new contacts in Sections 4 and 5 which had delayed the submission of final drafts to PEACE IV and Council for review and approval.

The project had also developed a short video with local school children on the theme "our place on the map". Further added value with the development of short trails, that could be followed between sections, incorporating the finished information panels and narratives was also being progressed.

Monitoring and evaluation data and relevant evidence of activity had been requested from the delivery partner.

### **Shared Space Volunteer Training**

<b>Deliverable targets</b>	<b>Targets achieved</b>
Sustrans	
30 volunteers (15 Walk & 15 Cycle Leads)	27 recruited across 3 groups
Volunteer Now Enterprise	
15 volunteers (Local Ambassadors)	8 recruited
The Conservation Volunteers	
15 volunteers (Nature Guides)	12 recruited

The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) had recruited a further 4 volunteers, who were currently participating in the training element. Further support for the volunteers, who had already completed the training, was being provided, such as collaborating with Sustrans' Walk Leads, gaining experience of leading on organised walks.

Volunteer Now were continuing to recruit interested individuals as Local Ambassadors. The 8 trained volunteers recently assisted at a family fun-day / celebration event in Springfield Dam. Discussions on approaches to keep volunteers engaged were ongoing.

A meeting of all volunteers and delivery partners (Sustrans, Volunteer Now and The Conservation Volunteers) was facilitated on 4th August 2022 to discuss collaboration opportunities and future coordination of a FMCG volunteer team. A site visit to another project / organisation / group with a volunteer programme was being looked at.

### **Governance / Management Model**

As reported previously, the final report on the proposed governance / management model was submitted by Viatac; the key highlights of the report were outlined in Appendix II. Members were asked to provide any comments on the report to the PEACE IV team. The PEACE IV Programme Manager advised that Senior Management were meeting today to discuss the recommendations and to consider practical support that Council could provide.

The public tender call to implement the governance model opened in early August and closed on 26th August. An assessment panel to consider responses took place on 7th September 2022.

### **Youth Engagement & Civic Education**

<b>Deliverable targets</b>	<b>Targets achieved</b>
400 young people	Commitment from approx. 120+ young people. 43 young people registered from Nubia / Blackmountain.

During August, Youth Link facilitated residentials / workshops to Greenhill YMCA and Life Activities (Castlewellan) with young people from Nubia, Blackmountain, Hammer, Glencairn and Ligoniel. The participants from Nubia, Blackmountain and Glencairn had completed social action projects in the local areas addressing dog fouling, mental health and community isolation.



Clonard Ministry and Youth for Christ (Ballysillan) had been engaged and provided participant young people. Also, additional groups had been set-up with Forthspring and Nubia Youth Club.

Following SEUPB approval to engage with local schools, YouthLink had commenced contact with local schools.

### **SSS Activities and Animation Programme**

<b>Deliverable targets</b>	<b>Targets achieved</b>
20 cross community activities/events, (to an audience of a minimum of 1200 attendees)	11 cross community activities / events to an audience of approximately 1000+ people
- 4 Public spectacle events (150 people at each) – 2 in Springfield Park	- “Luminate” event in Springfield Park – approx. 1500 people - “Swamp Festival” in Bog Meadows – approx. 1700 people - “Colour Festival” in Woodvale Park – approx. 1,000+ people
- 6 Medium sized creative animation activities / events (50-100 people at each).	- “River Clean event” – approx. 100 people - Colour Run events in Falls and Glencairn Park – approx. 500 people
- 10 small community focused activities / events (30 to 50 people at each)	- “Sunflower Festival” – approx. 50 people - Foraging Walk and Big Potato Harvest in Bog Meadows – approx. 100 people

ArtsEkta delivered a programme of wellness events / activities during August along with a “Movies at the Dam” evening on 25th August.

A programme of small and medium events / activities had been planned for September and October and would include a whisky tour, a street art workshop and youth orientated music / dance workshops. A final large-scale event was planned for Springfield Dam Park around Halloween, themed around the Mexican “Day of the Dead”.

To ensure local people had the opportunity to be involved in the final events / activities, an “Early Bird” process for the issue of tickets would be made available.

### **Resource Allocation**

The Resource Allocation call for applications to support local community led activities / events across Section 1 and Section 3 closed on Friday 29th July 2022 with no applications received. Feedback from interested groups / organisations was requested and would help with drafting of an options paper on the next steps. The Members were requested to note that the Programme Board agreed to delegate authority to the CYP and BPR Chairs to approve the next steps for the Resource Allocation process, to accelerate the process. A further report would be presented to the Programme Board and SCP in due course.

### **SEUPB Evaluation**

The SEUPB appointed evaluation team from RSM interviewed some key stakeholders on the SSS project during August. A meeting with Council officers to discuss the impact of the Forth Meadow Community Greenway had taken place on 15th August 2022. Officers had

requested RSM to share their findings with the Council ahead of a shared space learning event, which had been scheduled for 19th October 2022.

The Members noted that the Period 31 SSS claim, valued at £382k, had been submitted to SEUPB for reimbursement on 26th August 2022. Therefore, the total expenditure to date for the SSS totals £2.7m with £1.82m reimbursed by SEUPB. Claims for Periods 28-31 valued at £908k now remain outstanding and were yet to be verified by SEUPB.

The Chair reported that Causeway Coast and Glens Council had visited the Forth Meadow Community Greenway which had been positive and well received.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report and related appendices.

### **PEACE IV - Update on BPR Theme**

The Partnership considered the undernoted report.

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

**To provide the Shared City Partnership (SCP) with a progress report in respect of the Building Positive Relations (BPR) theme of the PEACE IV Local Action Plan.**

#### **2.0 Recommendations**

**The Partnership is requested to recommend to the Strategic Policy & Resources Committee that they note the contents of the report and related appendices and agree:**

##### **BPR3-Transform for Change-NICVA**

- **the request to progress payment of 30% of NICVA contract end payment in line with the deliverables completed and supporting evidence that has been submitted.**
- **The extension to November 2022 for the delivery of community led Action Plans, in principle.**

##### **BPR5 Traveller**

- **a further extension to the project until the end of October 2022 to allow completion of all elements of the Traveller project.**

#### **3.0 Main report**

##### **Key Issues**

**The status and progress with projects are outlined in Appendix I BPR-Progress Report.**

**Projects are at various stages of delivery; some projects are completing, whilst activity is continuing with other projects.**

Members should note that participation and retention levels continue to be impacted by Covid 19 with ongoing sickness and isolation, as necessary.

### **3.1 BPR1 – Cross Community Area Networks (CCAN)**

Participation levels remain consistent with recent increases in participants to 127/144 and 354/900 peer participants across the CCAN's.

TIDES is progressing exploratory discussions with the East Belfast Network groups (Island Street/Short Strand) to ascertain next steps and re engagement across groups. Capacity building hours to re-engage may be necessary.

The showcase / networking event due to take place during Good Relations week is to be rescheduled, provisionally for November, with the intention that the East Belfast groups can join.

NIHE has indicated that utilising the Technical assistance resource may not be availed of due to the process, timeframe and approvals required as barriers to progressing with this additional funding.

The modifications submitted in the Business case, to reduce participants from 1044 to 585 and contact hours 200 to 120 hours per Core participant will assist in the achievement of deliverables for the project.

### **3.2 BPR2 – Creative Communities Project**

As previously advised, delivery of activity has been slower than anticipated over summer months. The new project support officer (PSO) is continuing to meet with the project manager to ensure the position across all creative clusters is progressed.

The artist for the Football cluster has agreed to update the action plan to reflect new planned activities and how targets will be achieved.

The East Belfast Radius cluster is finalising details for the closure/unveiling event scheduled for 24th September 2022. Verification of the cluster participant numbers, and hours of engagement is required, however, as previously reported, indicators suggest targets will be achieved.

As previously reported, the Carlisle group has met through facilitated sessions, although further progress is required. A meeting to ascertain the likelihood of the cluster progressing is being arranged.

All clusters welcome the extension and time this permits in addressing any under delivery. It should be noted that whilst the extension to December 2022 will aid delivery, the reduction in

targets, as outlined in the business case requires SEUPB Steering Group approval with an anticipated return in September.

A request for quotation for a facilitator to support project delivery closed at the end of August with nil submissions. Feedback is being progressed and the next steps identified.

Participant numbers remain as reported with 133 participants from a target of 264.

### **3.3 BPR3 – Transform for Change Project**

#### **Transformative Leadership Programme**

The Transform for Change project delivery is continuing and to date 23 local community action plans have been submitted, each project remains at varying stages of development and completion. Members should note that a final date for the submissions of local community action plans has been issued as the end of August 2022. This is to allow sufficient time for the assessment, award and ensure project completion.

Members are requested to agree to an extended timeframe for local projects developed through the Action Plan process to complete by 30 November 2022 to ensure all projects achieve final outcomes/activities. The community action plan projects fit within the Peace IV remit and do not require the delivery partner's input.

Further discussion to progress the Black Gates project at Suffolk/Lenadoon were positive and next steps identified. There is sufficient buy in from the communities to offer assurances that this project will be achieved. A final attempt for a community lead to agree the Resource Allocation Agreement is progressing. Members should note that permission to enable council to accept this responsibility was previously agreed.

Planning of residential activity for the 27-29 September in Derry/Londonderry is progressing with 2 facilitators appointed through the delivery partner, and 18 participants confirmed to attend. The residential will enable participants to put their learning into practice.

The two remaining study visits are scheduled for September, with the Coleraine visit (previously cancelled) identified as a preferred option.

Members may recall that an addendum on a revised payment approach to NICVA had previously been agreed. Initial indications of achievement are that the Transformative Leadership Programme will have achieved 43/45 courses completed. 48 case studies completed exceeding target of 45 and 173/260 participants completed the TLP course from June 21 to June 22.

As project closure, reporting and review can take some time, members are requested to agree a payment of 30% of NICVA contract end payment amounting to approximately £36k. Payment will be made in line with the deliverables completed and supporting evidence that has been submitted. Final payment will be progressed on closure.

#### **3.4 BPR4 –BATW-Facilitation**

The collation of supporting documentation / evidence for the closure of the Belfast and the World project is continuing in line with the final reporting / verification process

Corrymeela is continuing with active engagement from BATW participants and support the residentials, and study visits. The Dublin residential in early August went well and feedback from participants and facilitators was positive, indicating a good experience for all with enjoyable historic site visits and interactive facilitation sessions. The Cork visit took place at the end of August, initial indications are the residential went well further feedback is being captured.

Planning of study visits to the Somme heritage centre and other local historic sites is progressing with the aim of completing all project aspects by the end of September 2022.

#### **3.5 BPR5 – Supporting Connected Communities - LINCS Project**

The LINCS project continues to engage with the established neighbourhood forums and core participants. The leadership programme and additional classes are scheduled for completion in September 2022.

As the end of project approaches all elements are due for evaluation. The establishment of Neighbourhood Participatory Forums, one in each locality with a target of 80+ participants overall (20 in each area) have been achieved, with participants exceeding the 68 engagement hours

The Inclusion forum continues to meet and aims to continue with the networks established post project closure.

Planning for a combined closure / second shared learning event is underway and to take place in September 2022.

#### **3.6 BPR5 – Traveller Project - Supporting Connected Communities**

The Empowering Young Women workshop series is complete with the exhibition scheduled for 7th September 2022, will include exhibition materials of a booklet and banner which will be showcased in the Falls Women's Centre and in 2 Royal Avenue. The young women have agreed to present and discuss their work at the Traveller closure event.

Delivery of Health and Wellbeing workshop continues with 10 participants registered, 3 sessions completed, and scheduled activity into September 2022. The aim is to complete exhibition materials by the end of September to showcase at the Maureen Sheehan Centre and again at 2 Royal Avenue.

The request for quotation of the final workshop programme and exhibition, Parallel Lives, received nil submissions. Feedback from interested suppliers indicated other priorities and timeframe as barriers to delivery. Alternate options are being explored.

The recent Traveller community event 'Vintage tea dance' with 20 people attending, although representation from the traveller community was low. Scoping exercise to engagement and participation with Travellers for future events is progressing. To date 3 of 4 community events have been delivered with the final community event scheduled for September.

Members are requested to agree to extend delivery to 31 October 2022 to enable sufficient time for approval and print of the exhibition materials and delivery of final activities.

### **3.7 BPR5 – Roma Project - Supporting Connected Communities**

The Roma Support Hub is continuing to engage the Roma community with drop in, advice support as well as ongoing participants and capacity building.

Recent activity has been filmed to capture the participants attending the English language classes and a recent excursion to Lady Dixons Park. Thus, positively highlighting the engagement and activities of the Roma project.

Engagement in the conversational English language classes remain positive, with 22 participants registered, although attendance is sporadic and further sessions is required to ensure 12 participants achieve the 26hrs of engagement before closure at the end of September.

Targets achieved are outlined above, and other deliverables remain unchanged with 3 of 4 intercultural events complete, the Police Commissioners report submitted with one pending.

### **3.8 BPR6 – St. Comgalls**

Project delivery is continuing with seminars and networking events scheduled to take place in September. The agreed extension to 30 November 2022 (within original contract terms) will enable activity to complete and the educational/exhibition materials to be robustly considered and approved by governance.

Further context around the methodology, fact checking, quality and equality assurances has been requested from the delivery partner to enable approval of the materials.

The delivery partner has been advised of the participation projections, which anticipate that 13/20 adult participants will meet required contact hours, subject to all adults attending the 2 seminars and 27/20 young people will have completed activity.

Members should note that the requested reduction to 32 hours as per the business case submitted to SEUPB would enable full achievement of targets.

### **3.9 Cinematography Project**

Filming of suitable opportunities to capture the Belfast Peace Journey is continuing. Footage / clips are being finalised for: SSS Interpretive Panels family treasure hunt event featuring the Lord Mayor Tina Black, Traveller Circus fun day event, Roma English class. Further filming is being planned for SSS Volunteer networking event and Roma trip to Lady Dixon. CYP5 and BPR1 remain to be captured with fewer opportunities identified. Short story films on each project continue to be finalised as projects closure events are planned.

Thematic Films for the BPR and CYP themes will be showcased on International Day of Peace event on 21 September and will be circulated to Members when finished.

Drafting of Interlink content/format for Council staff including clips with possible interactive 'story map' for legacy of PEACE Programme and on BCC website is ongoing.

### **3.10 Financial & Resource Implications**

The Period 31 BPR claim, valued at £255K has been verified and submitted to SEUPB for reimbursement. As such total expenditure for the BPR theme now totals £3.2m with £2.37m reimbursed by SEUPB.

Claims for Periods 28-31 valued at £840K remains outstanding and yet to be verified by SEUPB.

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

The draft plan has been equality screened and discussed at the Equality Consultative Forum on 13 May 2015. The Equality Consultative Forum was further consulted on 18 November 2020."

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report and agree the following proposals:

#### **BPR3 - Transform for Change - NICVA:**

- Approve the request to progress payment of 30% of the NICVA contract end payment in line with the deliverables completed and supporting evidence that had been submitted; and

- Approve the extension to November 2022 for the delivery of community led Action Plans, in principle.

**BPR5:**

- **Traveller Support Project** - Approve a further extension to the project until the end of October 2022 to allow completion of all elements of the Traveller Support project.

In addition, the Programme Manager asked for an extension for the following 2 programmes which were both agreed by the Partnership:

- **LINCS** - Extend the project to 30th November 2022 to allow for final activity and closure event take place; and
- **Morrow Communications** - Approve an extension to the above project to 31st December 2022 to allow for final filming of ongoing project activity.

**Update on Good Relations Audit**

The Good Relations Manager informed the Members of the progress of the work currently being undertaken to develop the Good Relations Audit. She reminded the Members that the Council had agreed in March 2022 to undertake a Good Relations audit to inform the Good Relations Action Plans for the next three years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26, and advised that the Council submitted a Good Relations Action plan to the Executive Office (TEO) on an annual basis to secure funding for Good Relations activity through the District Council Good Relations Programme (DCGRP). The Good Relations Manager explained that the plan must be needs-based and that there was a requirement on the Council to carry out an audit of Good Relations need in Belfast every 3 years, in order to inform the content of the Action Plans. As well as demonstrating that the Audit had shaped the Action Plans, TEO also required the Audit report to be submitted with the annual bid and, therefore, the audit was being carried out in advance of this timescale. The Members were advised that Peter Osborne of Rubicon Consulting had been appointed to carry out the Good Relations Audit between July and November 2022. Work had been underway to develop appropriate survey material and a timetable for consultation with a range of parties. As such, the audit would involve consultation with Elected Members, staff and external stakeholders, including the Shared City Partnership. Consultation would take the form of focus groups, questionnaires, roundtable discussions and interviews.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report and agree the following proposals:

- Note the request for the Partnership to engage with Rubicon Consulting in the development of the Audit; and
- Approve the request to invite Dr Lucy Michael to the next meeting of the Partnership to present on the draft findings of the research on the lived experience of ethnic minority communities in Belfast;

**Proposal for Interface Project (BCC9)**  
**Strategic Intervention Fund**

The Good Relations Manager provided the Members with a project proposal and request for funding under BCC9, for an interactive trail around Alexandra Park in North Belfast. The project was designed to promote the park as a shared space and encourage positive interaction between communities on either side of the peace line in the park. She advised that



Duncairn Community Partnership, in conjunction with INTERCOMM Ireland, had developed a project proposal for an interactive trail around the Alexandra Park in North Belfast. The Park had a peace barrier in the middle of it and access across this line was provided by a gate. During July and into the start of August, the Park remained largely quiet with only a couple of incidents of sectarian and anti-social behaviour, albeit there had been an increase in incidents with youths gathering over the last few weeks of August. This project aimed to encourage the use of the whole park by both communities in the area and enhance its value to the broader North Belfast community. It was accepted that animation, programming and diversionary activities provided a positive alternative and enhanced community ownership of, and pride in, the asset. The interactive trail would allow users to navigate around the site and interact with new interpretive signage at key locations. The interactive trail could be followed with a digital App. The project would be designed and installed by Brilliant Trails and, once completed, the trail would be the responsibility of Intercomm and Duncairn Community Partnership to ensure the maintenance and updating of the trail via Brilliant Trails.

The Good Relations Manager explained that the concept was not a new idea and it had been tried and tested in places like Galgorm Castle, Loch Lomond Trail and various parks in Belfast including the Stormont Estate. Once installed the trail could be themed for various times of the year, that is, Easter, Christmas, etc., It could be used for quizzes and the App could be adapted to provide augmented reality experiences for the users, for example , dinosaurs walking in the park, ghosts at Halloween, Easter bunnies, etc. The content and experiences could be changed to keep the trail fresh and innovative. This could be delivered in partnership with local schools, youth clubs and the community, making it a very useful tool for promoting community ownership and community buy-in.

The proposed project had the potential to open Alexandra Park up to more visitors and to help promote the park as a shared space. The installation of interactive panels within the park would not only provide entertainment but also provide an outlet to promote events in the park and encourage users to move freely within all the park, thus creating the potential to remove the gates that separate both sides of the park.

The Members heard how this installation would bring back pride and local ownership and buy-in. Consultations had taken place with some political representatives with others being planned. Community consultation was being planned with key stakeholders, including community groups, schools and youth clubs. To date, there had been positive reaction to this proposal.

The proposal provided a vehicle to promote understanding by using technology to tackle issues of shared space, anti-social behaviour (ASB) and Sectarianism. The series of interactive boards could provide information on various cross community events, not only in the park, but within other locations in North Belfast. Groups and organisations would be invited to contribute to the population of the interactive boards through a steering group used to populate content and promote the use of the park as a shared space. The overall aims of this project were the reduction of ASB in the park, greater understanding of the history of the park and greater buy-in from residents within the catchment area. This proposal fitted well with Belfast City Council's Good Relations programme and contributed to the TEO T:BUC Headings of Our Children and Young People, Shared Community, Safe Community, and promotion of Culture. This would be a long-term permanent fixture that would be maintained and managed by Intercomm and Duncairn Community Partnership after the initial investment by Belfast City Council.

The costs for this proposal were contained within the Good Relations Action Plan, 75% of which was funded by The Executive Office under the District Council's Good Relations Programme. The project would cost £10,000. There were no recurring costs or liabilities to Council.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report and agree the proposal to

- Approve funding of £10,000 to Duncairn Community Partnership for the Interactive Trail project in Alexandra Park subject to no recurring costs under the Good Relations Action Plan.

### **Events Update**

The Members were asked to note the following events that the Good Relations Unit was involved in.

**Event:** Strategies for Addressing Anti-Muslim Hatred

**Date:** 22nd and 29th September 2022

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**Format:** Online

**Registration:** [goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk)

**Event:** Living Library – Borrow an Individual Like a Book

**Date:** 28th September 2022

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Format:** Belfast City Hall

**Registration:** [goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk)

**Event:** Black History Month – series of workshops looking at matters such as Black History, the history and diversity of the African and Caribbean Communities, what inclusion means.

**Date:** 7th, 14th, 21st October

**Time:** 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**Format:** TBC

**Registration:** [goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:goodrelations@belfastcity.gov.uk)

In addition to the above, the Council was also funding 2 events during Good Relations Week, in which officers had been heavily involved in developing:

**Event:** Mini Mela event for the community as part of the Areema Shared Housing Development

**Date:** 22nd September 2022

**Venue:** Fullerton Park in Dunmurry

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

**Format:** Open to the public

**Event:** Making Peace With People, Planet and Place Conference

**Date:** 23rd September 2022

**Venue:** Belfast City Hall

**Time:** 10:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**Format:** Conference. [Registration via Eventbrite](#)

### **Update on PEACE PLUS & Workshop**

The Programme Manager provided the Members with context in relation to the PEACEPLUS 1.1 workshop on the ongoing emerging process for developing the Local Community Action Plan.

The Members were asked to note that officers had received information from SEUPB on targets for Belfast with a total output target of 17,437, more than double of those set for PEACE IV for the same amount of funding. Whilst SEUPB was anticipating that Councils could specify their own definitions, clarification on the rationale behind the targets set needed to be sought. The Programme Manager expressed his concerns around these targets and added that negotiations with SEUPB would be needed in this regard. The Members agreed that negotiations should take place with SEUPB around targets to ensure they were achievable given current experience under PEACE IV.

Consultants from Locus Management and Blu Zebra joined the meeting. Mr. C. Boylan took the Members through the process of Co-Design, the current position and advised that the launch of the Belfast PEACEPLUS engagement plan would take place in Belfast City Hall on Tuesday 27th September.

### **Key Steps Development of local action plan submission**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Peaceplus pre engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agree stakeholder engagement process</li><li>• Agree Co-Design Framework via internal structures</li><li>• Initiate desktop research</li></ul>	Aug – Sept 22
<b>Stage 1 co-design needs &amp; opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliver stakeholder engagement, workshops via themes, areas, S75 etc</li><li>• Complete research</li><li>• Undertake residents survey</li><li>• Present Stage 1 report on findings and potential projects for approval (via internal engagement and governance)</li></ul>	Oct – Nov 22
<b>Stage 2 Co-design long list of priority projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliver stage 2 engagement on list of potential priority projects.</li><li>• Assess potential projects.</li><li>• Test ideas with stakeholders (including internal structures).</li><li>• Seek approval on stage 2 report.</li></ul>	Jan – Feb 23

<b>Stage 3 final action planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft action plan submission</li> </ul>	Mar – Apr 23
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Ms. T. Hogg outlined the co-design development parameters and strategic alignment with PEACEPLUS programme, Belfast Agenda and Good Relations programme and invited the Members for thoughts in this regard.

Ms. A. Tohill left the meeting due to a potential conflict of interest as she would be involved in assessing the application forms in her TEO capacity.

Discussion ensued around collaboration to create stronger relationships, building on successful partnerships, coordination of knowledge sharing, promoting shared space and identifying problematic derelict space.

At this point, it was decided to reschedule the workshop due to low Member representation. The subsequent workshop would take place face-to-face to generate more discussion. The Good Relations Manager stated that she would contact the Members in relation to scheduling the workshop.

The Partnership recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it note the contents of the report and:

- Approve the updated stakeholder engagement plan and key milestones for developing the plan

Chairperson

## **Minutes of Meeting of Party Group Leaders' Consultative Forum Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

### **Attendance**

#### **Members:**

Councillor Ronan McLaughlin  
Councillor Billy Hutchinson  
Councillor Michael Long  
Alderman George Dorrian  
Councillor Brian Smyth  
Councillor Donal Lyons  
Alderman Sonia Copeland  
Councillor Fiona Ferguson

**Apologies:** Councillor Emmet McDonough-Brown

#### **Officers:**

John Walsh, Chief Executive  
Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources  
Nora Largey, City Solicitor (for Item 6)  
Peadar Doyle, Logistics Manager (for Item 8 Contracts Update)

### **1. Structures**

The Chief Executive presented a proposed structure for the Corporate Management Tier following approval of the interim arrangements put in place to ensure continuity for the Deputy Chief Executive role. Members noted a report detailing the proposals discussed along with a revised proposal for the role of Director of Finance and Resources will be presented to September's SP&R Committee for consideration.

### **2. Finance Update**

The Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Finance & Resources advised that work has commenced on the estimates for 2023/24 and an initial report outlining the 2023/24 rate setting process will be presented to September SP&R committee. Further to discussions at the last meeting of the Forum he stressed to Members the many challenges involved for the 2023/24 rate setting process due to the rising utility costs and the rise in inflation and the impact on Council Financing. Members discussed in detail the challenges involved, including potential options to review energy efficiency within Council Owned assets in order to mitigate

against some of the rising utility costs. It was noted that the process for 2023/24 would be unprecedented and very different from previous years.

Members also discussed NI Reval2023, the revaluation process being undertaken by Land & Property Services (LPS) to adjust the rateable value of business properties to reflect changes in the property market and the potential impacts for 2023/24.

A Member requested a Party Group Briefing for new party members who weren't familiar with the rate setting process and it was agreed a suitable time would be arranged. The Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Finance & Resources advised that Party Group Briefings for the 2023/24 rate setting process would also be arranged for all parties following October SP&R Committee when more detail on the LPS revaluation exercise would be available.

### **3. Update on Cost-of-Living Proposals – Agency and Casual Staff**

The Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Finance & Resources provided an update on the ongoing discussions in relation to the cost of living payments for Agency and Casual Staff. He advised that August SP&R Committee had agreed in principle to also provide cost of living payments to Agency and Casual staff alongside the payment to all Council staff below Chief Officer grade. Discussion followed on how this might be managed and it was agreed that the projected costs for the options discussed would be circulated to Party Group Leaders in advance of September SP&R for consideration and review.

### **5. Joint Leadership Session PGL's/CMT**

The Chief Executive advised that the externally facilitated leadership training session with Party Group Leaders and the Council's Corporate Management Team would take place on Friday 14th October, 2022. Diary invites have been issued and Members noted the venue. He advised that the facilitator had requested to meet with Party Group Leaders individually in advance of the session and it was agreed that Members would confirm with his office if they were content for their contact details to be shared.

### **6. Dual Language Street Signage**

The City Solicitor advised that an update report would be brought to September SP&R Committee on the Dual Language Street Signs Policy. It was noted that the report will ask members to agree final wording before the policy is published online. In relation to a number

of queries raised by Members the City Solicitor advised that the policy has been agreed and is being implemented, the revisions discussed were administrative in nature only. The City Solicitor to provide an update for Members to confirm that the previously agreed quota of 5 applications in any given month was continuing to be processed following approval at July Council.

## **7. Planning Update**

The Chief Executive updated the Forum on the live planning applications and informed the Forum of applications that were being presented to the Planning Committee in September. He also provided an update on the Replacement Planning Portal (new Planning IT system) and some of the issues with the transition.

## **8. AOB**

### **Update on Contracts**

The Chief executive provided an update on the amendment to two proposed Single Tender Actions (STA's) to be administered as Competitive Tenders at September Council meeting. Members discussed the amendment made at the Council meeting and the Logistics Manager outlined the rationale for why they had been recommended for approval as a STA. Following discussion, it was noted that a report will be brought to September SP&R Committee for further consideration.

### **Hugh Hanna Statue**

Alderman Dorrian raised an issue in relation the relocation of the Hugh Hanna Statue. Members noted the update and further information will be brought back to Party Group Leaders in due course.

### **Illumination Request**

Alderman Dorrian requested to light up City Hall on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2022 during Anti Slavery week in order to highlight Modern Slavery. It was noted that this request would be agreed under the Chief Executive's delegated authority, subject to availability.

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**Belfast**  
City Council

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Requests for Use of the City Hall and the Provision of Hospitality</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Aisling Milliken, Functions and Exhibition Manager

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>
1.1	This report, together with the attached appendix, contains the recommended approach in respect of each of the requests by external organisations for access to the City Hall function rooms received up to 9th September, which appear to the Function Management Unit to comply with the criteria previously established by the Committee and are recommended for approval.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve the recommendations made in respect of applications received up to 9th September, as set out in the attached appendix.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<u>Background Information</u>
3.1	The Committee will be aware that, at its meeting on 6th January 2017, it agreed to modify the criteria governing access to the City Hall function rooms for external organisations.

3.2	<p>The Committee also agreed to the implementation of room-hire charges for some categories of function, and also revised the approach to the provision of civic hospitality for functions on foot of the agreed efficiency programme. Some further modifications to this approach were agreed at the Committee's meetings of 24th March and 23rd June 2017 and 23rd June and 25th October 2019.</p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p>
3.3	<p>The existing revised criteria and scale of charges have been applied to the various requests received and the recommendations herein are offered to the Committee on this basis for approval.</p>
3.4	<p>The schedule attached covers six applications for functions, scheduled for 2022 and 2023.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
3.5	<p>The implementation of charging for external functions has commenced, in line with the Committee's decisions in the matter.</p> <p><u>Equality and Good Relations / Rural Needs Implications</u></p>
3.6	<p>There are no direct good relations, equality or rural needs implications arising from this report.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Document Attached</b>
	Schedule of function requests received up to 9th September, 2022

## SEPTEMBER 2022 CITY HALL FUNCTION APPLICATIONS

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE	HOSPITALITY OFFERED	CIVIC HQ RECOMMEND
<b>2022 EVENTS</b>						
Volunteer Service, Belfast Health & Social Care Trust	24 October 2022	<b>BHSCT Volunteers Recognition Event</b> – for their time, energy and expertise support existing services in a wide variety of roles improving the patient and carer experience for our service users.  Numbers attending – 80	C	Charge should be £115 in line with criteria but waiver due to Freedom of City for NHS	No Hospitality	Approve No charge No hospitality
RNIB (NI)	24 November 2022	<b>Launch of Research findings</b> “Barriers to Employment for people with sight loss NI”  Numbers attending – 150	A	No charge - Complimentary as Charity	No Hospitality	Approve No charge No hospitality
Groundwork NI	30 November 2022	<b>Young Women – Leaders of Tomorrow programme</b> - celebration for students from Belfast Model School and Holy Trinity College on completion of their programme  Numbers attending – 60	C	No charge - Complimentary as Charity	No Hospitality	Approve No charge No hospitality
<b>2023 EVENTS</b>						
QUB Architecture Society	27 March 2023	<b>Architecture Gala Ball</b> – Celebrating a year of new architects who are crucial for in the future for enhancing the city’s image through the built architecture around us.	B	Yes	No hospitality	Approve Charge £825 No hospitality

## SEPTEMBER 2022 CITY HALL FUNCTION APPLICATIONS

		Numbers attending - 300				
Bray Leino Events	18 April 2023	<p>CyberFirst Dinner - with speeches and after dinner entertainment for guests attending a 3 day conference.</p> <p>Numbers attending - 150</p>	A &B	No (waived as linked to Visit Belfast)	No hospitality	Approve No Charge No hospitality
Belfast Pride	21 July 2023	<p><b>Belfast Pride Launch and Pride Awards</b> – LGBT Community awards ceremony. Drinks reception followed by Awards presentation.</p> <p>Numbers attending – 350</p>	D	No charge - Complimentary as Charity	No Hospitality	Approve No charge No hospitality

## Language Strategy Working Group

Friday, 26th August, 2022

### LANGUAGE STRATEGY WORKING GROUP MINUTES HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillors McMullan, Spratt and Whyte.  
Councillor McLaughlin (on behalf  
of Councillor Walsh).

In attendance: Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor;  
Mrs. S. Williams, Governance and Compliance Manager;  
Mr. M. Johnston, Language Officer;  
Mr. C. McGuigan, Irish Language Officer;  
Ms. L McKee, Democratic Services Officer  
Mrs. G. Boyd, Democratic Services Officer; and  
Ms. R. Budd (Interpreter)

#### **Apologies**

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting were recorded from Councillors Kyle, O'Hara and Walsh .

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 12 August were taken as read and signed as correct.

The city solicitor thanked the members of the working group for their attendance and reminded them that it had been agreed at the working group meeting on 12 August that the working group would reconvene at the end of August to allow the Members time to consult with their respective parties to consider the reports circulated.

#### **Revised thematic draft Action Plan**

The Language Officer advised the Members that they still had an opportunity to feed into the language strategy and that they were keen to gather as much feedback as possible.

### **TOR for Sign Languages Stakeholders' Forum**

The City Solicitor suggested that, if members were agreeable, this item and the next item could be discussed at the next meeting of the working group at the end of September. She advised that the Democratic Services Officer would identify the next available date for the working group.

Noted.

### **Draft Irish Language Policy**

Members agreed that this item would be discussed at the next meeting of the working group. Councillor McLaughlin advised the other Members of the working group that his party had some feedback on the policy and agreed to forward the comments on the strategy to the City Solicitor and the Democratic Services officer for circulation to the working group.

### **Next steps and Date of next meeting**

The City Solicitor advised the Members that their party groups would be consulted during September in relation to the dual language street signage and that a further meeting of the group would be scheduled for the end of September at some stage after the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee. She added that it was envisaged that the dual language action plan/draft policy would be brought to the October meeting of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

Noted.

Chairperson



<b>Subject:</b>	<b>City Hall: Carson Tile – Proposed Design</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September, 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Sinead Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Kirsten Mullen, Project Sponsor

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's agreement on the preferred design for the Carson Tile in the Rotunda in the City Hall.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to approve the recommendation from the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group of 31st August on the proposed design for the Carson Tile to be installed in the Rotunda in City Hall as being Option 3, as outlined in 3.3 below

<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main Report</b>
	<b>Carson Tile Background</b>
3.1	In November 2012, the Council received an independent Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) relating to the City Hall and City Hall grounds. This EQIA was carried out in accordance with

	<p>Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and the Council's Equality Scheme. This EQIA underpinned the decision to relocate memorabilia into the exhibition, allowing it to be seen and understood in a different way. Whilst the relocation of the artefacts and memorabilia from various parts of the City Hall into the exhibition space addressed the issue of the City Hall itself, in terms of the EQIA, the EQIA also applied to the City Hall grounds, in respect of which no steps have been taken to address the report's findings that there is a need to provide a contemporary image of the City, reflective of its vibrancy and diversity.</p>
3.2	<p>At the time when the relocation of memorabilia to the exhibition was agreed, there was, as part of that arrangement, a commemorative tile to be installed marking the place at which Sir Edward Carson stood when he signed the Ulster Covenant. HED approval is required for this and following ongoing discussions with HED it has been agreed that this will take the format of a tile within the Rotunda area. SP&amp;R were updated on this at their meeting on May 2021 and approved approve the installation of a plaque with the final design to be agreed. This was referred to the City Hall Installations Working Group for further consideration. HED have subsequently confirmed that marble is the preferred material for installation.</p>
3.3	<p>The City Hall Installations Working Group has considered three options for the design of the Carson Tile which will be installed within the Rotunda in the City Hall. The designs considered are set out below:</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>PLAIN VERSION</p> <p>WITH EDGE LINES AND 'ULSTER DAY' AS SECOND LINE</p> <p>ADDING HAND/SHIELD ICON FROM COVENANT AS CORNER DETAIL</p> </div>
3.4	<p>Three Members expressed a preference for Option 3 (the design on the far right) while 2 Members expressed a preference for Option 1 and 1 for Option 2.</p> <p><b>The Committee is, therefore, asked to endorse the recommendation of the City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group of 31st August on the proposed design for the Carson Tile as being Option 3.</b> This will enable this to proceed to final design in advance of manufacture and installation.</p>



	<b><u>Financial and Resources Implications</u></b>
3.5	Following confirmation of final concept, a detailed design can be produced which will include final costs for manufacture and installation.
	<b><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b>
3.6	Installation of Carson Tile contribute to meeting the recommendations of the EQIA City Hall and City Hall Grounds in ensuring Council achieves a greater balance in terms of the persons who are depicted or represented within the grounds.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	None

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## City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group

Wednesday, 31st August, 2022

### THE CITY HALL/CITY HALL GROUNDS INSTALLATIONS WORKING GROUP MINUTES

HELD REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Councillors Beattie (Chairperson), Lyons and O'Hara.

In attendance: Ms. S. Grimes, Director of Physical Programmes;  
Ms. K. Mullen, Project Sponsor;  
Mr. J. Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer;  
Ms. V. Smyth, Democratic Services Officer; and  
Mrs. G. Boyd, Democratic Services Officer.

#### **Apologies**

There were no apologies received.

#### **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 31st May, 2022 were taken as read and signed as correct.

#### **Election of Chairperson**

It was proposed by Councillor O'Hara and agreed that Councillor Beattie be appointed as the Chairperson to the Installations Working Group from August, 2022 until the Local Government Elections, scheduled to be held in May 2023.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were recorded.

#### **Stained-Glass Windows**

The Director of Physical Programmes provided the Members with background to obtain agreement on the process around the design, procurement and installation of two new stained-glass windows in the City Hall and to confirm the final location. She reported that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 20th May, 2022, had agreed:

- (i) That the stained-glass windows in recognition of the Health Service; and the contribution of the LGBT citizens be progressed to Stage 1 – Uncommitted on the Capital Programme: and

## **City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group**

- (ii) To keep the remaining proposals under review.

She advised that, following agreement from the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, officers had explored a number of potential locations in the City Hall where two new stained-glass windows could be located. The preferred location was to the right of the Women's History stained-glass window, located in the North West corridor of City Hall. Previously identified locations such as available windows within the City Hall exhibition were not suitable as it was felt inclusion of stained-glass windows within the exhibition area would detract from the exhibition content in the relevant rooms. Based on previous design, manufacture and installation of stained-glass windows, it was proposed that the commission process be two-stage with selection by way of a two-stage open submission process.

The Director of Physical Programmes asked the Members if they were content with the locations identified. A Member questioned an available window in the Rotunda area as a location for the LGBT window. The Project Sponsor agreed to take a photograph of the window in question which has 3 panels and would provide an update at the next Working Group.

The Members noted that it was proposed that the installation of two stained glass windows would be moved to Stage 2 - Uncommitted on the Capital Programme to allow procurement to commence with final approval on designs and costs being taken by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee based on recommendations from Installations: City Hall/City Grounds Working Group. This would be subject to planning and listed building consent being obtained and a satisfactory tender being returned. It was recommended that an indicative budget be set to allow for the process to commence in terms of design, fabrication and installation. In line with the three-stage approval process, the Members noted that the final budget would only be agreed upon the receipt of a satisfactory tender.

The Members agreed:

- with the recommendation that the two new stained-glass windows should be located to the righthand side of the Women's History window in the North West corridor of City Hall (*subject to the Project Sponsor obtaining information relating the aforementioned window in the Rotunda area in relation to the LGBT window*).
- to give consideration to which key stakeholder groups should be consulted in relation to the final design for both windows; and
- that the same artist be commissioned for both windows and that procurement be by way of a two-stage open submission process.

### **Carson Tile**

The Director of Physical Programmes reminded the Members that, following discussion at the previous Working Group on 31st May 2022, concept designs for the Carson Tile had been circulated to Party Group Leaders for confirmation of the preferred design. To date, five responses had been received as detailed in the report and responses were outstanding from three remaining parties. The Director of Physical

## **City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group**

Programmes explained that, in order for Officers to proceed to next stages, that is, final design and associated costs, the Members would be required to confirm a position on the preferred concept design.

The Director of Physical Programmes stated that there had been two preferences for Option 1, one for Option 2 and two for Option 3. Therefore, no consensus had been reached. Given this the Director confirmed that she was seeking agreement from Members on the option to be recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to allow detailed design and final costings to be prepared. At the meeting a further preference was expressed for Option 3 and, given this, it was agreed that this would be the preferred option to be recommended to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval in advance of manufacture and installation.

### **Frederick Douglass**

The Director of Physical Programmes provided a progress update and reminded the Members that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 23rd October 2020, had received confirmation from the Minister for Communities indicating that she would be content for her Department to partner with Council in erecting a statue in Rosemary Street in remembrance of Frederick Douglass. The Minister had indicated that, should Council establish a steering group to take the project forward, her Department would provide part funding.

The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at that meeting had granted approval for the Council to establish and lead the Working Group tasked with delivering the project and agreed that it should also consider how the City's wider association with slavery during that period in history could be recognised.

Following ongoing Steering Group meetings and updates provided to the Installations: City Hall/City Hall Grounds Working Group, final procurement documents had been prepared which had been issued via eSourcing NI on 26th August, 2022.

The Director of Physical Programmes explained that this would be a two-stage procurement process, with one artist appointed to undertake the design, installation and manufacture of a statue to Frederick Douglass.

Based on previous experience of commissioning public art pieces, it was expected that the process could take 6 to 9 months, dependent on the project plan submitted by the appointed artist and subject to obtaining the necessary statutory approvals. It was envisaged that the final piece should be installed in Summer 2023. This was caveated by securing all the necessary approvals, that there was no time delay or costs implications of materials selected by the artist for the final piece and that there were no issues/delays with services given the piece will be located in the City Centre.

The Director of Physical Programmes advised that regular updates would be provided to the Installations: City Hall/City Hall Grounds Working Group during this process. As the project moved forward, the Members would be asked to give consideration to the planned public unveiling.

The Members agreed with the recommendations.

## **City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group**

### **Bereaved Families to Covid NI**

The Project Sponsor provided the Members with background to Bereaved Families to Covid in Northern Ireland, a support group for Covid bereaved families. She explained that it was established by the Family of Ruth Burke, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim who suffered the devastating loss of their mother on March 24th, the first woman to pass away to Covid19 in Northern Ireland. In Strabane, Co. Tyrone, Bredge and Owen Ward would pass away within 12 hours of each other on 16th November 2020. Another family left devastated. The Ward and Burke families like so many others who had lost loved ones during the pandemic had no goodbyes. Traditional funerals were restricted, the norms were suspended. Two families, like thousands linked together by a common loss during the pandemic.

Ciaran Ward (Son of Bredge and Owen) and Brenda Doherty (daughter of Ruth) had come together to discuss ways they could support other families bereaved through Covid19, while honouring the loss of all the families bereaved during the pandemic, whatever the illness. They had established a private Facebook group - Support Group for Covid Bereaved NI, in May, which had 138 members.

The Project Sponsor continued to highlight that those bereaved through Covid19 had faced similar grief, unable to visit hospitals to hold their loved one's hands, comfort them, no wakes, restricted funerals. In some cases, unable to touch/carry the coffin, unable to dress their loved ones in their final clothes. After the funeral was over, they were unable to meet family or friends to comfort each other, tell stories or share in collective grief.

A representative of the Group had contacted the Council to request that it give consideration to:

- I. The erection of a permanent memorial for all of those who lost their life during the Covid pandemic
- II. A permanent location for the Memory Stones of Love; and
- III. Give consideration to hosting the Lost Lace Project in Belfast.

### **Erection of Permanent Memorial**

The Project Sponsor advised that officers had held exploratory meetings with representatives of the Group who had requested that Council give consideration to the erection of a permanent memorial to those who lost their lives during Covid. It had been suggested that this might take the form of a living memorial located in one of Belfast City Council's parks. The Group had suggested:

- A living memorial, centre piece designed artwork, possibly around a fountain (Fountain of Life);
- Trees to signify the loss of life, seen as a lasting symbol of life, giving family and friends a place to visit and feel close the person who has passed away;
- Flowers for seasons, wall of colour eg March daffodils;
- Benches/picnic tables, areas to meet and talk to share experiences; or
- Plaques telling the story of the pandemic

## **City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group**

It was proposed that the memorial tell the story of the pandemic recognising the impact it had on the community of Northern Ireland not only on those families who suffered bereavement due to Covid related illnesses but other families who suffered bereavements during this period but were unable to attend funerals for their relatives and as such go through the grieving process.

The Project Sponsor explained that Members were only requested to provide initial views on the request for the erection of a permanent memorial. The Members noted that at this stage this would be subject to further discussions with Elected Members and Committee approval, subject to budget availability and all necessary due diligence requirements.

### **Memory Stones of Love**

The Project Sponsor informed the Members that The Memory Stones of Love had been on display in the Lord Mayor's Parlour during the previous Lord Mayor's term of office. The group had requested that Council give consideration to hosting the Memory Stones of Love on a permanent basis. She provided additional background to The Memory Stones of Love which had come about as a result of the group wanting to begin to create a memorial for all of those who had lost their lives during the pandemic. It was inspired by Rami's Heart in New Jersey with now over 300 stones representing not only people from across Ireland but with stones from abroad as well.

The Project Sponsor stated that the group advised that they saw the Memory Stones of Love as a beginning of a permanent memorial. They group had commented that it would be good to see that local council districts had acknowledged the lives lost through the pandemic by adding memorials to our towns and cities. In addition, they had hosted an event in Stormont, stating that the response from the MLA's that took time out to see the stones and met with families was positive. They hoped in the near future to see their request for a permanent memorial to honour the lives lost as well as essential/key workers, community groups and volunteers would become a reality.

The Members were asked to provide initial views and thoughts on the request to permanently host the Memory Stones of Love Project.

The Members noted that at this stage this would be subject to further discussions with Elected Members and Committee approval, subject to budget availability and all necessary due diligence requirements.

### **Lost Lace - Request for Council to Host Exhibition**

The Project Sponsor provided the Members with background to 'Lost Lace' which was a commemorative arts project comprising of 10,000 lace roses remembering all those lost to Covid across Ireland. The project had been funded by the Dublin City Arts Office and the Office of Public Works and would be on display in Dublin during October 2022 and Bereaved Families to Covid in Northern Ireland had requested that an invitation to attend be extended to the Lord Mayor of Belfast.

The Project Sponsor advised that, in addition, they had requested that Belfast City Council give consideration to hosting the exhibition in Belfast next year 2023. The group had indicated that there had been no public commemoration held in Northern Ireland and

## **City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group**

suggested that hosting the project could be used to publicly commemorate those whose lives had been impacted by the pandemic and recognise the impact it had on society.

The Members were asked to provide initial views on hosting the Lost Lace commemorative art project.

The Members noted that at this stage this would be subject to further discussions with Elected Members and Committee approval, subject to budget availability and all necessary due diligence requirements.

The Director of Physical Programmes advised the Members that a commitment was not required in this first instance and that the scope of the project needed further exploration.

The Members agreed to give consideration to the erection of a permanent living memorial to those who lost their lives during the Covid pandemic; to give consideration to a location for the permanent location for the display of the Memory Stones of Love; and to give consideration to hosting the Lost Lace commemorative arts project in Belfast in March 2023 on the basis of no commitment by Council at this stage and that all proposals would be subject to budget availability and further due diligence. Officers undertook to provide a further update report to the Working Group in due course.

### **City Hall Statues**

The Director of Physical Programmes provided an update on the progress of the City Hall Statues programme. The Members were reminded that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 28th March, 2022, had agreed that City Hall Statues – Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken be moved to Stage 3 – Committed on the Capital Programme and that the necessary procurement processes be initiated, as required with contracts to be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tenders and full commitment to deliver. The Installations: City Hall/City Hall Grounds Working Group, at its meeting on 31 May, 2022, had considered a draft Artist's Brief and agreed to a two-stage procurement process for commissioning one artist to design, manufacture and install both pieces, subject to necessary statutory approvals.

The Members of the Working Group noted that the procurement documents for the installation of the Winifred Carney and Mary Ann McCracken statues would be issued in late September 2022 and that the expected timeline for design, manufacture and installation of the two new statues (subject to necessary statutory approvals being in place). The Members further noted that one artist would be appointed to undertake the design and installation of both the Winifred Carney and the Mary Ann McCracken statues, which would ensure there was complementarity between both pieces. The Members gave consideration to public unveiling arrangements and developing a narrative around each of the new pieces.

A eMmber raised the matter of the timeframe and the public relations promotion to give the project international exposure. The Director of Physical Programmes provided assurance that Corporate Communications would be involved and she provided the rationale around the timeframe which had been timed deliberately in line with other projects.



**City Hall/City Hall Grounds Installations  
Working Group**

**Date of the Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Installations Working Group was scheduled for 26th October 2022 at 12.00PM.

Chairperson

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**Belfast**  
City Council

STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Audit and Risk Panel Report and Minutes of meeting of 21st September 2022</b>
<b>Date:</b>	23rd September 2022
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance and Resources and Deputy Chief Executive, ext. 6085
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Claire O'Prey, Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services (AGRS), ext. 4643

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
<i>After Committee Decision</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>After Council Decision</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Sometime in the future</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Never</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a summary of the key issues that were considered and discussed by the Audit and Risk Panel at its September 2022 meeting and present the minutes of that meeting for approval.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
2.1	The Committee is requested to note the key issues arising at the meeting and approve the minutes, as attached.

3.0	<b>Main Report</b>
3.1	<p><b>Key Issues</b></p> <p><u>Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO)</u></p> <p>3.1.1 The Panel considered the <b>Statement of Accounts</b> of the Council for the year-end 31st March, 2022. These accounts are a fundamental part of the councils overall corporate governance framework and provide assurance to Members and ratepayers on the stewardship of the council's finances and its financial position.</p> <p>3.1.2 The Panel reviewed the annual statement of accounts and did not identify any concerns arising from the financial statements or from the audit that needed to be brought to the attention of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee prior to their approval of the accounts on 23rd September, 2022.</p> <p>3.1.3 The NIAO Director informed the Panel that its audit of the accounts is almost complete and on the basis of the work completed to date, the Local Government Auditor (LGA) will report on the 2021/22 financial statements with an <b>unqualified audit opinion</b>. The Panel expressed their thanks to the Finance team and the NIAO.</p> <p>3.1.4 The Panel considered the update provided by the Local Government Auditor on the <b>draft Report to those Charged with Governance for 2021/22</b>, which outlines the system / control issues arising from the NIAO audit. The draft report contained only <b>two recommendations for management action, which are priority three (i.e., issue of a minor nature which represents best practice)</b>, relating to the accidental omission of one councillor from the published list of those receiving special responsibility allowance and invoices raised mid-March not being included in debtors balance at the end of March.</p> <p><u>Key Reports</u></p> <p>3.1.5 The Panel noted the <b>progress being made against the annual audit plan</b>, with five audits finalised in the period July - August 2022 and requested a management update on the progress being made to implement the recommendations arising from the internal audit of <b>Police and Community Safety Partnerships</b>. Regarding recent <b>internal audits of Developer Contributions, Fleet Management and Income and Accounts Receivable</b>, the Panel received an update from management on the progress being made to implement the recommendations arising. The Panel also received an update on preparations for the next <b>National Fraud Initiative</b>. The Panel noted that AGRS would review all open audit actions in October 2022.</p> <p>3.1.6 The Panel considered the <b>corporate risk dashboard</b> which provided an analysis and update on the progress being made to manage the 24 risks that are considered to present the greatest threat to the delivery corporate priorities and / or compliance with key statutory requirements. The Panel was updated on how the ownership of risks is to be reviewed given the changes at Chief Officer level. The Panel noted the <b>quarterly assurances provided by members of the corporate management team</b> regarding compliance with risk management and internal control processes. The Panel was also provided with an update on the review of the <b>business continuity plans</b> for a cyber-attack scenario for the critical services.</p> <p>3.1.7 The Panel also considered the report on the recent external quality assurance review of AGRS, which concludes that AGRS conforms to the requirements of the Public Sector</p>

	Internal Audit Standards. <b>This provides members with valuable independent assurance on the internal audit service provided by AGRS.</b>
3.1.8	The Panel was also provided with a <b>progress update</b> on the agreed actions to be taken in relation to the recommendations contained within the report from Peter Coll QC of his independent investigation relating to events at Roselawn Cemetery on 30th June 2020, noting that several actions had been completed.
3.1.9	The Panel also received <b>quarter 1 reports on corporate health and safety, absence management and performance improvement.</b>
4.0	<b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b> None
5.0	<b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b> None known at this time.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Document Attached</b>
	Minutes of the meeting of 21st September

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# Audit and Risk Panel

Wednesday, 21st September, 2022

## MEETING OF AUDIT AND RISK PANEL

HELD IN THE LAVERY ROOM AND  
REMOTELY VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Members present: Alderman Rodgers;  
The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor M. Kelly);  
Councillors Matt Collins, Groogan, Hutchinson and  
McKeown; and Ms. G. Fahy.

In attendance: Mr. R. Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of  
Finance and Resources;  
Ms. N. Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal  
and Civic Services  
Ms. C. O'Prey, Head of Audit, Governance and Risk  
Services;  
Mr. T. Wallace, Head of Finance;  
Mr. M. Whitmore, Audit, Governance and Risk  
Services Manager;  
Mr. L. Mulholland, Audit, Governance and Risk  
Services Manager;  
Ms. H. Lyons, Corporate Finance Manager;  
Ms. S. Williams, Governance and Compliance  
Manager; and  
Mr. H. Downey, Democratic Services Officer.

Also attended: Ms. C. Kane, Director, Northern Ireland Audit Office.

### **Pre-Meeting**

The Audit and Risk Panel met privately with the Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services prior to the meeting commencing, to enable Panel members to raise any concerns around the work of internal audit or the Council's risk, control and governance arrangements.

### **Election of Chairperson**

The Panel was reminded that, at its meeting on 7th June, it had agreed, given the absence of some Members, to defer the election of a Chairperson until its next meeting.

Accordingly, it was

Moved by Councillor McKeown,  
Seconded by Councillor Groogan and

**Audit and Risk Panel,  
Tuesday, 21st September, 2022**

Resolved – That Alderman Rodgers be elected to serve as Chairperson for the period to end on the date of the Local Government Elections in 2023.

(Alderman Rodgers in the Chair.)

**Apologies**

Apologies were reported on behalf of the High Sheriff (Councillor Hussey) and Councillor Carson.

**Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of 7th June were taken as read and signed as correct.

**Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were reported.

**Absence Rates - Quarter 1 2022-23**

(Ms. C. Sheridan, Head of Human Resources, attended in connection with this item.)

The Head of Human Resources submitted for the Panel's consideration the following report:

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

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Audit and Risk Panel of the Council's performance in managing absence during the quarter from April – June 2022/23.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

**2.1 The Audit and Risk Panel is asked to note the contents of this report.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**Key Corporate Indicators:**

**At the end of quarter one:**

- The Council's average sickness absence rate stands at 3.96 days per FTE, an increase of 0.64 days compared to absence for the same period last year (3.32).**



**Audit and Risk Panel,  
Tuesday, 21st September, 2022**

- A total of 7960.88 working days was lost due to sickness absence. This accounted for 7.04% of the total working days available.
- The table below provides a summary of how departments are performing against the target. As indicated below, 4 departments did not meet the Corporate target for quarter one (3.25 days).

End of year target	12.99					
End of Q1 target	3.25					
Department	Number of staff (FTE)	Total days lost (FTE)	Actual absence per FTE	Variance	% of workforce	% of absence
City and Neighbourhood Services	1122.64	4669.78	4.16	0.91	55.81%	58.66%
City and Organisational Strategy	118.95	288.98	2.43	-0.82	5.91%	3.63%
Finance and Resources	190.49	349.13	1.83	-1.42	9.47%	4.39%
Legal and Civic Services	150.82	916.64	6.08	2.83	7.50%	11.51%
Place and Economy	305.01	1046.46	3.43	0.18	15.16%	13.15%
Physical Programmes	123.75	689.89	5.57	2.32	6.15%	8.67%
Totals	2011.66	7960.88	3.96	0.71		

**Additional Absence Information:**

- There has been a decrease in the number of staff with no recorded absence this period (70.91%) compared to the same time last year (79.94%);
- There has been a slight increase in absence classified as long term (20+ days) this year (4994.28 days) compared to the same time last year (4929.56 days);
- Council's average sickness absence rate further reduces to 3.32 days per FTE when COVID-19 related absences are deducted;
- The number of days lost per full time equivalent decreased in quarter one (3.96 days) when compared to quarter four (21/22) (4.96 days). This decrease is illustrated in figure 1;
- Depression/anxiety/stress (33% of total days lost) and musculo-skeletal (23% of total days lost) continue to be the top two reasons for absence (refer to figure 2 for further information);
- 639 employees were off between April and June 2022. Discretion was applied to 80 of these employees (12.5%) and their absence accounted

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for 1745.6 days (approximately 22% of the total absence for quarter one). Refer to figure 3 for further information);

- A total of 90 cases were identified as having compliance related issues (48 in CNS). Refer to figure 4 for further information);
- Approximately 31.81% of absence (2532.23 days) is recorded as disability related, of which, 60% of was managed as long term. Depression and Anxiety related absence accounted for almost a third of disability related absence. (Refer to figure 5 for further information);
- A total of 218 employees were recorded as absent due to COVID19 and this accounted for a total of 1289.03 days/16.19% of the total absence in quarter one;
- 13 employees met the trigger for a Stage4/FAH in quarter one;
  - 2 employees availed of a career break before Stage4/FAH being scheduled.
  - Discretion was applied to four of these cases to Stage4/FAH due to an employee recovering from surgery, an employee recovering from treatment for cancer, an employee who had just returned from a period of Long Covid and an employee with a newly diagnosed disability
  - Six employees were ill health retired prior to Stage4/FAH being scheduled.
  - One employee attended a Stage 4 / FAH however, the outcome is not yet known as additional information was requested of management.
- All departments returned improvement plans for 2022/23 and a progress update will be reported on at the end of Q2. All departments returned absence reporting dashboards for quarter 1.

**COVID Recording Issue:**

In February 2022, Corporate HR was made aware of instances of incorrect recording of Covid absences, in that staff were recorded as being absent due to sickness when it should have been recorded as absent due to contact with an infectious disease – self isolation, given that the employee was well enough to work but wasn't allowed to because of the restrictions in place.

Corporate HR worked alongside departmental HR to establish an action plan to rectify the reported errors.

Physical Programmes and Legal and Civic Services have confirmed that all affected staff have been notified of the error and the absence records and payroll details have been updated as required. City and Neighbourhoods have not provided an update with regards to the current status of this piece of work.

This has led to a minor reduction to the final absence figure for 2019/20 and 2020/21. The new figures are as follows:

	Previous Figure	New Figure
20/21	10.86	10.82
19/20	13.58	13.56

**4.0 Resource Implications**

**4.1 Directors have been asked to ensure that:**

- attendance management continues to be an item on DMT agendas and related matters discussed and appropriate actions taken forward; and
- resources are in place to ensure that adequate monitoring and review is in place at Departmental level.

**5.0 Equality and Good Relations Implications**

**5.1 Approximately 31.81% of absence (2532.23 days) is recorded as disability related.**

The use of discretion and reasonable adjustments is considered in such cases.

After discussion, the Panel noted the contents of the report.

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**Update on Corporate Health and Safety Performance**

(Ms. E. Eaton, Corporate Health and Safety Manager, attended in connection with this item.)

The Panel was reminded that it was responsible for overseeing the Council's risk, control and governance arrangements for health and safety. In undertaking this function, the Panel provided independent scrutiny of the Council's health and safety performance, with reports being presented to it on a quarterly basis.

Accordingly, the Health and Safety Manager submitted for the Panel's consideration a report on corporate health and safety performance and activities for the quarter ending on 30th June, 2022.

She provided, on a Departmental basis, information on the implementation of actions associated with the key performance indicators of health and safety and fire safety and pointed out that, at a corporate level, compliance rates had been 20% and 47% respectively.

In terms of accident/incident reporting, there had, in quarter one, been 24 employee accidents, 8 non-employee accidents, 11 RIDDOR accidents and 17 work related violence incidents.

She concluded by providing details of the information which had, during quarter one, been forwarded to the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland in response to enquiries/correspondence.

The Panel noted the corporate health and safety performance and activities for the quarter ending on 30th June, 2022.

**Update on Audits of Planning Agreements/Developer  
Contributions and Planning Income**

(Mr. E. Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management) attended in connection with this item.)

The Panel was reminded that, at its meeting on 7th June, it had agreed that the Planning Manager (Development Management) be invited to attend its next meeting to provide a presentation on the progress being made to implement the recommendations from recent internal audits of Planning Agreements/Developer Contributions and Planning Income.

The Planning Manager (Development Management) reported that, in relation to Section 76 Planning Agreements, progress in establishing the new monitoring function within the Planning Service had been hindered due to monitoring officer resources being temporarily diverted to deal with the backlog of planning applications created by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing systemic issues with the operation of the NI planning system. This gap in monitoring resources had now been filled with the recent appointment of a permanent Section 76 Monitoring Officer.

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He went to provide an update on each of the six recommendations which had arisen from that audit and pointed out that much of the work was at an advanced stage of completion. He then provided the Panel with an overview of the Section 76 Planning Agreements which had been entered into and the agreed governance arrangements in place for managing this spend.

In terms of the three recommendations arising from the internal audit of Planning income, he indicated that the income reconciliations would be addressed in October through the new Planning Portal and that the fee accuracy checks had been reinstated. He added that the development of a charging model for Planning Performance Agreements would be implemented by March, 2024.

He concluded by providing clarification on issues which had been raised by two Members around Developer Contributions, in the context of public realm works being undertaken in and around the City centre.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided.

**Update on Audit of Grants, Fleet Management,  
Income/Accounts Receivable in Bereavement  
Services and Commercial Waste**

(Ms. C. Matthews, Operational Director of Resources and Fleet, and Ms. S. Toland, Director of City Services, attended in connection with this item.)

The Panel was reminded that, at its meeting on 7th June, it had agreed that the aforementioned Operational Directors in the City and Neighbourhood Services Department be invited to attend its next meeting to provide an update on the progress being made to implement the recommendations from recent internal audits of Grants, Fleet Management and Income/Accounts Receivable in Bereavement Services and Commercial Waste.

The Operational Director of City Services provided the Panel with an update on the arrangements for the verification of grants awards in relation to Covid-19 funds. A contractor had been appointed, who would report on the assessment of expenditure against terms agreed in Funding Agreements and Letters of Offer and on the extent to which funded organisations had complied with the terms of the contract with the Council. The Department was also progressing the recruitment of a Business Support Officer – Funding to act as a dedicated resource for community provision to ensure that funds were administered in line with Council procedures and best practice.

In terms of addressing the Income/Accounts Receivable recommendations, the Director explained that the Plotbox system had been implemented in 2019 and that there was an ongoing programme of improvement in the income processes in Bereavement Services, which would be completed by January, 2023. The recommendations regarding Commercial Waste income had been fully implemented.

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In terms of the audit of Fleet Management, the Operational Director of Resources and Fleet provided the Panel with an update on the actions associated with each of the eight recommendations. She confirmed that four had been fully implemented and that work was well underway on the remaining four recommendations, which should all be completed by the end of September, 2022.

Ms. Fahy enquired if a process was in place to ensure that, when vehicles are disposed of, spare parts for that vehicle are also disposed of, if no longer required. This would prevent stocks of obsolete parts from building up in the fleet stores.

The Operational Director of Resources and Fleet undertook to seek clarification in that regard and respond directly to Ms. Fahy.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided.

**Update on Audit of Central Transactions Unit -  
Income and Accounts Receivable**

The Head of Finance submitted for the Panel's consideration a report which summarised the progress being made to address the four recommendations arising from the recent internal audit of the Central Transactions Unit function, namely:

- i. the operation of the debt management process, including issuing dunning letter, monthly debtors report and pursuance of court action, where necessary;
- ii. credits and write offs, including authorisations of credits and write-offs on SAP and the SAP roles access to process credits and write offs on the finance system;
- iii. monitoring procedures and authorisations when setting up new customers and making critical changes to existing customers; and
- iv. the development of key performance indicators to assess the effectiveness of income collection and debt management activity.

He reported that recommendations i. to iii. would be implemented by the end of September, 2022 and confirmed that an Accounts Receivable management checklist had been initiated and that new staff had recently been appointed to assist with debt management activities. A new report had been created to monitor write off transactions, which was reviewed on a monthly basis, and other work was progressing in this area. Documentation to support the setting up of all new customers and the processing of critical changes for existing customers had been located and saved and all changes to data were reviewed and saved.

In terms of recommendation iv., the Head of Finance pointed out that the development of key performance indicators would be considered as part of

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the implementation of the reporting workstream of the new finance system, with a timeframe of April, 2023.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided.

**Belfast City Council Statement of Accounts 2021/22**

The Head of Finance submitted for the Panel's consideration the following report:

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Audit and Risk Panel the Statement of Accounts of the Council, including the Annual Governance Statement, for the period ending 31st March, 2022.**
- 1.2 The Statement of Accounts are an important element of the council's overall corporate governance framework as they provide assurance to Members and ratepayers on the stewardship of the council's finances and its financial position.**
- 1.3 The Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2022, as attached, have been prepared in line with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 based on International Financial Reporting Standards and the Department for the Communities Accounts Direction, Circular LG 02/22 dated 7th January, 2022 and 23rd March, 2022.**
- 1.4 I can confirm that the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March, 2022 has been prepared in the form directed by the Department for the Communities and in my opinion the Statement of Accounts give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year and the financial position as at the end of the financial year.**

**2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it approve the Council's Statement of Accounts and incorporated Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March 2022.**

**3.0 Main Report**

**Key Issues**

**Audit Opinion**

**3.1 It is the Local government Auditors' opinion that:**

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with relevant legal and statutory requirements and the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021-22, of the financial position of Belfast City Council as at 31st March 2022 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended; and
- the statement of accounts have been properly prepared in accordance with the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and the Department for Communities directions issued thereunder; and
- the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with the Department for Communities directions made under the Local Government (Accounts and
- Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015; and
- the information given in the Narrative Report for the financial year ended 31st March 2022 is consistent with the financial statements.

**Reserves**

**General Fund**

- 3.2 The credit balance on the General Fund has increased to £62,218,726 (of which £48,145,477 relates to specified reserves). The movement on the reserves balance is summarised in Table 1 below:**

**Table 1: Summary of Reserves Position**

Opening Balance		£54.9m
In year movement in reserves		<u>£7.3m</u>
Closing Balance		£62.2m



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Specified Reserves at year end		<u>£48.1m</u>
<b>Balance Available</b>		<b><u>£14.1 m</u></b>

**Capital Fund £12,220,031**

- 3.3 The Capital Fund is made up of the Belfast Investment Fund (£1,368,532). The fund has been created to support key partnership projects to regenerate Belfast and help lever substantial funds from other sources, the Local Investment Fund (£800,741) to fund smaller local regeneration projects, the City Centre Investment Fund (£7,688,069) to support the Belfast City Centre Regeneration Investment Plans, the Social Outcomes Fund (£2,362,689) to support City Centre projects which might not generate a direct financial return but would enhance the overall City Centre offer and support and attraction of investment.

**Neighbourhood Regeneration Fund £10,000,000**

- 3.4 This fund was created from the Belfast Investment Fund, to support neighbourhood regeneration and tourism projects in local neighbourhoods.

**Leisure Mobilisation Fund £621,287**

- 3.5 This fund is to support the Leisure Transformation Programme and will cover programme level costs including communications, engagement and procurement costs.

**Capital Receipts Reserve £1,068,583**

- 3.6 These are capital receipts which have originated primarily from the sale of assets and which have not yet been used to finance capital expenditure.

**Other Fund Balances and Reserves £1,731,811**

- 3.7 This relates to the Election Reserve (£735,037) which has been set up to smooth the cost of running council elections, the BWUH Subvention Fund (£703,151) to support national and international organisations in bringing their conferences to Belfast and the BWUH Sinking Fund (£293,623) to support planned maintenance and future capital works at the new exhibition centre.

**Debt**

- 3.8** The overall level of trade debtors had been decreasing over the last ten years. Whilst, the COVID 19 pandemic had an impact on overall debt levels which now stand at £7.1m at 31st March 2022 compared to £5.7m at 31st March 2012, the increase is mainly due to an increase in public authority debt at year end. An analysis of trade debtors, inclusive of VAT, for the last two years is shown below:

	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
Less than three months	£5,450,710	£3,963,319
Three to one year	£1,070,718	£481,307
More than one year	£553,310	£772,373
<b>Total</b>	<b>£7,074,738</b>	<b>£5,216,999</b>

**Creditors**

- 3.9** The Department for Communities has set councils a target of paying invoices within 30 days. During the year the council paid 71,202 invoices totalling £187,290,662.

The average time taken to pay creditor invoices was 17 days for the year ended 31st March 2022. The Council paid 57,882 invoices within 10 days, 66,649 invoices within 30 days, and 4,553 invoices outside of 30 days. The Council endeavours to process invoices as quickly as possible and has an improvement plan to support this process.

**Annual Governance Statement (AGS)**

- 3.10** The Statement of Accounts include the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for the year 2021/22, which has been prepared in line with the Accounts Directive provided by the Department for Communities, NIAO guidance and is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government'. Specifically the AGS sets out:

- scope of responsibility of the Council in relation to governance
- the purpose of the governance framework
- the governance framework in place
- review of effectiveness of the governance framework

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- **update on the significant governance issues from prior year**
- **significant governance issues to be disclosed for current year**

**3.11 The AGS is approved by the Chair of the Strategic Policy and Resources, the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Resources. It is subject to review by the LGA (NIAO) as part of its annual audit.**

**Financial and Resource Implications**

**3.12 None**

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

**3.13 None.”**

The Panel commended the staff from the Council’s Finance team and the Northern Ireland Audit Office who had been involved in the production of the financial accounts and agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it approve the Council’s Statement of Accounts and incorporated Annual Governance Statement for the year ended 31st March, 2022.

**Northern Ireland Audit Office - Draft Report  
to those Charged with Governance 2021/22**

The Director of the Northern Ireland Audit Office submitted for the Panel’s consideration the Draft Report to those charged with Governance for 2021/22. The report summarised the system and control issues which had arisen during its 2021/22 audit and included recommendations for management action.

She pointed out that, at this stage, management had not had the opportunity to provide comments and/or actions to address the issues raised within the audit and that those would be presented to the Panel at its meeting in December. The audit was, she pointed out, nearing completion, and would be finalised after the Northern Ireland Audit Office had received the final signed Statement of Accounts. It was anticipated that the 2021/22 statements would be certified with an unqualified opinion.

She reviewed the key elements of the draft report and pointed out that recommendations had been made in respect of two issues, namely, an omission from the Special Responsibility Allowances report on the Council’s website and Income cut off at year-end. Those had been categorised as Priority 3, that is, deemed to be of a more minor nature and representing best practice, and could change pending the finalisation of outstanding queries.

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The Director of the Northern Ireland Audit Office confirmed that a detailed response to the draft management letter would be completed, identifying timescales and responsible officers, and be presented to a future meeting.

The Panel noted the Report to those Charged with Governance for 2021/22.

**Update on Corporate Risk Management –  
Quarter 1 2022/23**

The Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services drew the Panel's attention to the Corporate Risk Dashboard which summarised the key updates from the risk review for the quarter ending on 30th June, 2022.

She highlighted the importance of ensuring that there was proper consideration and clarity around the future ownership and accountability for the management of the thirteen corporate risks owned by the previous Director of Legal and Civic Services and by the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources.

She reminded the Panel that it received, on a quarterly basis, assurances from senior officers on the management of risk and maintenance of internal controls and confirmed that all assurance statements had been received. She went on to provide an update on the work which was underway to ensure that the business continuity plans for critical services were updated to take account of how they would continue to operate during a significant cyber-attack.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided.

**Audit, Governance and Risk  
Services Progress Report**

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager submitted for the Panel's consideration a report providing an update on the work which had been completed by Audit, Governance and Risk Services from June to August, 2022.

He explained that five audits had been completed during that period and drew the Panel's attention to two in particular, namely, the year-end audit of stores and an audit of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships.

He reported that the audit of stores had identified a number of issues and that, whilst the amounts involved were not considered to be material, Audit, Governance and Risk Services had been unable to obtain satisfactory explanations for the reasons behind the variances which had occurred. Management was addressing the issues and Audit, Governance and Risk Services would undertake a full audit of stores later in 2022/23, with a report on the outcome to be presented to the Audit Panel in due course.

In relation to the audit of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships, the Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager pointed out that this had been the first time that this area had received an opinion of 'major improvement needed'. A number of issues had been found in relation to the maintenance of the programme management

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spreadsheet and the completeness of project files. Management had cited resource pressures during 2021/22 and had advised that the Unit was now fully resourced and that controls were being re-established.

He went on to provide details of Audit, Governance and Risk Services work which was currently in progress and confirmed that updates on that work would be presented to a future meeting.

In terms of fraud and raising concerns, he confirmed that initial enquiries had been completed in relation to a couple of concerns but the allegations could not be substantiated. There were no files currently with the Police Service of Northern Ireland. He confirmed that the Service had updated the Council's Raising Concerns policy, which was currently progressing through the Council's approval processes, and that it was preparing for the upcoming National Fraud Initiative exercise. He added that the next recommendations monitoring exercise had commenced in order to assess progress in implementing outstanding audit actions and that a report on the outcome would be presented to the next meeting of the Panel.

In response to a query from Ms. Fahy, it was pointed out that officers from Audit, Governance and Risk Services had, over the summer, attended Departmental Management Team meetings to brief Directors on the Panel's request for better progress to be made in the implementation of outstanding actions.

The Panel:

- i. noted the update on the work which had been completed by Audit, Governance and Risk Services from June to August, 2022; and
- ii. agreed, in line with established practice, that an update on the audit of Policing and Community Safety Partnerships be presented to its meeting in December and that it include details of any potential funding at risk as a result of missing documentation.

**External Quality Assurance Review of Audit,  
Governance and Risk Services**

The Head of Audit, Governance and Risk Services reminded the Panel that Part six of the Local Government (Accounts and Audit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 required the Council to *"undertake an adequate and effective internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of risk management, internal control and governance processes using internal auditing standards in force from time to time."*

In practical terms, this meant that Audit, Governance and Risk Services must comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, which stated that compliance reviews against the standards must include regular internal assessments and periodic external assessments, with the latter being required at least once every five years.

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Audit, Governance and Risk Services undertook self-assessments against these professional standards on an annual basis and presented the results to the Audit and Risk Panel. The most recent internal and external assessments had been reported to the Panel in June, 2022 and December, 2017 respectively.

She explained that, following a quotation exercise in March 2022, On Board had been appointed to undertake a review of the extent to which Audit, Governance and Risk Services complied with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. That review had now been completed and the draft report was being submitted to the Panel for consideration.

The report had concluded that Audit, Governance and Risk Services conformed to the requirements of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, which, she pointed out, provided Members and management with valuable independent assurance on the internal audit service provided by the Service.

On Board had found strong evidence from the self-assessment, review of supporting evidence, interviews with management and a sample of internal clients in the Council that the Internal Audit Service provided by Audit, Governance and Risk Services was valued very highly and was viewed as making/having made a positive contribution to the continuous improvement of governance, risk management and internal control.

She drew the Panel's attention to fifteen recommendations for improvement which had been made by On Board and confirmed that Audit, Governance and Risk Services would consider each of these and present a worked-up action plan to the next meeting of the Panel.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided.

**Northern Ireland Audit Office Report –  
National Fraud Initiative – Northern Ireland**

The Audit, Governance and Risk Services Manager submitted for the Panel's consideration the following report:

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

**1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Audit and Risk Panel:**

- **that the Northern Ireland Audit Office has recently published a report on the outcome of the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) exercise in Northern Ireland and to highlight the key issues arising from it; and**
- **of our proposed approach to the completion of the NFI exercise for 2022.**

**2.0     Recommendations**

**2.1     The Audit and Risk Panel is asked to note:**

- the summary and the full NIAO report; and
- the proposed approach to the completion of the NFI exercise for 2022 (paragraph 3.7)

**3.0     Main Report**

**NIAO Report – National Fraud Initiative – Northern Ireland**

- 3.1     The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) is a major data matching exercise, run by the Cabinet Office every two years, which detects fraud and error. The NIAO co-ordinates the exercise in Northern Ireland, with over 80 local public sector organisations participating. These include government departments, local councils and health bodies. As a body audited by the NIAO the council is a mandatory participant. The purpose of data matching must be ‘to assist in the prevention and detection of fraud.’ The NIAO report in the NFI in Northern Ireland is attached at Appendix 1.**
- 3.2     NI data was also matched with data held by public sector organisations in England, Scotland and Wales, providing a cross-jurisdictional approach to tackling fraud. This is the seventh NFI exercise to be undertaken in Northern Ireland and total outcomes to date are over £44 million, representing current and past fraud and error stopped and potential future fraud and error averted.**
- 3.3     While NI councils do take part in the NFI exercise by providing data on payroll, pensioners and trade creditors, the vast majority of issues arising from the exercise relate to matters administered by other participating, public bodies. However, the report does highlight the outcomes of the NFI exercise in relation to rates fraud / evasion which clearly impacts on council income. There has been a marked decrease in the level of rates arrears or incorrect rates relief recovered or averted in the most recent exercise equating to £58k compared to £935k for the previous exercise. This appears to have been due to the redirection of resources for a period during the pandemic. The report does not**

quantify amounts relating to the Belfast area. Other areas of fraud / error detected by the exercise across NI related to:

- £126,000 of erroneous pension payments recovered and £4.1m of potential future erroneous payments averted.
- around £51,000 of incorrect housing benefits being recovered or future losses averted.
- around £20,000 of erroneous grant payments recovered and;
- £40,000 recovered from suppliers.

- 3.4 There was a 19% decrease in NFI outcomes compared with the previous reporting period – this appears to be due to (i) less time spent on investigating NFI matches in other organisations because of higher priority work during the pandemic and (ii) a couple of one-off pilots undertaken in the last exercise, which were not repeated in this exercise.
- 3.5 The report also references two cases of undeclared conflicts of interest detected in relation to suppliers (not related to BCC) – this serves to highlight the importance of compliance with the council’s policy on Potential Conflicts of Interest. The report also includes reference to a duplicate payment £16,783.20 that was made to a vendor (because the invoices were input twice). Our progress report to the Board / Panel in March 22 confirmed that CTU offset the amount against future invoices and has now been recovered.
- 3.6 An update on the specific Belfast City Council activity / outcomes from the most recent exercise has been reported previously to the Panel in March 2022.

**Proposed Approach to NFI 2022**

- 3.7 As a mandatory participant, we have a number of specific responsibilities which include:
- issuing privacy notices which inform individuals that their data will be processed;
  - preparing data in a format suitable for data matching;
  - uploading the datasets for matching;
  - investigating matches; and
  - reporting on the outcome of investigations



- 3.8 Our proposed approach is the same as for previous exercises and involves completion of the above steps with appropriate liaison with Digital Services, Payroll, Central Transactions Unit and Departmental Business Support. We will ensure that the NFI work takes account of the project plan for implementation of the new accounting system.
- 3.9 Preparation is already underway for the 2022 NFI exercise, and we will keep the Panel updated on progress and issues arising throughout the course of the exercise.
- 3.10 In addition, we have reviewed the self-appraisal checklist relating to the NFI exercise which was completed in June 2021 and no further updates or revisions to the checklist are required at this time. The purpose of the checklist is to allow participating bodies to appraise their involvement in the NFI, to assist the Audit and Risk Panel in reviewing and seeking assurance over the effectiveness of our participation in the NFI and to assist officers in planning and managing the exercise. A copy of the completed checklist is attached at Appendix 2.

**Other – Corporate Fraud Risk Assessment**

- 3.11 In conjunction with the work we will be undertaking as part of the NFI exercise we will continue to liaise with departments regarding the completion and implementation of the Corporate Fraud Risk Action Plans within departments including supporting departments to develop the remaining 5 risk action plans.
- 3.12 We are working with Marketing and Corporate Communications on developing key messages for staff relating to the NFI and fraud risk awareness in general.

**Financial and Resource Implications**

None

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

None.”

The Panel adopted the recommendations.

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**Peter Coll QC Report –  
Update on Progress of Action Plan**

The Governance and Compliance Manager submitted for the Panel's consideration a report providing a quarterly update on the progress of the agreed actions arising from the recommendations contained within Section 6 of Mr. Peter Coll QC's independent investigation into events at Roselawn Cemetery on 30th June, 2020.

She pointed out that a number of actions had now been completed and, accordingly, the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee would be recommended to close those relating to a Customer Hub, Key Communications to Party Group Leaders and all Members, a Standards Committee and Staff Engagement to Enhance Decision-Making.

The Panel noted the information which had been provided.

**Performance Improvement:  
2021/22 Year-End Assessment**

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources submitted for the Panel's consideration the following report:

**“1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Panel the year-end Corporate Performance Assessment for 2021-22**

**2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to review and approve the year-end Corporate Performance Assessment for 2021-22.**

**3.0 Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues**

**Background**

- 3.1 Part 12 of the 2014 Local Government (NI) Act and the associated guidance requires that we:**
- produce a *forward looking* Annual Improvement Plan by 30th June (i.e. Corporate Plan) to take effect from April each financial year which reflects the Council's contribution to the Community Plan (Belfast Agenda).**
  - produce a *retrospective* Performance Improvement Assessment by September 30th,**

**detailing progress against the Improvement Objectives, examples of other forms of continuous improvement and any performance indicators included within the previous year's Corporate Plan.**

**Year End Corporate Performance Assessment**

- 3.2 As required, the Performance Unit within the Finance and Resources Directorate produced a Year End Operational Update for 2021-22 which was previously circulated to the Panel in June. The majority of the activities within the plan have been delivered and are running on schedule with the exception of a few that will run into the 2022-23 work programme.**
- 3.3 The content of the Year End Operational Update has now been used to compile the year end Corporate Performance Assessment report for 2021-22, which has been included at Appendix 1 for approval. This document is still required to be published by 30 September 2022. Following September's SP and R Committee meeting, the report will be published online pending ratification by the Council.**

**Performance Improvement Plan 2022 - 2023**

- 3.4 Part 12 of the Local Government (NI) Act requires Councils to agree improvement objectives on an annual basis and publish these in the form of an Improvement Plan. We have a statutory duty to agree improvement objectives and produce an annual improvement plan by 30th June each year. As one of the key planning documents of the organisation, the Performance Improvement Plan is produced by the City and Organisational Strategy Department. The Plan for 2022-2023 was agreed by SP&R and published by 30th June in accordance with these obligations.**

**NIAO Audit and Assessment 2021**

- 3.5 The NIAO audit and assessment of BCC's Improvement activity normally takes place between July and October each year. We are awaiting confirmation on this timeline for the NIAO audit and the panel will be updated once further advice is received.**

**Audit and Risk Panel,  
Tuesday, 21st September, 2022**

**Financial and Resource Implications**

- 3.6     Audit fees will be calculated on the basis of the time spent by the NIAO on Belfast's audit and on the levels of skill and responsibility involved and this cost is included within the revenue estimates.**

**Equality and Good Relations Implications**

- 3.7     None associated with this report.”**

The Panel approved the year-end Corporate Performance Assessment for 2021/22.

**Date of Next Meeting**

The Panel noted that its next meeting would take place on Tuesday, 6th December at 12.30 p.m.

**Mr. Ronan Cregan**

The Chairperson referred to the fact that this would be the last meeting at which Mr. Ronan Cregan, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources would be in attendance, as he was due to retire from the Council at the end of October.

On behalf of the Panel, he thanked Mr. Cregan for the significant contribution which he had made to the work of the Panel and the management of the Council's finances and wished him well for the future.

Chairperson