

Public Document Pack

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



Belfast
City Council

24th October, 2022

STANDARDS AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in hybrid format, both in the Council Chamber and remotely, via Microsoft Teams, on Tuesday, 25th October, 2022 at 5.30 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

2. (e) Rates Freeze (Pages 1 - 4)

This page is intentionally left blank



Subject:	Notice of Motion – Rates Freeze
Date:	25th October, 2022
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports	
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"/>

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

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider the Notice of Motion received for the meeting of the Council on 1st November in relation to a Rates Freeze.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee should note that the motion should be referred, in the first instance, to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee.

	<p>The cost-of-living crisis is a crisis on a similar magnitude and will require additional support to be provided to local Councils, to ensure they are adequately equipped to help mitigate the impact of this crisis on communities.</p> <p>The Council views any effort to increase rates as a response to these financial pressures as counter intuitive. Any move to increase rates during a cost-of-living crisis will only exacerbate problems for working class communities. It would lead to a further hike in already mounting household bills and could force more people into poverty.</p> <p>Council acknowledges the need to avoid another rates increase during the cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>As a first step toward avoiding this, the Council will write to Stormont Ministers, the Secretary of State, and the Treasury, urging them to support a financial package of additional funding to be allocated to local Councils to help them manage the cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>This Council also commits to writing to all other Councils across the north, asking them to adopt a similar position of calling for an increase of government support.</p> <p>This will help ensure all Councils are adequately equipped to provide support to communities, to pay fair wages to its employees, and deliver high quality services during the cost-of-living crisis.”</p> <p>Proposer: Councillor Michael Collins</p> <p>Seconder: Councillor Matt Collins</p>
3.4	<p>The motion, amongst other things, calls upon the Council to introduce a rates freeze – as the setting of the rate is matter for the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee, the motion should be referred to that Committee for consideration.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>None.</p>
4.0	Documents Attached
	None.

This page is intentionally left blank