

Public Document Pack

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



**Belfast
City Council**

5th August, 2025

MEETING OF THE CITY GROWTH AND REGENERATION COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

In addition to those matters previously notified to you, the following items will also be considered at the meeting to be held on Wednesday, 6th August, 2025 at 5.15 pm.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

4. Positioning Belfast to Compete

- (c) Culture Night - Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure and the Department for Communities (Pages 1 - 6)

5. Strategic and Operational Issues

- (a) Minutes of the City Regeneration Members' Working Group - 19th June 2025 and 4th August 2025 (Pages 7 - 10)

6. Issues Raised in Advance

- (a) Artist and Creative Studio Space (Councillor Groogan to raise)

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Subject:	Culture Night - Correspondence from the Minister for Infrastructure and the Department for Communities
Date:	6th August, 2025
Reporting Officer:	Damien Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy
Contact Officer:	Craig Mealey, Committee Services Officer

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision

After Council Decision

Sometime in the future

Never

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

☒

No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To update Members on responses received from the Minister for Infrastructure and the Department for Communities to correspondence from the Committee in relation to 2025 Belfast Culture Night.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the correspondence received from the Minister for Infrastructure and the Department for Communities in relation to Culture Night.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The Committee, at its meeting in April 2025, considered a report which updated Members on sector engagement and recommendations relating to the delivery and support models for a 2025 Culture Night in Belfast and subsequent iterations.
3.2	At the meeting, the Committee approved the launch of a public procurement exercise to deliver a 2025 Culture Night for Belfast.
3.3	The Committee also agreed to write to the Minister for Infrastructure and Translink requesting that consideration be given to the operation of late-night public transport services on Culture Night; and to write to the Minister for Communities requesting that consideration be given to the provision of funding to support the 2025 Culture Night programme, and Culture Night going forward.
3.4	Correspondence has now been received from the Minister for Infrastructure (Appendix 1) and the Department for Communities (Appendix 2), which provide responses to the Committee requests.
3.5	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.
3.6	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> None associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices - Document Attached
	Appendix 1 – Minister for Infrastructure Response – Culture Night Appendix 2 – Department for Communities Response – Culture Night

From the office of the Minister for Infrastructure
LIZ KIMMINS MLA

Craig Mealey

MealeyC@belfastcity.gov.uk

Private Office, 3rd Floor,
James House, Gasworks Site,
2 - 4 Cromac Avenue,
Belfast, BT7 2JA
Telephone: (028) 9054 0540
Email: Private.office@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Your reference:
Our reference: COR-0413-2025
16th June 2025

Craig, a chara,

2025 Belfast Culture Night

Thank you for your letter of 22nd May 2025 in respect of Belfast Culture Night.

I understand Translink are working with the City Council to develop a support plan for the event and welcome that both organisations are continuing to work together to ensure that people will be able to travel to and from the event by public transport.

On a wider basis, I remain committed to finding a solution which will enable the extension of late-night public transport services, not only for one off events in the city, but on a year-round basis and will continue to build on my recent positive engagement with the Economy Minister and representatives of Belfast City Council in this regard.

I wish you well for Belfast Culture Night.

Is mise le meas,



LIZ KIMMINS MLA
Minister for Infrastructure

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Email: culturesupport@communities-ni.gov.uk

Our ref: TOF-0527-2025
Date: 05 June 2025

Craig Mealey
Belfast City Council
Legal and Civic Services Department
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS

Via email: mealeyc@belfastcity.gov.uk

Dear Craig

BELFAST CULTURE NIGHT

Thank you for your recent correspondence to Minister Lyons MLA about the progress being made for 2025 Belfast Culture Night. I have been asked to reply on his behalf.

In respect of any funding support, I am sorry to advise that the Department does not have any funding streams available which I appreciate will be disappointing. I also checked with the Arts Council who advised they have been consulted and advised on application routes through its open programmes.

I am sorry I could not have offered a more positive response.

Yours sincerely

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Louise Hyland
Head of Culture ALB Sponsorship Branch

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City Regeneration Members' Working Group

Thursday, 19th June 2025

MEETING OF THE CITY REGENERATION MEMBERS' WORKING GROUP

Members present: Councillor de Faoite;
Aldermen Copeland and McCullough; and
Councillors R. Murphy (for Councillor Beattie).

In attendance: Mr. J. Walsh, Chief Executive;
Ms. S. McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Director
of Corporate Services;
Mr. D. Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Ms. C. Reynolds, Director of City Regeneration
and Development;
Mrs. K. Bentley, Director of Planning and Building
Control;
Mr. T. Wallace, Director of Finance;
Mr. A. Ferguson, Senior Development Manager;
Ms. P. Conway, Development Manager;
Ms. B. Farren, Regeneration Project Officer;
and
Ms. E. McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance
Coordinator.

Election of Chairperson

Moved by Councillor Murphy,
Seconded by Alderman McCullough, and

Resolved – That Councillor de Faoite be elected to serve as Chairperson for the City Regeneration Members' Working Group until the date of the Annual Council Meeting in 2026.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were reported.

Housing Led Regeneration – Private Sector Partner (PSP) Update

The Director of City Regeneration and Development advised the City Growth and Regeneration Committee had agreed to recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources

Committee at its forthcoming meeting on 20th June, that the City Regeneration Members' Working Group be solely utilised as an appropriate forum to engage with Members on the Private Sector Partner (PSP) housing led regeneration programme in advance of matters being brought back to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee and the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for approval, and that all other regeneration and development issues should be submitted to the City Growth and Regeneration Committee for consideration.

She then provided a presentation of the following themes:

Private Sector Partner – Current Position

- Housing ambitions – A difficult landscape;
- Progress since Developer Appointment;
- Approach to Corporation Street/Exchange Street;
- Engagement Process – Refresh;
- Additional Opportunity Sites;
- Member Direction; and
- Key Themes Impacting housing supply.

Private Sector Partner – Governance and Background to the Partnership

- Overview of Governance and more recent decisions;
- Key themes and insights of PSP;
- Reminder - Process and approval stages; and
- Engagement with Housing Associations.

During discussion, the officers answered a range of questions in relation to funding and the need for the Council to engage with external expertise and other professionals for advice as appropriate, exploring the option of a Development Trust Account, delivery, engagement with providers, community engagement and social value, targeted acquisitions, additional opportunity sites, access to utilities, management of sites, city centre communities, and branding.

In response to the discussion, the Director of City Regeneration and Development undertook to request an update from the Housing Executive in relation to City Centre Waiting List latent demand; to request further discussion with Northern Ireland Water in respect of emerging development and water infrastructure; and to bring proposals forward to a future meeting of the working group on the branding of the partnership for consideration.

The Director of City Regeneration and Development also highlighted the requirement for the next meeting of the Working Group to take place in the coming weeks given the contractualised timeline, to allow for discussion around the development programme prior to reporting to Committee.

The Working Group noted the contents of the presentation and next steps.

City Regeneration Members' Working Group

Monday, 4th August, 2025

MEETING OF THE CITY REGENERATION MEMBERS' WORKING GROUP

- Members present: Councillor de Faoite (Chairperson);
Alderman Rodgers (for Alderman Copeland); and
Councillors Nelson (for Councillor Long)
and Smyth.
- In attendance: Ms. S. McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Director
of Corporate Services;
Ms. N. Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and
Civic Services;
Mr. D. Martin, Strategic Director of Place and Economy;
Mr. A. Ferguson, Senior Development Manager;
Ms. P. Conway, Development Manager;
Ms. B. Farren, Regeneration Project Officer; and
Mr. C. Mealey, Committee Services Officer.

Apologies

No apologies were reported.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 19th June, 2025 were approved by the Working Group.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were reported.

Housing Led Regeneration – Private Sector Partner (PSP) Development Programme

The Senior Development Manager provided the Working Group with an update on the actions arising from its last meeting in June, 2025. He advised that the City Growth and Regeneration Committee would consider, at its meeting in August, 2025, a request from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive to attend a special meeting of the Committee to discuss the City Centre Waiting List; that engagement with Northern Ireland Water regarding the emerging development and water infrastructure would be progressed on a site-by-site basis; and that the Council had engaged further with its housing-led regeneration programme Private Sector Partner (PSP) in relation to the development of concepts for the branding of the partnership.

He then presented the Working Group with a detailed overview of the following:

- **Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA);**
- **Agreement of Seed Site Development Programme;**
- **Development Programme Process;**
- **Proposed Seed Site Prioritisation;**
- **Seed Site Development Programmes;**
- **PSP Seed Site Development Programme Milestones / Longstop Dates;**
- **Additional Opportunity Sites; and**
- **Immediate Next Steps.**

During discussion, the Senior Development Manager answered a range of questions from the Members in relation to seed sites, value for money, city centre housing density and community engagement.

In response to Members' questions in relation to the details and timelines for the delivery of the seed sites, the Senior Development Manager explained that further detail would be provided through the Initial Site Specific Business Plan and the Detailed Site Specific Business Plan, which both required approval by the Council.

The Senior Development Manager advised the Working Group that the PSP would be engaging with Party Group leaders in August, 2025.

After discussion, the Working Group noted the contents of the presentation and the immediate next steps.

Date of next meeting

The Working Group noted that the next meeting was scheduled to be held on 13th October, 2025, and that future meetings would coincide with key decisions to be made in line with the SPA.