

Public Document Pack

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

17th September, 2025

MEETING OF STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

I enclose a copy of the report for the following items to be considered at the meeting to be held at 9.30 am on Friday, 19th September, 2025.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

2. Restricted Items

- (a) Draft Irish Language Policy (Pages 1 - 28)
- (e) Assets Management (Pages 29 - 44)
- (g) Gasworks Engagement Forum (Pages 45 - 52)

5. Physical Programme and Asset Management

- (a) Physical Programme (Pages 53 - 58)

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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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Subject:	Physical Programme Update
Date:	19 September 2025
Reporting Officer:	Sinead Grimes, Director of Property & Projects
Contact Officer:	David Logan, Senior Programme Delivery Manager Shauna Murtagh, Portfolio Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="width: 70%;"> <p>After Committee Decision</p> <p>After Council Decision</p> <p>Sometime in the future</p> <p>Never</p> </div> <div style="width: 25%; text-align: center;"> <input style="width: 40px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 40px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 40px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> <input style="width: 40px; height: 25px;" type="text"/> </div> </div>	

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

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The Council's Physical Programme currently includes over 200 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. The Council's Capital Programme forms part of the Physical Programme and is a rolling programme of investment which either improves existing Council facilities or provides new facilities. This report presents requests for stage movement approvals under the Capital Programme.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is requested to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital Programme Movements - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cremated Remains Burial Plots – Agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> and held at Tier 0 – Scheme at Risk pending further development of the project and a satisfactory tender return; and that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate 'framework' arrangements) be initiated with a contract to be awarded on the basis of the most economically advantageous tenders received and full commitment to deliver. ○ Belfast Zoo Improvement Works Phase 2 – Agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> with a maximum allocation of up to £950,000 to address serious H&S and welfare issues to be taken from the £1.4m agreed by Committee for capital works at the Zoo as part of the rates setting process in January 2025. ○ Open Spaces and Streetscene (OSS) Machinery Replacement Programme – Agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i> to allow options to be fully worked up, with further detail to be brought back to Committee in due course. ○ Greening and Growing Project – Agree that the project is moved to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i> to allow options to be fully worked up, with further detail to be brought back to Committee in due course. ○ Workshop Plant Replacement Programme - Agree that the project is added to the Capital Programme at <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i> to allow a business case to be developed. ○ Fernhill House and Courtyard - Agree that the project is added to the Capital Programme at <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i> to allow a business case to be developed. ○ Lenadoon Greenway - Agree that the project is added to the Capital Programme at <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i> to allow a business case to be developed.
3.0	Main report <u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	Physical Programme <p>Members will be aware that the Council runs a substantial Physical Programme. This includes the rolling Capital Programme – a multimillion regeneration programme of investment across</p>

	the city which improves existing Council assets or provides new council facilities. The Property & Projects Department is happy to arrange a site visit to any projects that have been completed or are underway.																								
3.2	<p><u>Capital Programme - Proposed Movements</u></p> <p>As outlined above Members have agreed that all capital projects must go through a three-stage process where decisions on which capital projects progress are taken by the Committee. This provides assurance as to the level of financial control and will allow Members to properly consider the opportunity costs of approving one capital project over another capital project. Members are asked to note the following activity on the Capital Programme:</p> <table><tr><th>Project</th><th>Overview</th><th>Stage movement</th></tr><tr><td>Cremated Remains Burial Plots</td><td>Development of cremated remains plots at Roselawn.</td><td>Move to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i></td></tr><tr><td>Belfast Zoo Improvement Works Phase 2</td><td>To carry out essential Health & Safety works and enclosure upgrades in the Belfast Zoo</td><td>Move to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> with a maximum budget of £950,000 out of the £1.4m previously agreed by Committee in January 2025 as part of the rates setting process.</td></tr><tr><td>Open Spaces and Streetscene (OSS) Machinery Replacement Programme</td><td>Rolling programme to replace grounds maintenance machinery which is beyond its lifespan.</td><td>Move to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i></td></tr><tr><td>Greening and Growing Project</td><td>Biodiversity improvement and sustainable food growing development project at GROW community garden, Waterworks.</td><td>Move to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i></td></tr><tr><td>Workshop Plant Replacement Programme</td><td>Programme to replace workshop plant which exceeded 10 plus years and no longer fit for purpose.</td><td>Add as <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i></td></tr><tr><td>Fernhill House and Courtyard</td><td>Explore options for bringing the Courtyard at Fernhill back into active use space as an outdoor education/ activity space linked to the Access to the Hills project.</td><td>Add as <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i></td></tr><tr><td>Lenadoon Greenway</td><td>Proposed greenway to connect local residents with nearby green spaces and outdoor facilities, including Lenadoon Millennium Park, Half Moon Lake, Colin Glen Forest Park, Padraig Sairseil CLG Walkway and the wider Belfast Hills.</td><td>Add as <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i></td></tr></table>	Project	Overview	Stage movement	Cremated Remains Burial Plots	Development of cremated remains plots at Roselawn.	Move to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i>	Belfast Zoo Improvement Works Phase 2	To carry out essential Health & Safety works and enclosure upgrades in the Belfast Zoo	Move to <i>Stage 3 – Committed</i> with a maximum budget of £950,000 out of the £1.4m previously agreed by Committee in January 2025 as part of the rates setting process.	Open Spaces and Streetscene (OSS) Machinery Replacement Programme	Rolling programme to replace grounds maintenance machinery which is beyond its lifespan.	Move to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i>	Greening and Growing Project	Biodiversity improvement and sustainable food growing development project at GROW community garden, Waterworks.	Move to <i>Stage 2 – Uncommitted</i>	Workshop Plant Replacement Programme	Programme to replace workshop plant which exceeded 10 plus years and no longer fit for purpose.	Add as <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i>	Fernhill House and Courtyard	Explore options for bringing the Courtyard at Fernhill back into active use space as an outdoor education/ activity space linked to the Access to the Hills project.	Add as <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i>	Lenadoon Greenway	Proposed greenway to connect local residents with nearby green spaces and outdoor facilities, including Lenadoon Millennium Park, Half Moon Lake, Colin Glen Forest Park, Padraig Sairseil CLG Walkway and the wider Belfast Hills.	Add as <i>Stage 1 – Emerging</i>
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3.3	<p>Cremated Remains Burial Plots</p> <p>In September 2023, this project was moved to Stage 2 – Uncommitted on the Capital Programme with further detail to be brought back to Committee in due course. The project is for the development of 622 cremated remains burial plots utilising shallow land within Roselawn cemetery which is unsuitable for full earth burials. Following survey and assessment work which was undertaken in Section P it has been agreed that the development of the plots for the repose of cremated remains is feasible from both a planning and technical perspective. Work is also underway on looking at the operational arrangements and pricing model. Members are asked to agree that the project is moved to Stage 3 – Committed and held at Tier 0 – Scheme</p>																								

	<p>at Risk, pending further development of the project and a satisfactory tender return; and that necessary procurement processes (including the invitation of tenders and/or the use of appropriate ‘framework’ arrangements) be initiated. A contract will be awarded based on the most economically advantageous tender received and full commitment to deliver.</p>
3.4	<p>Belfast Zoo Improvement Works Phase 2</p> <p>This project was moved to the Capital Programme at Stage 2 – Uncommitted in April 2025. The project is to carry out essential health and safety works and enclosures upgrades in the Belfast Zoo which are necessary for the Zoo to retain its licence. This will address the H&S and welfare issues for animals, keepers and the public as well as improvements to enclosures. The essential capital works identified include boundary fencing repairs in a number of critical areas, upgrades to existing animal enclosures to prevent incursions, replacement of the windows in a number of animal enclosures and replacement of the climbing within the ape house. Members will recall that £1.419,000 was agreed for capital works at the Zoo as part of the rate setting process in January 2025. Members are asked to agree that the project is moved to Stage 3 – Committed with a maximum allocation of up to £950,000 to address the serious H&S and welfare issues be taken out of the £1.4m previously agreed by Committee in January 2025.</p>
3.5	<p>Open Spaces and Streetscene (OSS) Machinery Replacement Programme</p> <p>This project was added to the Capital Programme at Stage 1 – Emerging in June 2025, to replace grounds maintenance machinery to maintain service provision across the Council’s estate. These machineries are beyond its economically viable life span and no longer financially viable to maintain in use for the respective services. As per the three-stage approval process, a strategic outline case has been submitted. Members are asked to agree that the ‘OSS Machinery Replacement Programme’ project is moved to Stage 2 – Uncommitted to allow the options to be fully worked up, with further detail to be brought back to Committee in due course.</p>
3.6	<p>Greening & Growing Project</p> <p>This project was added to the Capital Programme at Stage 1 – Emerging in August 2025. This project focuses on biodiversity improvement and sustainable food growing development funded through Shared Island Fund programme. It will be delivered at the GROW NI community garden at Waterworks, in partnership with Belfast City Council and Belfast Healthy Cities. As per the three-stage approval process, a strategic outline case has been submitted. Members are asked to agree that the Greening & Growing Project is moved to Stage 2 – Uncommitted to allow the options to be fully worked up, with further detail to be brought back to Committee in due course.</p>

3.7	<p>Workshop Plant Replacement Programme</p> <p>The proposed 'Workshop Plant Replacement Programme' project aims to replace workshop plant which exceeded 10 plus years of working wear and tear and no longer fit for purpose. Members are asked to agree that the project is added to Stage 1 – Emerging to allow the business case to be developed.</p>
3.8	<p>Fernhill House and Courtyard</p> <p>In November 2024, Members have received an overall Heritage Assets update including Fernhill House and Courtyard and agreed that the Council explores options for bringing the Courtyard at Fernhill back into active use as an outdoor education/ activity space linked to the Access to the Hills project and building on the success of the Forth Meadow Community Greenway and authorised officers to discuss this opportunity with potential partners. On 1 September 2025, the Council agreed to allocate approximately £900k to Fernhill House redevelopment. Members are asked to agree that the project is added to Stage 1 – Emerging to allow the business case to be developed.</p>
3.9	<p>Lenadoon Greenway</p> <p>The proposed greenway aims to connect local residents with nearby green spaces and outdoor facilities, including Lenadoon Millennium Park, Half Moon Lake, Colin Glen Forest Park, Padraig Sairseil CLG Walkway and the wider Belfast Hills. Members are asked to agree that the project is added to Stage 1 – Emerging to allow the business case to be developed.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p><i>Financial Implications –</i></p> <p>Belfast Zoo Improvement Works Phase 2 – capital allocation of up to £950,000 from the £1,4m previously agreed by Committee in January 2025 as part of the rates setting process for capital works at the Zoo.</p> <p><i>Resource Implications –</i> Officer time to deliver.</p>
3.11	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>All capital projects are screened as part of the stage approval process</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None</p>

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