

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



**Belfast
City Council**

7 October 2025

MEETING OF THE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room - City Hall on Tuesday, 7th October, 2025 at 5.15 pm, 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. Deputations

- (a) Stranmillis Neighbourhood Association
- (b) Friends of Botanic Gardens
- (c) Rugby Road Residents' Association
- (d) Lagan Valley Regional Park (Pages 1 - 20)

3. Notices of Motion/Matters Raised at Committee (Update)

- (a) Motion - Community Orchards (Pages 21 - 22)
- (b) Motion - Feasibility of a Dedicated Scrambler Site and Programme (Pages 23 - 24)

- (c) Motion - Safeguarding Belfast's Playparks (Verbal Update) (Pages 25 - 26)
- (d) Pitch Bookings at Sally Gardens Playing Fields (Update) (Pages 27 - 30)
- (e) Alleygates - Phase 5 (Update including costs re: replacement keys) (Pages 31 - 40)
- (f) Community Consultation on Renaming of Balfour Avenue Playpark (Update) (Pages 41 - 58)
- (g) DAERA - Funding Award and Update re: Urban Meadows (Pages 59 - 74)

4. **Restricted Items**

- (a) Greenwich Leisure Limited - Proposed Schedule of Charges 2025/26 (Pages 75 - 90)
- (b) Greenwich Leisure Limited - Customer Survey Review (Pages 91 - 142)
- (c) Ending Violence Against Women and Girls - Additional In-Year Funding (Pages 143 - 166)
- (d) Belfast City of Sport 2026 - Candidature Bid (Pages 167 - 172)

5. **Committee/Strategic Issues**

- (a) Draft Support Framework for Independent Advice and Debt Service - Consultation (Pages 173 - 184)

6. **Operational Issues**

- (a) Fly Tipping (Pages 185 - 202)
- (b) Litter Bin - Update (Pages 203 - 210)
- (c) Requests for the Use of Parks and Open Spaces (Pages 211 - 214)
- (d) Integrated Advice Partnership Fund - Additional Funding (Pages 215 - 218)
- (e) Neighbourhood Renewal Advice Services Funding (Pages 219 - 222)
- (f) Proposals for Dual Language Street Signs (Pages 223 - 226)
- (g) Applications for Dual Language Street Signs with Potential for an Adverse Impact (Pages 227 - 230)
- (h) Dual Language Street Signs - Survey Postal Issues (Update) (Pages 231 - 234)
- (i) Dilapidations Bill - Response (Pages 235 - 258)
- (j) Proposal for the Naming of a New Street (Pages 259 - 262)

7. **Issue Raised in Advance**

- (a) Use of Cutts Recycling Centres by Belfast Residents (with the permission of the Chairperson, Councillor McCann to raise)

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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:	Notice of Motion – Community Orchards
Date:	7th October, 2025
Reporting Officer:	David Sales, Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Barry Flynn, Committee Services Officer.

Restricted Report	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" 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 draw the Committee's attention to a Motion on Community Orchards which the Standards and Business Committee referred to the Committee on 23rd September.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is requested to consider the motion and to take such action thereon as may be determined.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The following motion, which had been moved by Councillor Bower and seconded by the High Sheriff (Councillor McAteer) was referred to the Committee for its consideration:
3.2	<p><u>Community Orchards</u></p> <p>“This Council recognises the wide-ranging social, environmental, and economic benefits of community orchards, including increased access to fresh fruit, the promotion of local food resilience, the enhancement of green spaces, improved mental and physical wellbeing, and stronger community cohesion. It acknowledges that community orchards contribute to climate resilience through increased biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and natural cooling effects in urban areas. It also notes that community orchards offer valuable opportunities for intergenerational learning, volunteering, and environmental education, particularly in areas where green space and access to nature are limited.</p> <p>This motion is requesting that this council commits to supporting the creation and maintenance of community orchards across the city through partnerships with residents, schools, and local organisations. Council will take part in identifying underused or neglected public land that could be repurposed for community orchard use. This would require commitment to some expenditure for planting, equipment, and training necessary to establish new orchards in identified areas. Council would also encourage and support</p>

<p>4.0</p> <p>5.0</p>	<p>community-led management of orchards and provide resources and guidance to support their long-term sustainability.”</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None at this stage as there is no commitment to proceed with the Notice of Motion.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>This motion, if agreed, may have potential equality, good relations and rural needs implications and should be subject to our normal screening process as appropriate.</p>
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Subject:	Notice of Motion – Feasibility of a Dedicated Scrambler Site and Programme
Date:	7th October, 2025
Reporting Officer:	David Sales, Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Barry Flynn, Committee Services Officer.

Restricted Report	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" 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 draw the Committee's attention to the above-mentioned motion which the Standards and Business Committee referred to the Committee on 23rd September.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is requested to consider the motion and to take such action thereon as may be determined.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The following motion, which had been moved by The Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Doherty) and seconded by the Councillor de Faoite, was referred to the Committee for its consideration:
3.2	<p><u>Feasibility of a Dedicated Scrambler Site and Programme</u></p> <p>This Council recognises the serious risks and community concerns associated with illegal and reckless scrambler use across Belfast, where incidents have endangered lives, damaged public spaces, and affected community wellbeing. Accordingly, this Council agrees that officers prepare a report for Committee which will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore the feasibility of identifying a dedicated site for a scrambler programme in Belfast which aims will be to divert young people away from offending behaviour, rehabilitate those caught up in crime, provide vocational training and learning opportunities and create a safe, managed environment that works to remove scramblers from our streets and parks; 2. Undertake a land audit of Council managed sites to assess potential suitability;

	<p>3. Identify potential stakeholders and collaborators, including relevant Stormont departments, the PSNI, youth and community organisations, and training providers; and</p> <p>4. Outline preparatory requirements, indicative timelines, and opportunities for partnership to inform Members of the potential for taking such a project forward.”</p>
4.0	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>
5.0	<p>None at this stage as there is no commitment to proceed with the Notice of Motion.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>This motion, if agreed, may have potential equality, good relations and rural needs implications and should be subject to our normal screening process as appropriate.</p>



Subject:	Notice of Motion – Safeguarding Belfast’s Playparks – Verbal Update (
Date:	5th August, 2025
Reporting Officer:	David Sales, Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Barry Flynn, Committee Services Officer.

Restricted Report

Is this report restricted?

Yes

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No

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Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in?

Yes

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No

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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	At the Committee meeting in August, a motion in relation to ‘Safeguarding Belfast’s Playparks’ which the Standards and Business Committee considered. The Committee deferred consideration of the motion to allow further information to be provided to the Party Group Leaders’ Consultative Forum on the consultation and policy process. A verbal update in this regard will be provided at the meeting.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	Members are asked to note that in accordance with Standing Order 13(i) that Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report. At this time Members are only asked to note that the Notice of Motion has been received and that, if agreed, a subsequent report will be brought to Committee outlining a detailed consideration of the Notice of Motion and the potential costs implications.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Standards and Business Committee, at its meeting on 24th June, referred the following motion to the Committee for consideration:
3.2	<p><u>Safeguarding Belfast’s Playparks</u></p> <p>“Belfast City Council, hereinafter “this Council”, expresses its deep concern at the growing number of reports relating to indecent, threatening, and predatory behaviour in Council-owned playparks across Belfast. These spaces, intended for the</p>

	<p>happiness and well-being of children, are increasingly being compromised by individuals loitering without lawful purpose, in a manner that alarms parents and communities.</p> <p>This Council believes that every child has the right to play safely, and every parent has the right to peace of mind when bringing their children to a local park. Public spaces must reflect public values – including the protection of childhood innocence, the upholding of decency, and the moral duty to safeguard the vulnerable. Accordingly, this Council commits to the creation of a comprehensive ‘Safeguarding Belfast’s Playparks Policy’ – including, but not limited to, the following objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To prohibit loitering in and around children's playparks by any adult not accompanying a child, or without a legitimate purpose; 2. To conduct a full public consultation, both online and in person, to hear the views of residents, parents/guardians, and community organisations in directly shaping this policy; 3. To work with statutory bodies – including the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Home Office, and community organisations – to combat predatory sexual crime and anti-social behaviour in our public spaces.” <p>Proposer: Alderman McCullough Seconder: Councillor McCormick</p>
3.3	<p>The motion calls upon the Council to commit to the creation of a comprehensive Safeguarding Belfast’s Playparks Policy - The People and Communities Committee is responsible for the Council’s playgrounds and parks and accordingly the motion was referred to this Committee.</p>
4.0	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None at this stage as there is no commitment to proceed with the Notice of Motion. Details of any financial and resource implications will be reported at a subsequent meeting.</p>
5.0	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>This motion, if agreed, may have potential equality, good relations and rural needs implications and should be subject to our normal screening process as appropriate.</p>
4.0	<p>Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None.</p>



Subject:	GAA Joint Management Board Partnership Agreement & Issue Raised in Advance Re – Sally Gardens
Date:	Tuesday 7 October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Jim Girvan, Operational Director, City and Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Paddy McGrattan, Leisure Development Manager

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

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Call-in

Yes

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No

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Is the decision eligible for Call-in?
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1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider a request from Ulster Council Gaelic Athletic Association for a one-year extension to the existing Partnership Agreement with Belfast City Council.
1.2	To respond to the issue raised in advance regarding cancellation of bookings at Sally Gardens pitch.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	That the existing Belfast City Council – Ulster Council GAA Partnership Agreement is extended until 16 October 2026.
2.2	That members note the content of the report regarding ongoing work to reduce cancellations to a minimum and maximise utilisation of the Sally Gardens pitch.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Partnership Agreement</u></p> <p>Belfast City Council entered into a Partnership Agreement with Ulster Council GAA which provided priority access to bookings in support of sports development outcomes. The Agreement covers floodlit synthetic GAA facilities at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cherryvale Playing Fields • Cliftonville Road Playing Fields • Woodlands Playing Fields • Sally Gardens
3.2	To oversee the Partnership agreement a quarterly Joint Management Board meeting involves representatives from Ulster Council GAA, County Antrim GAA, County Down GAA and Belfast City Council.
3.3	The role of the Joint Management Board is to regulate the use of the playing facilities and to oversee the proper use and sharing of the facilities to maximise the community benefit through the Sports Development Plans for each site.
3.4	The Agreement holders present a six-monthly programme of use, which demonstrates the GAA sports development outcomes within each of the sites and these bookings are prioritised. Access to the sites outside the programme of use is in accordance with normal booking procedures.
3.5	On 28 August 2025, Council received a formal request on behalf of Ulster Council GAA, County Antrim board GAA and County Down board GAA seeking a one-year extension of the current Partnership Agreement.
3.6	A one-year extension of the current Agreement will allow the existing booking/prioritisation model to continue until a future model is agreed through the Physical Activity and Sports Development Strategy and the Pitches Strategy.

3.7	<u>Cancellations at Sally Gardens</u>
3.8	Committee of 8 th October 2024 asked officers to liaise with teams and service users to ascertain the underlying reasons for recurring pitch cancellations with a view to enabling other teams and clubs to maximise use of the facility in the event of such cancellations
3.9	<p>Analysis of the most recently completed Programme of Use at Sally Gardens, 1st October 2024 to 31st March 2025 revealed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 54 cancellation requests were received • 13 cancellations were made, cancelling a one hour booking slot for the following three months. • Three cancellations reduced an initial five hour booking to two hours. • Five cancellations reduced an initial two hour booking to one hour. • 33 full pitch bookings were reduced to half-pitch bookings • 4 bookings were recorded as no show following receipt of information from facility management.
3.10	<p>Contact with bookers who cancelled or did not attend for booking provided only one reason for not-attendance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary making the booking had not confirmed the booking with coaches and players
3.11	Following this matter being raised through the Joint Management Board, the Antrim County Board representative relayed to all relevant clubs the importance of bookings being fulfilled and the negative impact of cancellations on usage of the facility.
3.12	<p>Booking Procedures.</p> <p>Existing procedures enable bookers to cancel at two full working days' notice without financial penalty. Bookings requested with less than two full working days' notice are declined except under exceptional circumstances. This approach limits the ability of pitches booking service to market availability of pitches or accept last minute bookings following short notice cancellations. Review of booking procedures, cancellation deadlines, penalty for cancellation and no-show, booking deadlines will be considered under the review of the pitches strategy and new booking system.</p>
3.13	<u>Financial Implications</u>
3.14	There are no financial implications related to this report
	<u>Equality Impact Assessment</u>
	None
4.0	Appendices
4.1	None

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Subject:	Alleygate Delivery Update
Date:	7 th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Jim Girvan – Director Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Pól Hamilton – Lead Officer Community Safety

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

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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

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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	<p>The purpose of the following report updates on the delivery of Phase 5 of the Alleygates Programme.</p> <p>The following issues are addressed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Member query relating to delay in delivery of Phase 5b 2. Delivery of Alleygates in Holylands area 3. Issue raised in advance relating to the allocation of replacement keys under the scheme.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	Members to note the additional funding secured to progress the delivery of the remainder of gates under phase 5.
2.2	Members agree to enact the Belfast City Council (Holylands) Traffic Regulation Order 2025 (appendix 1)
2.3	Members to note the costs of replacement keys
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Delivery of Phase 5 of the alleygating programme is underway, with Alleygates in tranche 1 of phase 5 installed.
3.2	Property and Projects Officers are working with the fencing contractor to develop a schedule of works for the delivery of the remaining Alleygates within the programme. It is anticipated that delivery of phase 5, tranche 2, will commence by October 2025, with delivery completed by February 2026.
3.3	<p>The delivery of Alleygates within phase 5 of the programme for the Holyland area of South Belfast, funded by the Department for Communities has been delayed because of concerns raised by landlords within the area.</p> <p>Officers have been working on the issues raised; however, members should note that the objections raised by landlords, relate not to the installation of the Alleygates themselves, rather any subsequent 'alleyway transformation' programme that might be delivered by Council. In correspondence received from landlords, they note however that they would like to see Alleygates installed to assist with security at the rear of their properties.</p>

	<p>The installation of Alleygates and the future delivery of any 'alleyway transformation' programme are separate programmes, with the framework on the delivery of the latter still to be agreed by council.</p>
3.4	<p>Members are asked to enact the Belfast City Council (Holylands) Traffic Regulation Order 2025 (appendix 1) to allow work to commence on the installation of gates under Phase 5b Alleygating programme in the Holylands area of South Belfast.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Key Allocations / Replacements</u></p> <p>When Alleygates are agreed at a location, prior to installation, officers will undertake key distribution sessions, typically in a local facility close to where the gates are being installed. Residents are informed and attend these sessions, completing the relevant paperwork and are issued with 1 key free of charge to allow access to rear of their property, via the new Alleygates.</p>
3.6	<p>Where a resident has recently moved into a property and can demonstrate they did not receive a key at the time of installation, 1 key will be issued to them free of charge.</p>
	<p>If however, a replacement key is required because a resident has lost or broken their original key, the cost of a replacement key is currently set at £25. This charge has been set since the introduction of the original alleygating scheme.</p>
3.7	<p>The alleygating scheme was designed to address issues of Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and fear of crime at the rear of residential properties across Belfast.</p>
3.8	<p>The purpose of the £25 charge per replacement key was to cover the costs to Council for the replacement, including any associated administration costs. The cost was also designed to reinforce the importance of keeping the original key secure, thus minimising the amount of keys in circulation. The success of each phase of alleygating across the city in reducing ASB, crime and fear of crime is potentially compromised if keys are not kept secure or easily misplaced, and lots of replacement keys are in circulation.</p>
3.9	<p>Each gate across the city requires an individually cut specialist key, to increase the security and integrity of the gates, therefore residents cannot source their own replacement key through a locksmith or traditional key cutting service.</p>

3.10	Replacement keys are issued at Cecil Ward Building, Linenhall Street, and requires those needing a replacement key to attend with appropriate identification and payment, with a replacement key issued at that visit.
3.11	If a resident indicates that they have mobility issues that impacts them attending Cecil Ward Building, officers can make arrangements to complete the relevant paperwork at their home.
3.12	Keys are ordered from a supplier when current stock is low. Costs to Council vary per order, however a replacement master key, which can open all gates, and is typically issued to our cleansing crews and utility companies for essential maintenance, average approx. £21 ex VAT.
3.13	Costs to council for a replacement individual gate key, the type typically requested by residents, vary depending on quantities ordered, and which manufacturer the vendor sources them from given the specialist type of key, however since the introduction of the alleygating scheme, it averages at approx. £10 - £15 per key ex VAT.
3.14	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>£50,000 from within annual departmental budgets</p>
3.15	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None known at this time</p>
4.0	Appendices
	Appendix 1 - Belfast City Council (Holylands) Traffic Regulation Order 2025

Notice of Traffic Regulation Order
Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
Belfast City Council

Notice is hereby given that the Council in the exercise of the powers conferred on it by Articles 69A to 69E of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 as inserted in the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 proposes to make an order entitled the Belfast City Council (Holylands) Traffic Regulation Order 2025.

The purpose of the Order is to prohibit the use by vehicles and pedestrians of the following streets in Belfast:

Affected Roads

1. To the rear of Nos. 2 - 46 Magdala Street, Nos. 81 - 117 University Street and to the sides of No. 2a Magdala Street and No. 1a Sandhurst Road.
2. To the rear of Nos. 8 – 42 Fitzroy Avenue, Nos. 104 – 138 University Avenue and to the side of No. 2 Dudley Street.
3. To the rear of Nos. 36 – 44 Agincourt Avenue, Nos. 1 – 17 Curzon Street, Nos. 2 – 20 Collingwood Avenue and to the sides of No. 1 Curzon Street and No. 2 Collingwood Avenue.
4. To the rear of Nos. 46 – 58 Agincourt Avenue, Nos. 1 – 19 Collingwood Avenue, Nos. 46 – 66 Damascus Street and to the sides of No. 1 Collingwood Avenue and No. 44 Damascus Street.
5. To the rear of Nos. 60 – 70 Agincourt Avenue, Nos. 45 – 67 Damascus Street, Nos. 50 – 74 Jerusalem Street and to the sides of No. 45 Damascus Street and No. 50 Jerusalem Street.
6. To the rear of Nos. 72 – 82 Agincourt Avenue, Nos. 53 – 77 Jerusalem Street, Nos. 58 – 84 Palestine Street and to the sides of No. 53 Jerusalem Street and No. 58 Palestine Street.
7. To the rear of Nos. 84 – 94 Agincourt, Nos. 59 – 87 Palestine Street, Nos. 66 – 96 Carmel Street and to the sides of No. 59 Palestine Street and No. 66 Carmel Street.
8. To the rear of Nos. 96 – 100 Agincourt Avenue and to the sides of Nos. 67 and 69 Carmel Street.
9. To the rear of Nos. 120 – 134 Agincourt Avenue, Nos. 2 – 12 Harrow Street and to the side of No. 2 Southview Street.
10. To the rear of Nos. 136 – 144 Agincourt Avenue and to the side of No. 1 Southview Street.

Vehicles requiring access in specified circumstances are exempted from the provisions of this Order. It is proposed to give effect to this by erecting gates at entrances to the back and side of streets specified above.

Objections or other representations may be made in writing to Belfast City Council, Sharon Traynor, City and Neighbourhood Services Department, 4-10 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8DP within a period of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice.

Full details are contained in the Draft Order, which, together with a map showing the roads affected may be inspected free of charge during office hours within the said period at The Cecil Ward Building, 2-10 Linenhall Street, Belfast, BT2 8BP. A Draft Order will also be available for inspection in your local community centre.

Authorised Officer:

Dated this _____ day of _____ 2024

Pursuant to Part 1 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and Article 69 of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993; Belfast City Council hereby makes the following Order:

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER 2024

Nora Largey
City Solicitor
City Hall
Belfast
BT1 5GS

Traffic Regulation Order

Road Traffic and Vehicles

Belfast City Council (Holylands) Traffic Regulation Order 2024

Made - - - - - 2024

Coming into Operation - - - - 2024

Belfast City Council is satisfied that the conditions for making a gating order as set out in Article 69A (3) of the Roads (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 and inserted in Part 1 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (hereinafter called “the Act”) have been met.

Article 69A (3) states that before making a gating order in relation to a relevant road the district council must be satisfied that:

- a) Premises adjoining or adjacent to the road are affected by crime or anti-social behaviour;
- b) The existence of the road is facilitating the persistent commission of criminal offences or anti-social behaviour;
- c) It is in all the circumstances expedient to make the order for the purposes of reducing crime or anti-social behaviour.

The Council has published a Notice in compliance with Articles 69D (1) and (3), and has served copies of the Notice, Order and relevant maps on all parties the Council has deemed as having a relevant interest in compliance with Article 69D (2).

(Here will follow, where appropriate, recitals of the fact of any written objections or other representations received or inquiry held and the outcome thereof)

Now therefore, Belfast City Council in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Article 69 of the Act and every other power enabling it in that regard hereby makes the following Order:

1. There shall be at the date of coming into effect of this Order gates erected on the roads described in Schedule I hereto and shown on the maps annexed to this Order.
2. Subject to Article 69B the use by vehicles and pedestrians to the rear or side roads is prohibited.
3. Notwithstanding anything contained in this Order the owners of premises adjoining or adjacent to the road and all statutory undertakers as specified in Schedule II hereto shall have the right to retain and access the road.
4. Responsibility for maintaining the gates rests with Belfast City Council.
5. This Order shall be cited as the Belfast City Council (Holylands) Traffic Regulation Order 2024.
6. This Order comes into effect the day it was passed in Council.

Dated this _____ day of _____ 2024

SEALED with the Corporate Seal of)
BELFAST CITY COUNCIL in the presence of:)

_____)
_____)
_____)
_____)
_____) LORD MAYOR

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Schedule I

Affected Roads

1. To the rear of Nos. 2 - 46 Magdala Street, Nos. 81 - 117 University Street and to the sides of No. 2a Magdala Street and No. 1a Sandhurst Road.
2. To the rear of Nos. 8 – 42 Fitzroy Avenue, Nos. 104 – 138 University Avenue and to the side of No. 2 Dudley Street.
3. To the rear of Nos. 36 – 44 Agincourt Avenue, Nos. 1 – 17 Curzon Street, Nos. 2 – 20 Collingwood Avenue and to the sides of No. 1 Curzon Street and No. 2 Collingwood Avenue.
4. To the rear of Nos. 46 – 58 Agincourt Avenue, Nos. 1 – 19 Collingwood Avenue, Nos. 46 – 66 Damascus Street and to the sides of No. 1 Collingwood Avenue and No. 44 Damascus Street.
5. To the rear of Nos. 60 – 70 Agincourt Avenue, Nos. 45 – 67 Damascus Street, Nos. 50 – 74 Jerusalem Street and to the sides of No. 45 Damascus Street and No. 50 Jerusalem Street.
6. To the rear of Nos. 72 – 82 Agincourt Avenue, Nos. 53 – 77 Jerusalem Street, Nos. 58 – 84 Palestine Street and to the sides of No. 53 Jerusalem Street and No. 58 Palestine Street.

7. To the rear of Nos. 84 – 94 Agincourt, Nos. 59 – 87 Palestine Street, Nos. 66 – 96 Carmel Street and to the sides of No. 59 Palestine Street and No. 66 Carmel Street.
8. To the rear of Nos. 96 – 100 Agincourt Avenue and to the sides of Nos. 67 and 69 Carmel Street.
9. To the rear of Nos. 120 – 134 Agincourt Avenue, Nos. 2 – 12 Harrow Street and to the side of No. 2 Southview Street.
10. To the rear of Nos. 136 – 144 Agincourt Avenue and to the side of No. 1 Southview Street.

Schedule II

Exceptions

The prohibition in Article 2 shall not apply to:

- The occupiers of premises adjoining or adjacent to the road.
- A person visiting a resident or premises adjacent to or adjoining the road.
- A person for police, military, ambulance or fire brigade purposes or in an emergency by a medical practitioner.
- A person in pursuance of statutory powers or duties by or on behalf of a government department or district council.
- A person in connection with the laying, erection, alteration or repair of any electronic communications apparatus as defined in Schedule 2 of the Telecommunications Act 1984.
- A person in connection with street works as defined in Article 3(3) of the Street Works (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.
- A person for the conveyance of goods to or from premises adjacent to the road.
- A person in connection with the carrying out of work to premises adjacent to the back or side road.
- A person in connection with the discharge of the functions of a holder of a licence granted under Article 8 of the Gas (Northern Ireland) Order 1996.
- A person in connection with a funeral from the premises adjacent to the back or side road.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order prohibits the use by vehicles and pedestrians of the back street specified in the Schedule.

Provision is made for access, either by vehicle or on foot, for residents, their visitors, emergency services, or any person in pursuance of statutory powers and duties, in connection with telecommunications, street works, gas or electric work, funerals, the carrying out of work at or the conveying of goods to or from premises adjacent to the roads.

Any person who acts in contravention of the Order shall be guilty of an offence under the Road Traffic Regulation (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 ("the Regulation Order") and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale (£1,000) in accordance with the Road Traffic Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 as amended by the Regulation Order.

Traffic signs indicating the effect of the Order will in due course be erected on the roads.



Subject:	Update on Issue – Proposal Community Consultation on renaming of Balfour Avenue Playground
Date:	7th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Stephen Leonard, Director CNS
Contact Officers:	Edel Gowdy, Lead Officer OSS, Gary McNeill Lead Officer OSS, Eimear McCullough, Lead Officer OSS.

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

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

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	At September's meeting of the People & Communities Committee an Issue was raised regarding the proposed community consultation in respect of the renaming of Balfour Avenue Playground and it was agreed that a report is to be submitted to a future meeting. This report outlines the decision-making process followed when considering this type of request.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	Committee is requested to note this report.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Council has never formally adopted a policy in relation to this matter. All requests are considered around the principles agreed in 2008 by the then Parks & Leisure committee (see Appendix One).
3.2	Any request to name or re(name) a parks or leisure facility must be made in writing to the Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services. Appendix 2 includes a pro-forma a requestor is required to complete to demonstrate the proposed name change meets the required criteria. Appendix 3 provides more detailed information on the criteria. Officers will assess the information provided and bring a report to the People and Communities Committee which will make a recommendation on the proposed name change. Any committee decision on this matter would require approval at full Council.
3.3	If approved at full council, the requestor will then have to undertake a consultation with users and the local community to show that there is widespread support for the name change. Guidance on carrying out the consultation is included in Appendix 2. The requestor will have to cover the costs of carrying out the consultation.
3.4	Officers will assess the findings of any consultation and bring them to the People and Communities Committee. Officers will also carry out an equality screening of the proposed name change. The Committee will make a final decision on the proposed name change and this will require full Council approval.
3.5	If agreed the name of facility will be changed, the change will be permanent, and the requestor will bear the costs of any new signage.
3.6	Financial and Resource Implications

	None
3.7	Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment Officers will also carry out an equality screening of any proposed name change.
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 Parks & Leisure Committee Report 2008 Appendix 2 Decision Making process on a request to re(name) a Parks & Leisure Facility. Appendix 3 Information Criteria



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Parks and Leisure Committee
Subject:	A Draft Policy Framework for (Re)naming Parks and Leisure Facilities
Date:	14 August 2008
Reporting Officer:	Andrew Hassard, Director of Parks and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Emer Boyle, Policy and Business Development Manager

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to:

- (i) outline the background to the development of a policy for how to manage requests from the public and community groups for the re-naming of Parks and Leisure facilities; and
- (ii) present a draft policy framework for managing future requests for discussion and agreement by Members.

Relevant Background Information

Members will be aware of a recent request to the Parks and Leisure Committee through the Director from the Linfield Supporters' Club and Blackstaff Community Development Association suggesting that, as a suitable memorial to commemorate the former Northern Ireland and Linfield football player, the late Tommy Dickson, the Blythefield Open Space be re-named the Tommy Dickson Park.

At the meeting of the Parks and Leisure Committee on Thursday 13 March 2008, the Committee agreed that a report on proposals for re-naming open space be submitted for consideration.

This report has been developed taking onboard extensive research and best practice examples and consultation with Members across the Party Groups.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to those that have an interest in the (re)naming of Belfast's Parks and Leisure facilities. It is proposed on the basis that it would apply to all Council owned Parks and Leisure facilities but not those facilities which the Council has taken on management responsibility for under a formal lease or agreement with an external organisation or group.

The intention behind the development of the policy is to provide a management framework within which requests from organisations and groups can be managed and to provide direction on how to apply for approval to (re)name Parks and Leisure facilities.

Up until this time, many parks have been named subject to no specific criteria. Currently 87% of Parks and Leisure facilities have the name of the geographic location in which they are located although the Council has reacted in the past to (re)name some of its facilities (playgrounds, playing fields and parks).

There are three main types of naming situations this policy intends to address:

- (i) The opening or reopening of parks and leisure facilities;
- (ii) Providing recognition of major financial contributions;
- (iii) Requests for “Memorialisation” or honouring individuals in recognition of “significant” contributions to the area or particular location.

Background Policy Context (External and Internal)

The (re)naming of Parks and Leisure facilities (or any Council location) is complex and potentially emotionally evocative because assigning a name can be a powerful and permanent identity for a public place or facility. The (re)naming of parks and leisure facilities must also be considered in light of less obvious factors such as staff and financial resources and wider external factors such as changing names on signs, maps, and other literature. In addition, the Council should also be mindful that excessive and constant name changing could be the source of confusion to the public.

External Policy Context

There are a number of relevant policy frameworks in place in Northern Ireland which relate and inform the issue of (re)naming of Parks and Leisure Facilities to a greater or lesser extent, namely:

- A Shared Future: Policy and Strategic Framework for Good Relations in Northern Ireland (2005). The shared future policy sets out challenging aims for building a shared society, with a key priority being to reclaim shared space.
- Draft Programme for Government (2007). This programme highlights that it is imperative that we all embrace the opportunity to create a shared and better future, based on tolerance and respect for cultural diversity.
- Racial Equality Strategy (2005). The aims of the Racial Equality Strategy complement those of A Shared Future.

(Further details on each of these are attached at Appendix 1.)

Internal Policy Context

Within the Council there are three relevant policy strands currently in place which could be interpreted as relating to or informing the issue of (re)naming of Parks and Leisure Facilities to a greater or lesser extent, namely:

- 1) The Street Naming Policy;
- 2) The Equality Scheme;
- 3) The Good Relations Plan

(Further details on each of these are also attached at Appendix 1.)

In developing this draft framework and report, cognisance has also been taken of ongoing research work across the Council such as that commissioned by the Good relations Unit (Conflict Transformation Project) into the promotion and maintenance of shared space across the City.

Current Position

A review of current Parks and Leisure facilities outlines that only 13% of Parks and Leisure facilities have been (re)named with a name which is not reflective of their geographical location. In summary:

- 6 facilities have been named in memory of a person (“Memorialisation”) including 1 facility which was purchased by the Council with the proviso that the park should be named after a member of the family;
- 2 facilities have been named after people (based on “significant contributions” – e.g. the exemplary performance of Mary Peters);
- 3 facilities have non-geographical names, related to Royalty, dating back to Victorian times (King George V, Queen Mary’s, Alexandra and Victoria Parks);
- 5 facilities have been named after the relevant benefactor.

Key Issues

Research and best practice gives some assistance to the development of a policy on this subject although it must be acknowledged that the type of criteria used in other cities and countries are not directly transferable to the Belfast context. Some general examples of criteria are outlined below:

- parks and facilities which have been officially named shall retain their existing names; the renaming of Parks and Leisure facilities is strongly discouraged.
- new parks or existing parks which have not been officially named shall be named after the geographic location, neighbourhood or public street where the park, facility or amenity is located;
- facilities named after persons, organisations, foundations or families contributing towards the acquisition, development or conveyance of land or building;
- names will not be considered that are discriminatory or derogatory considering race, gender, creed, religious or political affiliation, or other similar factors.

General Principles

In considering proposals for the (re)naming of a park or leisure facility, best practice would suggest that there are general principles which should be taken into account either collectively or individually, such as that the proposed name should:-

- engender a strong positive image;
- be appropriate having regard to the parks or leisure facility location;
- have historical, cultural or social significance for future generations;
- commemorate places, people or events that are of continued importance to the City or region;
- have broad public support as evidenced through consultation; and
- be inoffensive and non-party political

Cost

One of the main issues for consideration when deciding to implement a policy on this issue will be the financial implications for the Department. Currently the Parks and Leisure Department requires a substantial increase in finance to enable it to complete essential maintenance at a number of facilities as well as a number of the development activities outlined in the departmental plan. A policy which requires both staff time and departmental finances (which the department cannot foresee, plan for and allocate financial spend to) could potentially have the effect of diverting resources which should be dedicated to essential activities already in the workplan.

Consultation

Some discussion has taken place with the Party Groups with regard to how community consultation could be undertaken and what a suitable and valid approach would be – for example, should the “community” be interpreted as being the users of the park or facility or the home owners living within a certain distance? In order for this to be a valid approach consultation must take into account the Council’s statutory requirements.

It is also important that any proposed name change coming before the Council has the required level of community support forthcoming at the consultation stage. This is to ensure that no embarrassment is caused to any individual or organisation who might not receive the necessary support for the (re)naming proposal.

At present the Council has in its plan of work the development of a consultation and engagement strategy. In the absence of a Council approach to conducting consultation to guide the development of a process which would support this policy, a draft “proposed application process” is attached at Appendix II, with detail on the (re)naming request guidelines attached as Appendix III and the guidelines for the consultation outlined and attached at Appendix IV.

Policy Options

OPTION 1 – (Continue as we have been) To adopt an ad-hoc approach dealing with individual requests received.

OPTION 2 – To agree a policy which “draws a line in the sand” from this point, and establishes that Parks and Leisure facilities are named after their geographical location (or shall retain their existing names) and that the renaming of Parks and Leisure facilities is strongly discouraged.

OPTION 3 – To treat it as a policy issue for the Department and develop a rigorous policy framework to deal with all (re)naming requests received by the Parks and Leisure Department.

This approach has much broader implications for Parks and Leisure in terms of consultation, staff resources and the associated costs.

Recommendation and Proposed Criteria

Based on all of the research and the need to strike a balance between defining a strict policy and placing undue limits on the democratic process, Option 3 is recommended. It is further recommended that the policy apply only to local parks

and leisure facilities and that the Council would not wish to have its City, District and Country Parks re-named (a list of the City, District and Country Parks is attached at Appendix 5).

The criteria have been designed to ensure that only sincere and non-vexatious proposals will be considered by the Council.

It is recommended that this should be supported by a detailed set of criteria and management framework as follows:

1.0 Proposed Criteria

1.1 Where the request made is to memorialise a person

- The person must be deceased for a minimum of five years.
- If the nominee is deceased then appropriate relatives or friends will be contacted asking if they approve of the request. If the relatives or friends do not approve, the naming process will not be pursued.
- The person must have made a “significant contribution” to the life of the area/City/made a significant positive contribution to parks and leisure objectives within the community where the facility is located.
- The person must have lived within the locality / district electoral area (DEA) of the park or leisure facility for a significant or formative period;

1.2 It is recommended that a park not be named for a living person, except in the event that the person / family have made a significant financial contribution to improvement / development of the park or facility.

1.3 Where the name requested relates to a specific unique location:

- The name should provide a sense of place, reflecting the geographic location, community, neighbourhood or street where the park, facility or amenity is located;
- The name should reflect the historical significance of the area or reflects unique characteristics of the site (unique flora / fauna).

1.4 In ALL (re)naming cases:

- The applicant will bear the cost of the (re)naming in terms of consultation, signs, plaques etc;
- The name, once bestowed, is permanent;

1.5 Names should not be considered which:

- Cause confusion due to duplication or names sounding similar to existing named facilities / locations within the City;
- Unlawfully discriminate within the meaning and scope of the provisions of the Council’s equality and good relations policies and the Shared Future agenda;
- Are party-political in intention or use.

1.6 Existing names will not be changed without consideration of the historical significance of the existing name, the cost and impact of changing existing signs, rebuilding community recognition and updating records (i.e. letterhead, databases, and promotional materials).

- 1.7 Each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 1.8 All signs that indicate the name of a park and/or recreational facility shall comply with Belfast City Council's Parks and Leisure design standards. Specialised naming signage should not be permitted.

Resource Implications

Financial

The recommended option will place the financial implications of carrying out consultation on the proposed (re)name change and any subsequent changes to signage on the applicant.

There will be financial implications for the Council in terms of updating literature/Council documents.

Human Resources

The implementation and management of the proposed framework will require officer time which is difficult to predict at this stage and which would require re-examination after a suggested 12 month period. There will be resource implications in terms of officer time required to verify the consultation process.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- (i) review the report presented, research and options;
- (ii) agree the recommendation – Option 3 and the approach which has been proposed in terms of procedure and consultation; subject to
- (iii) the preferred policy position then being fully considered in line with the Council's statutory Equality obligations.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: additional information (internal and external policy context).

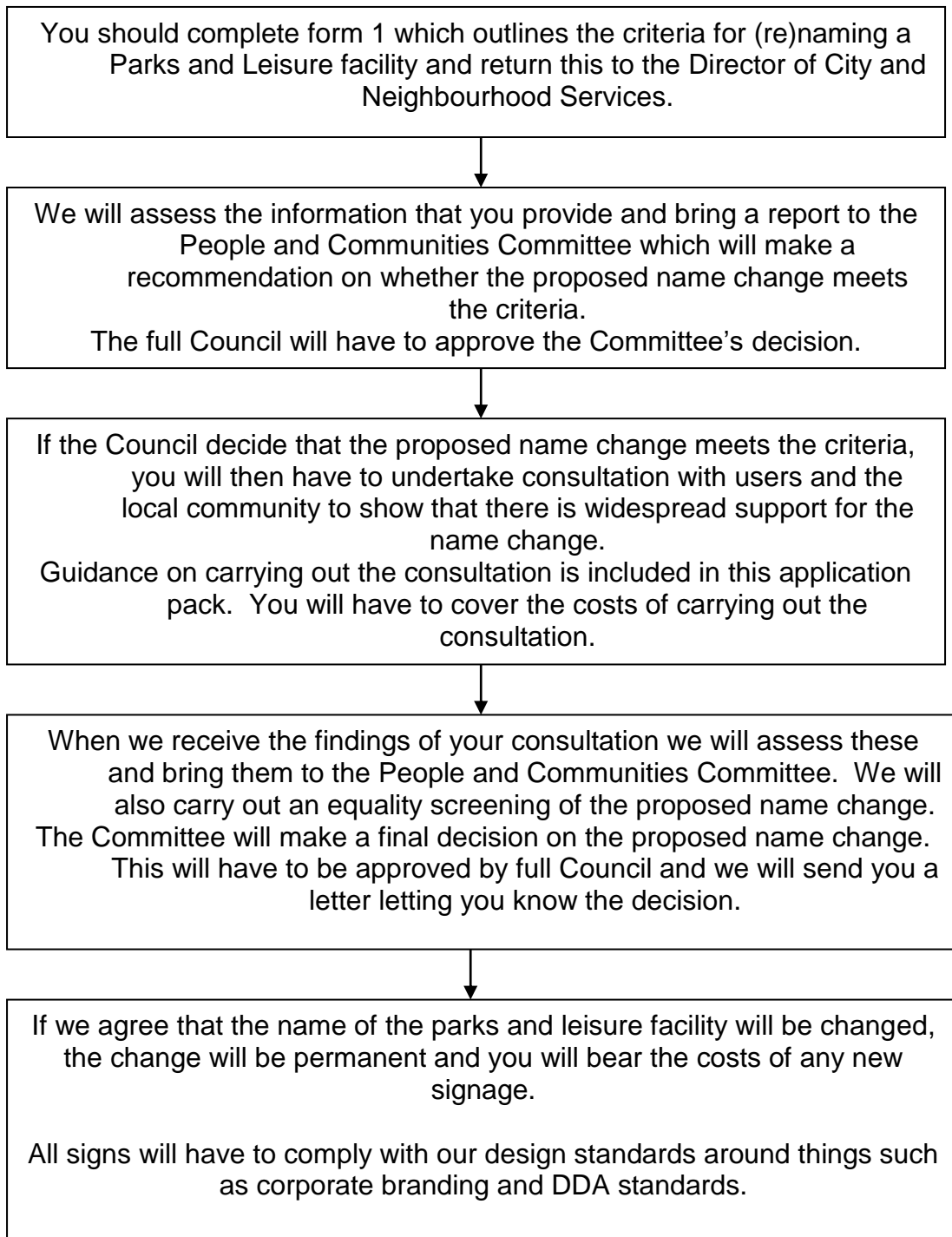
Appendix 2: (Re)naming Parks and Leisure Facilities Process.

Appendix 3: Stage 1: (Re)naming request guidelines.

Appendix 4: Stage 2: Consultation guidelines.

Appendix 5: List of Parks and Leisure Department City, District and Country Parks.

Decision making process on a request to (re)name a Parks and Leisure facility



Guidance on consulting with users and the local community in relation to the (re)naming of parks and leisure facilities

A request to (re)name a park and leisure facility must be accompanied by evidence which demonstrates that there is substantial community support for the proposed name change.

This evidence must have been gathered through consultation by the applicant proposing the name change. This consultation must be resourced by the applicant and carried out to the following specification.

Communication and advertising

- The applicant will be required to demonstrate that they have undertaken sufficient advertising through a range of methods, for example newspaper advertisements, to communicate to all users, potential users and interested parties that the consultation is being undertaken.
- The applicant should ensure that all users and interested parties who reside outside the catchment area are afforded the opportunity to participate in the consultation process for example through advertisements in newspapers in adjoining areas of public meetings or focus groups.

Sample size & method

- 50% of the catchment area population of the park should be consulted. A map showing the catchment area for a park and specifying the catchment population will be produced by the Parks and Leisure Department.
- This should be carried out through the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods.
- The quantitative method should involve the use of a questionnaire which surveys at least 50% of the catchment area population. The questionnaire should ask those surveyed whether they are in favour of the name change.
- The qualitative method should involve the use of either at least 2 public meetings or a series of focus groups. These should target users, potential users and interested parties who reside both within the catchment area and outside it.
- The sample should be random.

User population/catchment area

- The recognised catchment area for users of a local park consists of communities within a 5 minute walk of the facility¹.
- A map showing the catchment area for a park and specifying the catchment population will be produced by the Parks and Leisure Department.
- Community consultation should be conducted with relevant stakeholders.
- Consultation should include, but not be limited to, nearby residences/businesses, emergency services and other statutory organisations as appropriate.

¹ National Playing Field Association Guidelines

Timescales

- Sufficient time should be allowed for considered responses from all individuals/groups with an interest in the issue.
- The consultation period should be a minimum of 8 weeks and consideration should be given to holiday periods such as Christmas and Easter with more time being allowed over these periods.
- If consultation takes the form of an event consideration must be given to the date and timing of the events and its convenience to working people, parents with young children, younger people and older people.

Validation of the process

- The applicant will be required to provide contact detail of all those people involved in the consultation process. This information should be obtained with the consent of the person consulted and in such a way so as not to link them to their response.
- The council reserves the right for officers to attend all consultation events such as public meetings or focus groups.

Acceptance levels

- The applicant will have to demonstrate that 66% of the sample i.e. 50% of the catchment area population agrees with the proposed name change.
- People not returning a reply to the questionnaire will be deemed not to be in favour of the name change and a nil response recorded.

Criteria

To allow us to assess whether your proposed name meets our criteria we would ask that you complete the following sections demonstrating who you meet the criteria.

Current name of park/leisure facility which you wish to (re)name:

Proposed name:

Complete the following section if your request will **memorialise a person**

Criteria	Please demonstrate how your request meets the criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The person must have made a “significant contribution” to the life of the area / City / or made a significant positive contribution to parks and leisure objectives within the community where the facility is located. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The person must have lived within the locality / District Electoral Area of the Park and Leisure facility 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The person must have been deceased for a minimum of five years. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If person is still alive have they made a significant financial contribution to the improvement / development of the park or facility? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the nominee is deceased then appropriate relatives or friends will be contacted asking if they approve of the request. If the relatives or friends do not approve, the naming process will not be pursued. 	

Complete the following section if your request **relates to a specific unique location**

Criteria	Please demonstrate how your request meets the criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The name should provide a sense of place, reflecting the geographic location, community, neighbourhood or street where the park, facility or amenity is located.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The name should reflect the historical significance of the area or reflects unique characteristics of the site (unique flora / fauna).	

Please return completed form to: David Sales
Strategic Director City and Neighbourhood Services
Belfast City Council
The Cecil Ward Building
4-10 Linenhall Street
BELFAST
BT2 8BP

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APPENDIX 3

Stage 1: (Re)naming request guidelines

Proposed procedure and guidelines

These procedures and guidelines have been established to ensure that the (re)naming of parks and leisure facilities is approached in a consistent manner.

1.0 Initial requests for (re)naming of Parks and Leisure facilities

- All requests for the naming or renaming of a park and leisure facility shall be made in writing to the Director of Parks and Leisure Department.

1.1 Initial requests should contain the following information:

- The proposed name.
- Reasons for the proposed name.
- Written documentation indicating community support for the proposed name.
- Description / map showing location and boundaries of the park.

1.2 Detailed form for (re)naming Parks and Leisure facilities

- On verification of the initial request the Parks and Leisure Department will send out a detailed form that specifies the criteria that will have to be met if a Parks and Leisure facility is to (re)named. The proposed criteria is outlined below:

1.3 Proposed Criteria:

1.3.1 Where the request made is to memorialise a person:-

- The person must have made a “significant contribution” to the life of the area / City / or made a significant positive contribution to parks and leisure objectives within the community where the facility is located.
- The person must have lived within the locality / District Electoral Area of the Park and Leisure facility.
- The person must have been deceased for a minimum of five years.
- If the nominee is deceased then appropriate relatives or friends will be contacted asking if they approve of the request. If the relatives or friends do not approve, the naming process will not be pursued.

It is recommended that a park not be named for a living person, except in the event that the person / family have made a significant financial contribution to the improvement / development of the park or facility.

1.3.2 Where the name requested relates to a specific unique location;-

- The name should provide a sense of place, reflecting the geographic location, community, neighbourhood or street where the park, facility or amenity is located.
- The name should reflect the historical significance of the area or reflects unique characteristics of the site (unique flora / fauna).

1.3.3 In ALL (re)naming cases;-

- The applicant will bear the cost of the (re)naming in terms of signs, plaques etc.
- The name, once bestowed, is permanent.

1.3.4 Names should not be considered which:

- Cause confusion due to duplication or names sounding similar to existing named facilities / locations within the City.
- Unlawfully discriminate within the meaning and scope of the provisions of Section 75, the Good Relations Plan (2007) and the Shared Future agenda.
- Are party-political in intention or use.

Existing names will not be changed without consideration of the historical significance of the existing name, the cost and impact of changing existing signs, rebuilding community recognition and updating records (i.e. letterhead, databases, and promotional materials).

All signs that indicate the name of a park and leisure facility shall comply with Belfast City Council's Parks and Leisure design standards. Specialised naming signage should not be permitted.

Each application will be considered on a case-by-case basis.



Subject:	DAERA Funding Award and Update on the NoM on Urban Meadows
Date:	7 th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Stephen Leonard , Operational Director City & Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Edel Gowdy, Lead Officer, Open Space & Streetscene & Orla Maguire, Biodiversity 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"/>
Some time 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 or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To inform members of the committee that in September 2025, Belfast City Council, was awarded £472,000 through the DAERA Challenge Fund and to update Members on progress in implementing the NoM on Urban Meadows.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to note the DAERA funding and agree to proceed with project implementation on the Urban Meadow sites.
3.0	Main report

3.1	Background and Context
3.2	<p>In March 2024, invitations were issued for organisations to submit applications to the DAERA Challenge Fund. The Environmental Impact Priorities are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and Climate Recovery: Building Ecological and Climate Resilience, Landscape, water, habitats, species and earth science condition and extent maintained and improved • Connecting People with the Environment: Connecting with the natural environment, understanding it and taking action to have a positive effect on it
3.3	Council officers submitted an application in March on Nature Recovery and a letter of offer was received in September.
3.4	The project objective is to develop a landscape scale Nature Recovery Network across Belfast increasing habitat extent, condition and connectivity for nature and people. Conservation Management Plans will be developed for key BCC sites and habitat enhancement plans for a suite of sites across Belfast. A public awareness campaign and training will be undertaken for staff and stakeholders. Opportunities to create demonstration sites and share knowledge will be identified.
3.5	<p>The total project cost is £522,500 with delivery up to 31 March 2028. As the project develops further reports will be brought to Committee for update.</p> <p><u>Notice of Motion on Urban Wildflower Meadows</u></p>
3.6	Members are reminded that in September 2023 Council agreed to a pilot project that aimed to identify one site for a wildflower meadow in each quadrant of the city. A bid for £50,000 was secured as part of the 2025/2026 estimates to support delivery of this initiative.
3.7	Officers have undertaken a series of actions and identified a preferred site for each quadrant of the city. A workshop was undertaken with OSSS Managers and a long list created. Following site visits to assess ecological benefits, viability and securing indicative costings the following sites have emerged as the preferred option per quadrant.

3.8	<p>North: Glencairn Park</p> <p>South: Ormeau Park</p> <p>East: Belmont Park</p> <p>West: Brook Leisure Centre</p>
3.9	<p>Site prioritisation is based on ecological, community and education benefits along with feasibility and resourcing.</p> <p>Finance and Resource implications</p> <p><u>DAERA Funding</u></p>
3.10	<p>There is a requirement of £50,000 match funding from BCC as part of the DAERA funding. This has been identified within existing budgets.</p> <p><u>Urban Meadows NoM</u></p>
3.11	<p>The indicative site costs for interventions are just under the £50,000 budget secured within the 2025/2026 estimates.</p> <p>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</p>
3.12	<p>There are no known equality or good relations implications associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 - Letter of Offer</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Urban Meadow Maps</p>

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Applicant – by email only
biodiversity@belfastcity.gov.uk

Our Ref: NRCF 2025/22

Direct Tel: 02890 569610

09/09/2025

Dear Orla

Letter of Offer: Belfast is Making Space for Nature - Nature Recovery Network

Following your application to the Environment Fund I am pleased to inform you that the Department is offering the level of grant outlined below, subject to the Terms and Conditions that are attached to this letter of offer in Appendix 4 and the Additional Terms and Conditions below.

This is to deliver Option 2 within your application and, where appropriate with the amendments outlined below. The Outcomes and Targets to be delivered, monitored and reported on are listed in Appendix 2, alongside the Risk Register that must be maintained and reported on with each grant claim.

Offer:

1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026: Up to £103,500 at up to 61% of eligible costs.

Future years

1 April 2026 – 31 March 2027: Up to £140,000 at up to 78% of eligible costs.

1 April 2027 – 31 March 2028: Up to £135,000 at up to 78% of eligible costs.

Client Officer:

The DAERA Client Officer allocated for this project is Maeve Foley; Tel 02890 569234; e-mail Maeve.foley@daera-ni.gov.uk

Additional Project Specific Terms and Conditions:

1. GIS files showing exact chosen areas must be shared with client officer when management plans are developed, and sites and actions are determined.
2. Conservation Management Plans should be developed in reference to any Agri-environment schemes or any other funding projects to avoid duplication. As the project progresses and stepping stone/wildlife corridor/landscape scale sites are

chosen and actions determined, BCC must consult with Countryside Management Unit to ensure no duplication of funding for works.

3. When sites are chosen and actions are determined, appropriate permissions such as consent/assent must be in place prior to works commencing, and an up-to-date HRA must be undertaken if there is potential for an impact on designated European sites such as SPAs/SACs or Ramsar sites. Any other relevant licences and approvals must be sought if required throughout the project, and client officer informed.
4. Specialist machinery purchased must be actively made available for lending out to other organisations including but not limited to other councils, LVRP, BHP, NT and DfI Roads.
5. If Nature Towns and Cities bid is successful, throughout the process, BCC must ensure that there is no duplication and inform client officer of activities undertaken.
6. Transects/surveys undertaken by staff/volunteers under this project must be submitted to the relevant National survey, e.g. Bumblebee Monitoring Scheme – this will contribute to landscape scale delivery.
7. The Applicant is responsible for obtaining and complying with statutory approvals in advance of the conduct of any activities that may affect designated sites. In awarding this grant DAERA is not inferring that “as an owner/occupier¹ of the protected site(s) named in the EF Application Form, or as a public body, you may carry out, cause or permit to be carried out, the operation(s) specified in the manner prescribed” and outlined in your grant application and supplementary information. This Letter of Offer is not therefore a Consent/Assent, under the Environment Order (Northern Ireland) 2002 as amended, for any of the operations proposed in your project.

Where you do not have current Consent/Assent in place for the proposed project, and intend to carry out operations within or near ASSIs, you must gain this via your Environment Fund (EF) Client Officer in writing prior to carrying out any operations. You must fill in the appropriate form in Appendix 4.

Competent Authorities (Government, Councils and Statutory Undertakers) intending to carry out projects within or near ASSIs must have the Assent of DAERA in order to proceed, and for European sites are required to carry out their own Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) prior to applying for Assent from their EF Client Officer.

If you propose to amend, or carry out additional operations, or where the period identified in the proposal for the operation to take place has expired, you must provide sufficient information to enable the environmental assessment to be carried out to consider whether the operation(s) can be granted Consent/Assent.

Where any operations also require permission from a local planning or other regulatory authority, separate to a permission under the Environment Order (Northern Ireland) 2002 as amended, you must ensure these permissions are also obtained before any operations take place.

¹ You must have written permission of the owner.

Acceptance of Offer:

If you are accepting this offer you must confirm this using the attached Grant Acceptance Form by **07/10/2025**. This must be signed by 2 authorised representatives.

Yours sincerely



Liz Loughran

Director, Natural Environment Division
DAERA

Copy: Maeve Foley, DAERA Client Officer
efgrants@daera-ni.gov.uk

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Urban Meadows Maps

1. Glencairn





2. Ormeau Park (***note: area subject to final agreed plans for dog park***)





3. Belmont









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of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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Belfast
City Council

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Department for Communities (DfC), draft consultation on the Support Framework for Independent Advice and Debt Services

Subject:	Department for Communities (DfC), draft consultation on the Support Framework for Independent Advice and Debt Services
Date:	7 th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Jim Girvan – Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Nicola Lane – Neighbourhood Services Manager Margaret Higgins – Lead Officer, Community Provision

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 type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Information relating to any individual Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) Information in connection with any labour relations matter Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 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 Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 										
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table> <tr> <td>After Committee Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>			After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
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
1.1	The purpose of this report is to present to Members the draft Belfast City Council response to the DfC consultation on the proposed Support Framework for Independent Advice and Debt Services.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to review and agree the draft Belfast City Council response to the recently published Department for Communities proposed Support Framework for Independent Advice and Debt Services
2.2	Members are asked to note the closing date of the consultation, which is 3 rd November and to acknowledge that the BCC draft response, if approved by Committee, will not be ratified by full Council until after the closing date and that this will be highlighted on our response notification to the Department for Communities.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Members will be aware the Council administers and provides significant funding to support the delivery of a range of advice services through the Community Support Plan (CSP) Letter of Offer from the Department of Communities (DfC). The Department released a consultation on the proposed Support Framework for Independent Advice and Debt services in September 2025 it is open until the 3rd November 2025. The link to the full consultation is included in Appendix 1 - BCC Draft response to DfC consultation on the proposed Support Framework for Independent Advice and Debt services.</p> <p>“The Department for Communities has put forward draft proposals for how the Department will work with local government and independent advice providers to ensure that people can access consistent quality advice regardless of where they live in Northern Ireland, with a focus on ensuring that the Department’s investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports independent advice and debt service-providers to meet needs on the ground; • strikes the right balance between supporting frontline community delivery and regional services; and • supports collaboration and joining up of services to minimise duplication, maximise resources and improve outcomes for clients. <p>Proposals are geared towards achievement of a cohesive partnership between DfC, the District Councils and the independent advice and debt sector, underpinned by ‘Guiding Principles’ that are a reference framework for how services should be delivered.”</p>
3.2	<p><u>Consultation overview</u></p> <p>The consultation includes 5 structured questions, responses have been collected and collated across council services, into the attached appendices. The formal response document as per Appendix 1 is in draft format pending ratification by council, it will not be ratified before the consultation submission date, therefore will be submitted as a draft response.</p> <p>Overall, Belfast City Council (BCC) welcomes the ambition to produce a framework for advice provision particularly the ambition to ensure access to high quality advice across the region. BCC</p>

	welcomes the introduction of a quality standard for advice provision that will be implemented centrally by the department.
3.3	<p>Council also welcomes the ambition to enhance collaboration and referral, however noting that a resource for co-ordination will have to be provided by the department given that is an additional ask of advice organisations. Council asks the department to note that it supports the delivery of advice services through local providers and that these organisations need to be adequately resourced to provide advice services. The level of departmental funding for generalist advice has remained at a similar level for a number of years whilst the sector reports that it is experiencing challenges in terms of the increased complexity of cases and in recruiting and retaining staff. Council also supports the ambition to introduce longer term funding for the advice sector (5 years and beyond) to provide much needed stability. Council will need to consider its commitment to longer term investment when the department's position in terms of funding is agreed.</p>
3.4	<p>It is not clear how the views or users/clients have been factored into the vision/priorities, or whether there are plans to engage specifically with service users / citizens during the further development of the framework. An analysis of the range of issues people are seeking advice about as well as an understanding of the service beneficiaries /client groups is essential to enable a person-centred, tailored service that meets needs. Better profiling and support matching could also support aligning provision / allocation of resources based on analysis of need.</p> <p><u>Overview of Key areas</u></p> <p>1- Independent Advice and Debt services : Scope for improvement in future support outlining the key features of the Independent advice and debt service in Northern Ireland and the drivers for future policy and delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – BCC welcomes the key areas outlined and highlights the need for resources, coordination and full analysis on the types of support required across both debt and advice services. Noting the need for sufficient and realistic timelines to implement any changes. <p>2- An ambition for future service delivery This section outlines an ambition for Independent Advice and Debt Services: vision, outcome, guiding principles for delivery and core policy themes. DfC have set out a vision for independent advice and debt services that contributes to the Programme for Government: Our Plan; 'Doing What Matters Most'. This vision also supports the UK Financial Wellbeing Strategy and NI Delivery Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – BCC notes that it may be worth considering greater linkage between the individual and societal benefits ; consider education in debt/those facing issues with benefit take up. This approach may also inform the outcome-based framework for the sector. <p>3- The Department's investment priorities for Independent Advice and Debt Services, setting out the thematic investment priorities for Independent Advice and Debt which will determine how the Department funds future services. Under 5 thematic areas:</p> <p><u>Theme A: Joining up to improve outcomes</u></p> <p>The Department's investment and the way that it works with other funders of advice services will support a collaborative delivery model, with strong partnerships and effective referral pathways between statutory and Voluntary and Community sector services working together to ensure people get the help and support they need.</p> <p><u>Theme B: Enhancing visibility and accessibility of services</u></p> <p>The Department's investment will recognise the need for advice and debt services to be visible and accessible for all those who need advice, in a way that reflects their preferences and requirements.</p>

3.5	<p><u>Theme C: Quality and Innovation in Services</u></p> <p>The Department's investment will support a formal quality standard as a fundamental part of the service.</p> <p><u>Theme D: Measuring Performance and Impact of Services</u></p> <p>To ensure the Department's investment in advice and debt services is appropriately targeted, we need to ensure the right things are recorded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Belfast City council supports the integration of funds, collaboration on delivery and working with key stakeholders to shape the outcomes. <p>4- Support and Strengthen the Sectors The Department recognises the need to support the effective and efficient delivery of community-based advice and debt services through continued investment in regional "infrastructure" support that best meets the needs of the sector and people who use it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Belfast city council welcomes the introduction of integrated regional infrastructure support provision that meets the need of community-based advice services. The role of support organisations should be clearly defined and there should be local mechanisms for links between advice providers, infrastructure organisations and local councils. <p>5. Delivering the framework, sets out the Departments plans for the implementation of the priorities in this framework to support future delivery of independent Advice and Debt Services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We note further development will be informed by key delivery partners including local government, and the independent advice sector; however, we would refer to the work carried out in Scotland where those with lived experience were recruited in the pre-consultation stage to form a reference panel to transform the system, therefore involving users from design to implementation and enhancing accountability. <p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>Belfast City Council will submit the full return as a draft submission, by email, before the consultation end date of the 3rd of November pending any recommendations from committee.</p> <p>The consultation response will also be submitted through an online questionnaire which will reflect the responses as outlined in appendix 1.</p>
	<p>4.0 Financial & Resource Implications</p> <p>None – with regards to responding to the consultation. The consultation response highlights that further responsibilities on councils for delivery of additional areas of work will need to be appropriately resourced.</p>
	<p>5.0 Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</p> <p>None</p>
	<p>6.0 Communications Implications</p> <p>None- links to consultation and reference material: https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-support-framework-independent-advice-and-debt-services https://www.gov.scot/publications/social-security-experience-panels-legacy-report/</p>
	<p>7.0 Appendices</p> <p>Appendix 1 - BCC Draft response to DfC consultation on the proposed Support Framework for Advice and Debt service</p>

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Appendix 1 - BCC draft response for Department for Communities consultation on: Support Framework on Independent Advice and Debt services

DfC submission date: 3rd November 2025

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-support-framework-independent-advice-and-debt-services>

Overview

- Council welcomes the introduction of a quality standard for advice provision that will be implemented centrally by the department.
- Council asks the department to note that it supports the delivery of advice services through local providers and that these organisations need to be adequately resourced to provide advice services. The level of departmental funding for generalist advice has remained at a similar level for a number of years whilst the sector reports that it is experiencing challenges in terms of the increased complexity of cases and in recruiting and retaining staff.
- The department should recognise that there are significantly more advice service organisations in Belfast City Council area than in other council areas. There are historical and current reasons for the high number of providers in Belfast and resources should be made available to support the co-ordination of services and referral mechanisms across the city.
- We support the ambition to enhance collaboration and referral, however we note that a resource for co-ordination will have to be provided.
- We support the ambition of the consultation to introduce longer term funding for the advice sector (5 years and beyond) to provide much needed stability.
- It is not clear how the views of users/clients have been factored into the vision/priorities, or whether there are plans to engage specifically with service users / citizens during the further development of the framework. An analysis of the range of issues people are seeking advice about as well as an understanding of the service beneficiaries /client groups is essential to enable a person-centred, tailored service that meets needs. Better profiling and support matching could also support aligning provision / allocation of resources based on analysis of need.
- While there is passing reference to the diverse and changing profile of service users, this could be strengthened by including an analysis of the make-up of customers by Section 75 or socio-economic background, helping to understand need better and minimise barriers. This should also be linked to the outcome/performance measures.
- While the consultation documents include a Rural Needs Assessment and consultation feedback, there is no accompanying equality screening. This is critically important to understand the potential impact of the service on different groups, particularly given the increasing complexity of cases being dealt with and person-centred support provided by the sector.

1. Independent Advice and Debt services

This first section outlines the key features of Independent Advice and Debt Services in NI and the drivers for future policy and delivery.

DfC what we mean

- Independent advice and debt services refers to Department-funded community-based advice and regulated debt advice services
- The need and demand for independent advice and debt services are driven by wider economic and social changes.
- The independent advice and debt sector is part of a wider Voluntary and Community Sector. It comprises community-based advice services delivered in each council area, supported by regional advice organisations.

Scope for improvement in future support:

Our engagement with stakeholders has identified several areas where current arrangements can be improved to better respond to need and to achieve better outcomes. These form the basis for the priorities for investment detailed later in this framework.

- Delivery
- Community-based advice services
- Sectoral support
- Funding

Belfast City Council Response

- Welcome the aim to reduce duplication however removal of the regional Welfare Changes Helpline and introduction of a regional gateway will require additional resources to ensure that there is a mechanism in place for onward routing.
- Any removal of an existing regional resource will have to be accompanied by a robust communications and marketing campaign and this should highlight the range of local services available.
- Would be important to test with current users of regional advice services if removal of a regional helpline will have a negative impact.
- Welcome consistent reporting framework which should include analysis of council area variations and ensure analysis of individuals and types of advice being accessed.
- Welcome simplification of grant streams, however timelines need to include sufficient time for councils to put in place arrangements to accommodate new approaches, particularly in relation to debt.

2. An ambition for future service delivery

This section outlines an ambition for Independent Advice and Debt Services: vision, outcome, guiding principles for delivery and core policy themes.

DfC what we propose:

DfC have set out a vision for independent advice and debt services that contributes to the Programme for Government: Our Plan; 'Doing What Matters Most'. This vision also supports the UK Financial Wellbeing Strategy and NI Delivery Plan.

Underpinning these priorities are eight guiding principles which describes the way in which services should be delivered, reflecting the values of the independent advice sector:

- Confidentiality
- Quality
- Accessibility
- Independence
- Free to the recipient
- Person centred
- Impactful
- Impartiality

Belfast City Council Response

- Worth considering greater linkage between the individual benefits and societal benefits, for example, consider reduction in debt/those facing issues with benefit take up etc. This may also inform the outcome-based framework for the sector.
- Societal impacts should mention impacts on those most disadvantaged.
- Worth considering greater linkage between the individual benefits and societal benefits, for example, consider reduction in debt/those facing issues with benefit take up etc. This may also inform the outcome-based framework for the sector.
- Principles should include reference to supporting the dignity of those accessing services

3. The Department's investment priorities for Independent Advice and Debt Services.

This section sets out thematic investment priorities for Independent Advice and Debt which will determine how the Department funds future services.

DfC what we propose	<p>Investment Theme A: Joining up to improve outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department's investment and the way that it works with other funders of advice services will support a collaborative delivery model, with strong partnerships and effective referral pathways between statutory and Voluntary and Community sector services working together to ensure people get the help and support they need. <p>Investment Theme B: Enhancing visibility and accessibility of services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department's investment will recognise the need for advice and debt services to be visible and accessible for all those who need advice, in a way that reflects their preferences and requirements. <p>Investment Theme C: Quality and Innovation in Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department's investment will support a formal quality standard as a fundamental part of the service. <p>Investment Theme D: Measuring Performance and Impact of Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the Department's investment in advice and debt services is appropriately targeted, we need to ensure the right things are recorded.
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Belfast City Council Response

Theme A

- We support integration of funds; the department needs to ensure that there is sufficient time to support introduction of new arrangements at council level.
- We support the collaborative delivery model proposed and would suggest that as research shows a link between the advice sector and improving health outcomes, particularly in terms of mental health, easing stress and financial instability; there may be scope to utilise additional referral pathways or promotion/outreach opportunities through community-based networks, GP or library facilities etc.
- Role of Regional Advice Partnership needs to be clearly defined with clear targets for operation.

Theme B

- Enhancing visibility & accessibility refers to multi-channel delivery. It appears focused on streamlining and on-line/self-help support, but it is vital that:
 - community face-to-face delivery is robust, accessible and readily available, particularly given the complexity of issues which those facing hardship may present and certain groups ie. older and those where English not first language, can face additional barriers.
 - the increasing diversity of the population should also inform delivery and factor in the language and cultural barriers that people may face in accessing the service.

- In this context consideration should be given to ensuring resources are available to expand the scope and nature of advice and support which may be required by newcomers communities.
- Enhancing visibility needs to include marketing and communication workstream and resource to support delivery of this centrally.

Theme C

- Welcome implementation of a quality standard for advice and debt services, a timeline for implementation would be helpful.

Theme D

- Welcome the development of the **outcomes-based framework** which includes key performance measures, lived experience and outcome measures. The development of a framework has to be cognisant of the increased complexity of cases and therefore should not only focus on numerical analysis.

4. Support and strengthen the Independent Advice and Debt sector through effective regional support

This section outlines how the Department's investment will provide effective regional "infrastructure" support to meet the needs of and strengthen the Independent Advice and Debt Sector

DfC what we propose	<p>Investment Theme E: Support and Strengthen the Sectors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Department recognises the need to support the effective and efficient delivery of community-based advice and debt services through continued investment in regional "infrastructure" support that best meets the needs of the sector and people who use it.
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Belfast City Council Response

- Welcome introduction of integrated regional infrastructure support provision that meets the need of community-based advice services. The role of support organisations should be clearly defined and there should be local mechanisms for links between advice providers, infrastructure organisations and local councils.

5. Delivering the Framework.

This section sets out the proposed implementation plans to support independent Advice and Debt Services

Section 5	<p>Delivering the framework</p> <p>This section sets out the Departments plans for the implementation of the priorities in this framework to support future delivery of independent Advice and Debt Services.</p>
Proposed Action:	<p>Phase 1 – Develop Stage – Laying the foundations by establishing defining outcomes and quality measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an outcomes-based framework • Progress Advice Quality Standard <p>Phase 2 – Design Stage – Pilot and refine frameworks while developing service specification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot outcomes framework • Appoint an independent NIAQS accreditation body • Design service specification for community advice services (with councils) and regional delivery <p>Phase 3 – Delivery Stage / Commission services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department commissions regional services • Council implements the service specification for community advice services

Belfast City Council Response

- Council strongly welcomes the introduction of a centrally implemented quality standard
- An indication of timeframes for the phased approach would be helpful.
- We note further development will be informed by key delivery partners including local government, and the independent advice sector; however, we would refer to the work carried out in Scotland [Social Security Experience Panels: legacy report - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/social-security-experience-panels/legacy-report/pages/1-1-introduction.aspx) where those with **lived experience** were recruited in the pre-consultation stage to form a reference panel to transform the system, therefore involving users from design to implementation and enhancing accountability.



Subject:	Fly Tipping
Date:	7th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	David Sales, CNS Strategic Director
Contact Officer:	Siobhan Toland (CNS Director), Stephen Leonard (CNS Director), and Caroline McGeown (Senior Performance and Improvement Officer).

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

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

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	At P&C Committee on the 5 August, it was agreed that a report is to be submitted to a future meeting which would provide data and information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement activity, prosecution information and a geographical breakdown of problem areas, fly tipping and house clearances.
1.2	This report provides an overview of fly tipping as of August 2025, focusing on the following key areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and data • Enforcement • Open Spaces and Street Scene • Waste Management • Communication, Education and Awareness
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	Committee is recommended to note this report.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Context Fly-tipping is the illegal disposal of waste. This can range from small-scale dumping, such as black bin bags left in alleyways, to large-scale tipping of building materials, white goods, or commercial waste. It also includes excess waste left beside household and commercial bins, which is the Council's policy not to collect.
3.2	Fly-tipping is an increasing problem across the UK, blighting communities, damaging the environment, and costing local councils millions of pounds in cleanup efforts. From abandoned furniture and household waste to hazardous materials, illegally dumped rubbish poses serious risks to public health and wildlife.
3.3	The responsibility for fly-tipping enforcement is shared between Local Councils and Northern Ireland Environmental Agency (NIEA): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Councils have responsibility for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) all non-hazardous waste deposits under 20 cubic metres in volume or accumulations of several small-scale fly tipping incidents.

3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) all hazardous waste of a type and volume that could be accepted at an appropriately authorised Council operated civic amenity or waste recycling centre. • Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) have responsibility for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) all waste deposits over 20 cubic metres in volume regardless of the waste classification. In summary, 20 cubic metres generally relates to less than a single small lorry load. (ii) all other hazardous waste of a type and volume which would not be accepted at a Council operated Recycling Centre.
3.5	<p>Householders are responsible for ensuring that the waste produced on their property is only transferred to an authorised person known as Duty of Care, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District council waste collectors or their contracted collectors • a registered waste carrier or • a waste site that is appropriately licensed with NIEA.
3.6	<p>Littering is an offence under the Litter (NI) order 1994. While fly tipping is an offence under the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 2017 and, where the Council can impose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) of £80 for 'littering'. There is a reduced fee of £60 paid in 10 days. • FPNs of £400 for larger scale fly tipping, with no early payment discount. • FPNs of £300 for failing to comply with the duty of care requirements regarding production, collection, carrying, treating and disposing of controlled waste. • Court Fines: can reach up to £50,000 depending on the offence.
3.7	<p>For larger-scale incidents and those involving organised crime, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) takes this very seriously. This can lead to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy fines of up to £50,000 and sentences of six months imprisonment per charge. • At Crown Court level, the fines are unlimited, and criminals can be sentenced to up to five years imprisonment per charge - and made to pay back their profits. <p>Understanding the causes of fly-tipping and exploring effective solutions is essential in tackling this growing issue. Several factors can contribute to the increasing problem of fly-tipping in the UK:</p>

3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Awareness – Some people may not realise that leaving waste beside public bins is illegal dumping. Others may not be fully aware of the services and facilities provided by the Council such as the bulky household waste collection service. This requires continued outreach and communication programmes. • Rogue Waste Collectors – Unlicensed waste removal services often take payment for disposal but dump the waste illegally instead of using registered facilities. • Enforcement – While enforcement powers exist, the challenge lies in gathering sufficient evidence to issue penalties/ prosecute those responsible. • Lack of personal responsibility and accountability - By thinking 'It's only a bag' or 'someone else will clean it up'. • Mobility & Transport Options - Some people may lack their own transport needed to get their additional or bulky waste to disposal facilities. Again, for bulky waste they should avail of the Council's bulky waste collection scheme. • Time and Location: People are more likely to undertake the act of fly tipping at night or where they are not seen or observed (such as alley ways). Certain location such as high-density housing areas and those with transient communities e.g. rented accommodation are more likely to have fly tipping through house clearances. • Seasonal Trends: There are trends in seasonal dumping during change of tenancies, which is a recurring issue. There can also be seasonal dumping/ clear outs pre- and post-Christmas in some residential areas. Customer Hub data, also shows a trend in more fly tipping being reported during summer months, this could be because it is more visible to residents while they are out and about. • Psychology of fly tipping: Perceived cleanliness of the surrounding environment can influence behaviour. Peer behaviour is another powerful force in shaping habits. If we see others doing it without consequences, it can normalise the behaviour and make it more acceptable. <p>A behavioural science approach to reducing fly-tipping</p> <p>As a local authority, tackling fly-tipping often feels like a lose-lose situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If we leave dumped waste in place, the “broken window” effect kicks in—people see rubbish and add more to it. • If we remove it quickly, residents assume it is bulky waste collection service and stop using official disposal services. • Rapid removals can also hinder enforcement, limiting your ability to gather evidence for prosecutions. Although our OSS colleagues and our Environmental Enforcement Team work closely to ensure all possible evidence is gathered before it is removed.
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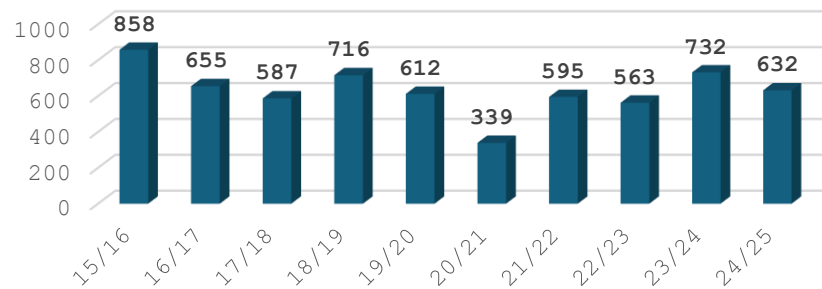
4.0	Data and Intelligence
4.1	The Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) has reported that fly tipping is a significant environmental concern in Northern Ireland. In Northern Ireland Environmental Statistics Report, May 2025. Pollution of air, water and soil and illegal dumping of waste and litter were the greatest environmental concerns for households in Northern Ireland in 2024/25.
4.2	It is a complex issue that all councils across the United Kingdom are constantly tackling and are spending significant sums of rates payers' money on yearly through cleansing, enforcement, communication and education messaging.
4.3	Both population and number of households in Northern Ireland show increasing trends, which in turns will increase the amount of waste produced. Belfast also has high density residential areas, with alleyways and transient residents/ communities that can cause high levels of fly tipping.
4.4	Data from the Customer Hub in terms of complaints between 1 April 2021 and 31 August 2025, reported that there were 15,923 customer complaints for fly tipping, which equates to approximately 245 complaints per month. Open spaces and street scene and the Environmental Enforcement Team also receive complaints directly and deal with incidents of

	<p>fly tipping while on the street that go unreported, therefore these figures could be significantly higher than this. For detail on the Customer Hub data sets on fly tipping, see Appendix 1.</p>
4.5	<p>The data shows that complaints reported to the customer Hub are higher during the months where there is light in the evening, this is likely to be because the fly tipping is more visible, and more people are out and about.</p>
4.6	<p>Fly tipping is a UK wide problem, the NIEA does not collect benchmarking data across other councils on fly tipping, and each council could record their data differently using different methodology. The profile of the area within each council is different which could also be a factor in either more or less fly tipping. Therefore, it is not possible to use other councils' data to compare because you could be comparing two different data sets and giving a wrong interpretation of the data.</p>
4.7	<p>The Customer Hubs data for Belfast shows that fly tipping is a city-wide problem. For data on the top 20 reported customer complaints by street for fly tipping to the Customer Hub by area, see Appendix 2. This does not include direct requests and the on-street incidents that both OSS and the Environmental Enforcement Team deal with, which could change this data on the top 20 streets for fly tipping.</p>
5.0	Tackling Fly Tipping
5.1	<p>Council's current approach and proposals to tackling Fly Tipping</p> <p>As outlined within this report, there are several factors that can contribute to the causes of fly tipping. Therefore, there is no silver bullet answer to solving this problem, however, having a strong partnership across services is important to tackling this problem. Within City and Neighbourhood there is a strong partnership approach to this issue. The Customer Hub sends daily reports to the Environmental Enforcement Team (EET) and Open Spaces and Street Scene (OSS) on fly tipping including the location. The EET and OSS then work closely to ensure that all possible evidence is gathered to take enforcement action where possible before it is removed by OSS. Within EET and OSS there are clear operational processes in place to ensure these incidents of fly tipping are dealt with correctly and safely.</p>
5.2	<p>Waste management is carried out by Resources and Fleet and they provide residents and businesses with several options in which to dispose of their waste responsibly. Educational and awareness support is also provided by Corporate Communication and the</p>

	<p>Environmental Education and Outreach Team. However, it is important to recognise this issue is ‘everyone’s responsibility’ and everyone has a responsibility under the duty of care to dispose of waste responsibly.</p>
5.3	<p>Enforcement Team</p> <p>We have 8 Enforcement Officers, and 2 city centre litter wardens who investigate littering and fly-tipping incidents. The Enforcement Officers work on an area basis each patrolling reactively and proactively within dedicated areas across the city, which helps to strengthen relationships with OSS and other relevant stakeholders.</p>
5.4	<p>The Enforcement Officers are responsible for enforcing the legislation under the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 2017 and the Litter NI Order 1994. If they observe someone fly tipping or littering and obtain the relevant information, they can issue a Fixed Penalty Notice of £80, or in instances of large-scale waste being fly tipped a £400 FPN. However, in most cases it is not possible to directly identify the person dumping, and we will examine the waste to determine if there is evidence within the waste that could identify the source.</p>
5.5	<p>Where an individual has been identified, an Article 20 or an Article 44 Notice (as appropriate) is sent to them to obtain further information as part of our investigation. Over the last 10 years, a total of 25,804 Article 20 Notices to obtain further information have been issued. If we have sufficient evidence, they have committed an offence we may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. If they choose not to pay the fine the case may proceed to court. There is an additional offence of failing to comply with the Notice which may result in court proceedings. In instances where we are unable to take formal enforcement action, we will always seek to educate individuals regarding the proper methods by which to dispose of their waste.</p>
5.6	<p>Over the last 10 years, Belfast City Council has issued 6,289 Fixed Penalty Notices for littering and fly tipping. Graph 1 below, shows the number of Fixed Penalty Notice per year. The figures fluctuate per year, with the lowest being during covid, due to reduced services during this period.</p> <p>Graph 1</p>

5.7

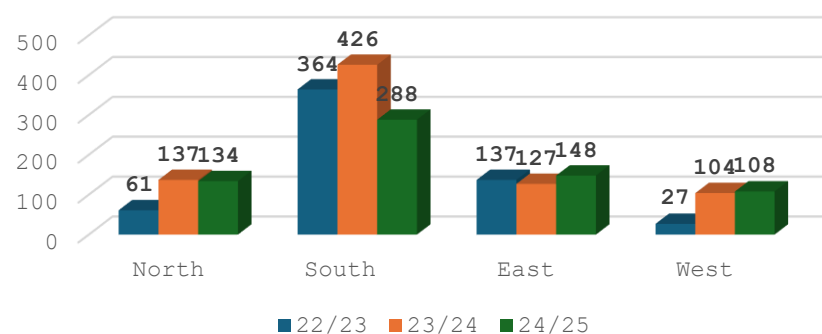
Fixed Penalty Notices - Littering and Fly Tipping - April 2015 - March 2025



Graph 2 below, shows the number of Fixed Penalty Notices per year for littering and fly tipping, over the last 3 financial years. All areas are similar except for South, which has higher levels of Fixed Penalty Notice issues. Higher Fixed Penalty Notices/ enforcement action in this area reflects the dense population and transient nature of properties in the South. We may deploy more Enforcement Officers to this area when the seasonal demand increases.

Graph 2

Fixed Penalty Notices by Area for Littering and Fly Tipping, Failure to respond to Article 20 April 2022 - March 2025



Over the last 5 years, a total of 854 court cases have been heard, relating to littering, fly tipping and failing to respond to Article 20 Notice.

5.8

5.9	<p>The Enforcement Officers are also responsible for dealing with Commercial waste. The Enforcement Officers have a good working relationship with businesses across the city which involves proactive engagement with businesses to ensure that they deal with waste responsibly. If they either receive reports or identify a business has undertaken fly tipping, they will speak with them. However, if the business does not comply with the initial request we will issue a warning letter under Article 22 for infringements of their waste presentation requirements and if needed a Fixed Penalty Notice. Over the last 10 years there were 14 Article 22 Notices served and 15 Article 22 Fixed Penalty Notices served to businesses.</p>
5.10	<p>Open Spaces and Street Scenes</p> <p>Belfast City Council Open Space and Street scene operates a street cleansing service in each area of the city. There are approximately 17,100 street cleansing planned programmes per week. In addition, OSS also deal with reactive requests in relation to fly tipping, dog fouling, graffiti and sharps/ needles daily.</p>
5.11	<p>The OSS cleansing programme was not set up or resourced to provide a reactive programme across the city, each area is having to manage this additional work on top of an already extensive planned cleansing programme across the city. This can have an impact on the planned cleansing programme. As noted earlier there are on average approximately 245 service requests reported from customer per month for fly tipping, this doesn't include reports directly to OSS and the Environmental Enforcement Team, which means there will be significantly higher number of incidents of fly tipping to be dealt daily across the city.</p>
5.12	<p>Operationally for OSS this can involve taking several officers off planned routes for several hours to support with the cleansing. Depending on the volume of fly tipping and types of rubbish such as bulky items, this can involve having to arrange mechanical sweepers and vans to clear the rubbish. Again, this means taking resources away from planned cleansing routes.</p>
5.13	<p>At a recent P&C Committee meeting in June 2025, a report was presented on a review on dog fouling. Like fly tipping, dog fouling is a continuous and significant issue on our streets and evidence is showing that the problems are increasing and are also having an impact on our street cleansing programme. Additional planned investment within the OSS service to tackle dog fouling would also assist our OSS service in meeting the increasing challenges and demands with dealing with fly tipping across the city.</p>

5.14	<p>Waste Management</p> <p>As regulators, the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) sets the framework for waste management within Northern Ireland through the Waste Management Strategy. They are currently working on a new Northern Ireland Management Strategy, with a draft expected for consultation in October 2025. This new strategy aims to enhance resource efficiency, reduce waste and transition towards a circular economy. The upcoming strategy is expected to set new targets and actions to enhance waste management practices across the region.</p>
5.15	<p>Within Belfast City Council website, there is a range of information available to residents and businesses to support them to dispose of their waste responsibly and to ensure that their waste is not dumped illegally by others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bins in Belfast • Recycling in Belfast • Bulky waste collections Belfast City Council <p>There are also contact details so that residents and businesses can contact the relevant services to receive further information.</p>
5.16	<p>Communication, Education and Awareness</p> <p>The Environmental Education and Outreach (EEO) team was formed in 2021 by merging two existing environmental education teams; Community Awareness which had a focus on litter, dog fouling and environmental crime, and Waste and Resources which focused on waste minimisation and recycling. The EEO team's work plan continues to reflect these themes supporting national waste campaigns, facilitating the council's reusable period product and nappy schemes and developing community programmes to divert textile and food waste from landfill.</p>
5.17	<p>Within their planned programme of outreach work, the EEO team include fly tipping as a topic on their education programme to schools where the impact of improperly disposed of litter and waste on the local environment is discussed. In addition, they promote the bulky household collection during information sessions with helpful leaflets.</p>
6.0	<p>Appendices - Documents Attached</p>
6.1	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p>

6.2	<p>There are no financial and resource implications with this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no known equality or good relations / rural needs assessment associated with this report at this time. However, any proposed changes will be screened in accordance with councils' equality scheme.</p>
7.0	Appendices
7.1	<p>Appendix 1 – Customer Hub Data on Fly Tipping</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Customer Hub Data Top 20 Streets By Area</p>

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Appendix 1 – Customer Hub Data on Fly Tipping

Graph 1 – Customer Requests on Fly Tipping April 2021 – August 2025 Per Month

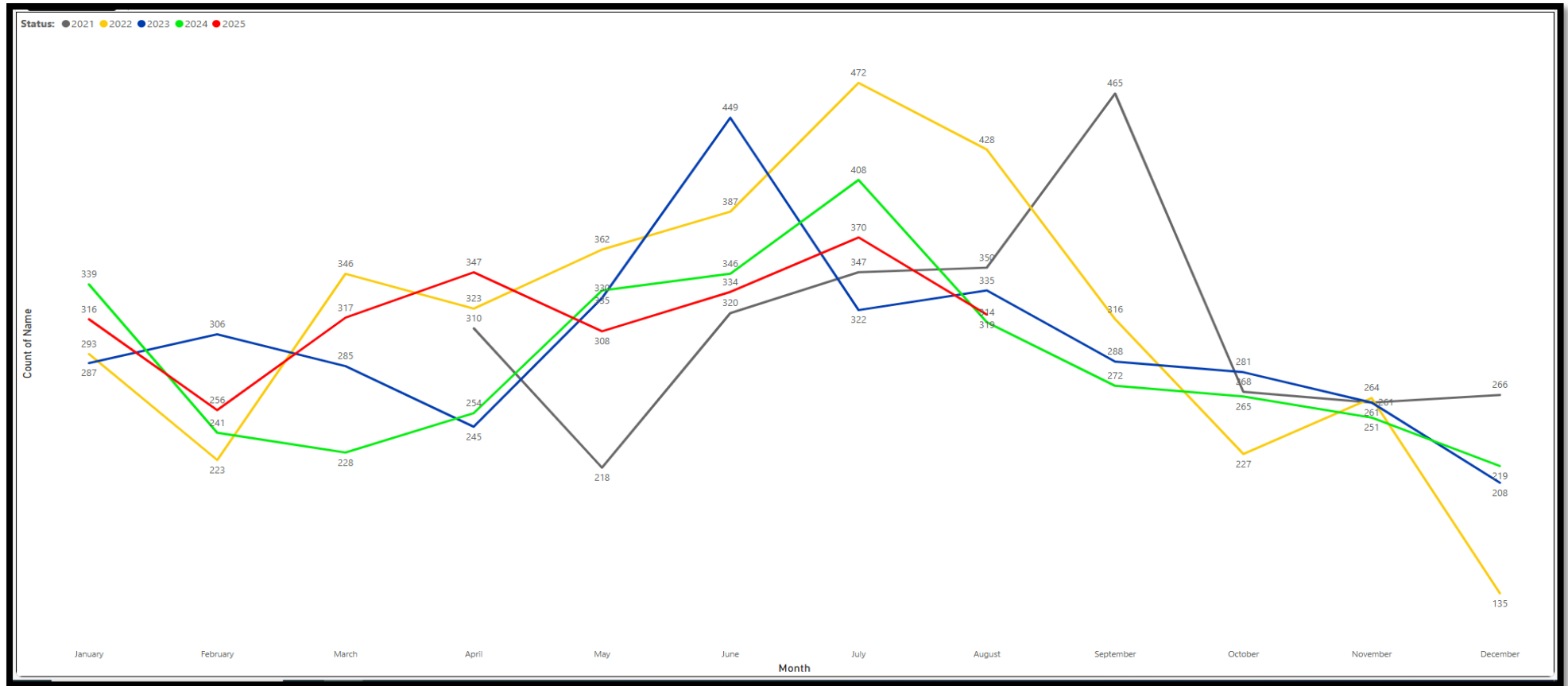
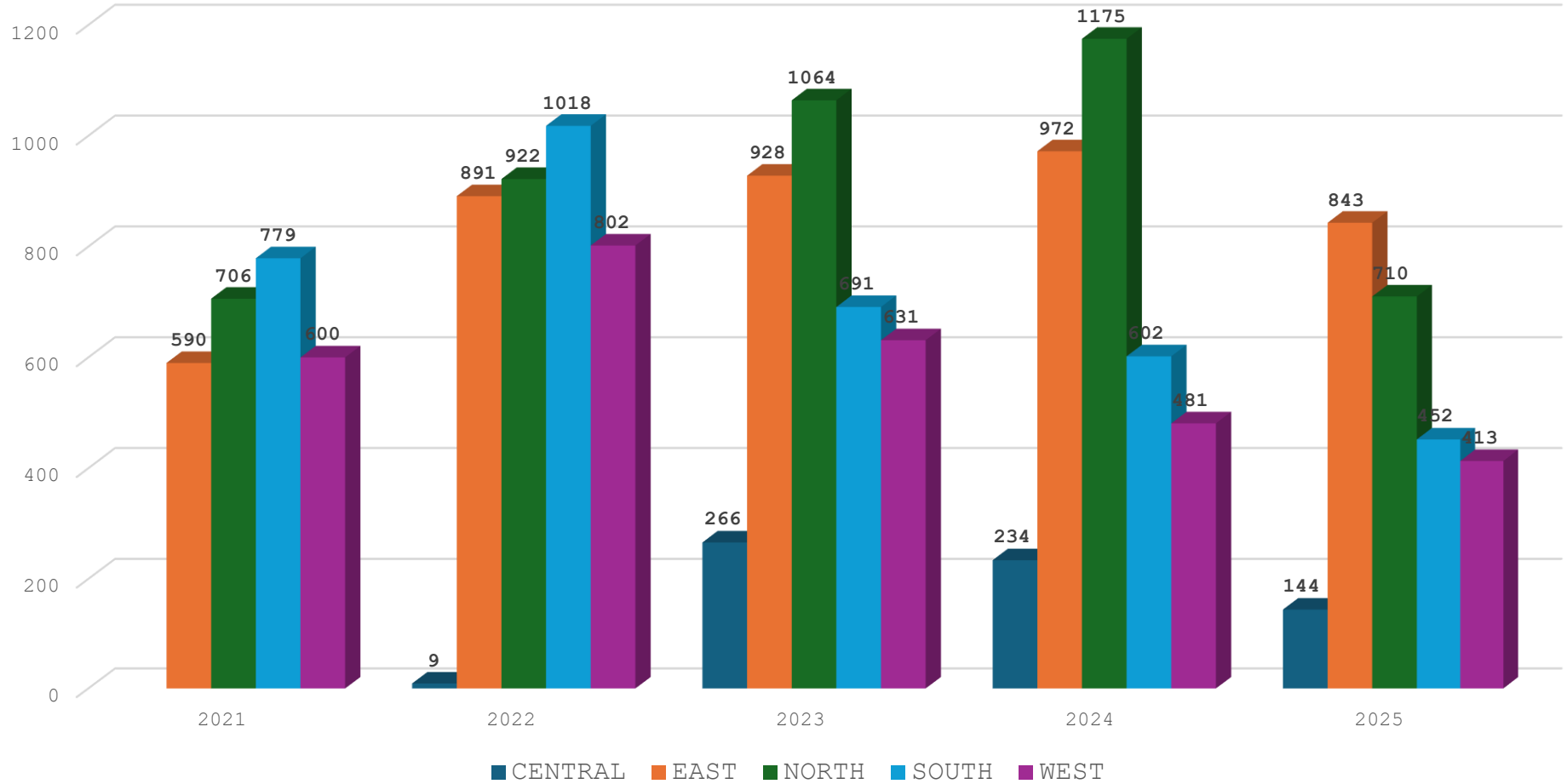


Table 2: Customer Requests on Fly Tipping April 2021 – August 2025 by Area

Customer Requests on Fly Tipping By Area
April 2021 - August 2025



Appendix 2 – Customer Hub Data Top 20 Streets by Geography Area

No	West Streets	North Street	East Streets	South Streets
1	CAVENDISH STREET	CRIMEA CLOSE	TAMERY PASS	DONEGALL ROAD
2	FORTHRIVER WAY	OAKLEY STREET	BEERSBRIDGE ROAD	LISMAIN STREET
3	BALLYGOMARTIN ROAD	ANTRIM ROAD	LEVEN PARK	RAVENHILL AVENUE
4	OAKMAN STREET	ALEXANDRA PARK AVENUE	AVONIEL ROAD	STRANMILLIS STREET
5	LENADOON AVENUE	CEDAR AVENUE	WYNFORD STREET	WELLESLEY AVENUE
6	SPRINGFIELD ROAD	CRUMLIN ROAD	WILLOWFIELD WALK	IMPERIAL STREET
7	WEST CIRCULAR ROAD	OLDPARK ROAD	HYNDFORD STREET	LISBURN ROAD
8	HARROGATE STREET	SHORE ROAD	LOOPLAND GARDENS	DONEGALL AVENUE
9	HIGHFIELD DRIVE	CLANMORRIS STREET	KERRSLAND CRESCENT	SANDHURST DRIVE
10	ST JAMES ROAD	CLIFTONVILLE ROAD	FLORA STREET	COLENZO PARADE
11	BEECHMOUNT PARADE	MOUNTCOLLYER STREET	HATTON DRIVE	DUNVEGAN STREET
12	IRIS DRIVE	DUNCAIRN GARDENS	RAVENSCROFT AVENUE	MY LADYS ROAD
13	UPPER SPRINGFIELD ROAD	WOODVALE ROAD	THE MOUNT	FITZROY AVENUE
14	AREEMA DRIVE	LIMESTONE ROAD	TEMPLEMORE AVENUE	EDINBURGH STREET
15	CLONDARA STREET	CLIFTONPARK AVENUE	SUNDERLAND ROAD	ORMEAU ROAD
16	HAWTHORN STREET	MANOR STREET	WILLOWFIELD GARDENS	STRANMILLIS ROAD
17	CLOWNEY STREET	NORTHWOOD ROAD	CASTLEREAGH ROAD	TATES AVENUE
18	COLINVIEW STREET	SHORE CRESCENT	EVELYN AVENUE	UNIVERSITY STREET
19	FALLS ROAD	AINSWORTH AVENUE	PORTALLO STREET	WOODSTOCK ROAD
20	LAURELBANK	MERVUE STREET	UPPER NEWTOWNARDS ROAD	AGRA STREET

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Belfast
City Council

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE

Subject:	Belfast City Council Litter Bin Updates
Date:	7th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Stephen Leonard, Operational Director CNS
Contact Officer:	Edel Gowdy, Lead Officer OSS

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

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

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues																		
1.1	To update members on the various elements of our litter bin improvement programme, and to seek approval for its proposed next steps.																		
2.0	Recommendation																		
2.1	Members are asked to: a. Note the update on the SMART compactor litter bin pilot, and approve the recommended next steps; b. Note and approve the proposed streets to be considered for additional litter bins as part of the coordinated approach to tackling dog fouling. c. Note the outworkings of the litter bin audit and condition survey, and ongoing work to upgrade litter bin stock.																		
3.0	Main Report																		
3.1	SMART compactor Litter Bin Pilot In November 2024, 24 of our standard litter bins were replaced with 10 SMART compactor litter bins within the grounds of the City Hall, as part of a pilot. We subsequently extended the pilot to cover the busy summer months, when usage of the grounds at lunchtime, and generally throughout the day, is much higher. Therefore, putting a greater demand on the litter bin provision and collections.																		
3.2	Table one below demonstrates the estimated labour time saved on servicing litter bins at City Hall, by installing SMART compactor bins. By reviewing bin fullness reports within the software, our operational team can adapt to reduce the number of collections required throughout the day and attend other priority cleansing operations.																		
3.3	Table One <table><tr><th colspan="3">Belfast City Hall</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>Previous Standard Bins</th><th>BigBelly Bin Locations</th></tr><tr><td>No of bins</td><td>24</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Average Empties per day per bin</td><td>3</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Total Empties Per day</td><td>72</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>Emptying time (no of mins)</td><td>2</td><td>2</td></tr></table>	Belfast City Hall				Previous Standard Bins	BigBelly Bin Locations	No of bins	24	10	Average Empties per day per bin	3	1	Total Empties Per day	72	10	Emptying time (no of mins)	2	2
Belfast City Hall																			
	Previous Standard Bins	BigBelly Bin Locations																	
No of bins	24	10																	
Average Empties per day per bin	3	1																	
Total Empties Per day	72	10																	
Emptying time (no of mins)	2	2																	

	Total mins per day attending bins	2hrs 24mins	20mins															
3.4	In addition to the labour time savings, the SMART bins technology provides useful insight into individual bin collection volumes over a six-month period. This provides the team with data that can be used to inform better bin placement. Making better use of our litter bin stock and operative time overall.																	
3.5	Our operational teams have noted that on occasion the compactor mechanism jammed, usually due to very large pizza boxes, meaning the bin is not usable until this is remedied. In these instances, the software will notify area teams when this occurs. There is also the option of installing a 'pizza belly' bin, which is designed to dispose of all sizes of pizza boxes specifically.																	
3.6	Officers are seeking approval from members to extend the SMART litter bin provision further into the City Centre and propose to install an additional 26 bins at various locations around Donegal Square, Donegal Avenue and Royal Avenue. This extension will also include locations within the BID areas, as agreed with partners.																	
3.7	In addition to this, officers are exploring the option of installing SMART litter bins at various 'hard to reach' locations within the neighbourhoods, as well within our parks and our playparks. For example, Cavehill car park, Upper Hightown road. And hopefully reducing unnecessary down time and fuel costs, when these bins are not approaching the required level of fullness to be emptied. This would be particularly helpful in the winter months when our playpark inspection programme reduces. Table two below provides an indication of the impact on the service in terms of a reduction in daily litter bin emptying time. This reduction means that operatives can be redeployed to other tasks including litter collection and bin maintenance etc.																	
3.8	Table Two <table><tr><th colspan="3">Belfast City Hall & Donegal Place/Sq to Royal Ave.</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>Standard Bins</th><th>BigBelly Bin Locations</th></tr><tr><td>No of bins</td><td>50</td><td>26</td></tr><tr><td>Average Empties per day per bin</td><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>Total Empties Per day</td><td>100</td><td>26</td></tr></table>			Belfast City Hall & Donegal Place/Sq to Royal Ave.				Standard Bins	BigBelly Bin Locations	No of bins	50	26	Average Empties per day per bin	2	1	Total Empties Per day	100	26
Belfast City Hall & Donegal Place/Sq to Royal Ave.																		
	Standard Bins	BigBelly Bin Locations																
No of bins	50	26																
Average Empties per day per bin	2	1																
Total Empties Per day	100	26																

Emptying time (no of mins)	2	2
Total mins per day attending bins	3 hrs 20 mins	52 mins

3.8

Dog Fouling Hot Spots – Enhanced Litter Bin Provision

Since January 2025 officers have been conducting a dog fouling reduction pilot within OSS North. A report will be brought back to members on the full outworkings of that pilot. Alongside this work an officers coordination group, aimed at tackling incidents of dog fouling across the City, has been established. As part of the action plan this group has extracted information from the customer hub on the streets with the highest number of dog fouling complaints during the period 01 April 2021 - 01 July 2025. Using this information together with data from our quality monitoring returns and OSS management insight, the streets listed at Appendix B would be the focus for the next phase of targeted interventions, including increased patrols by dog wardens as well as a review of litter bin provision, to include consideration of a mix of post mounted and standard litter bins, with dog fouling stickers affixed to the sides. All locations are subject to location suitability assessment. Members may have anecdotal information on other streets / areas to be considered, and officers are happy to engage on those areas to consider how provision could be improved.

3.9

Litter Bin Condition Survey Update

The following information is provided by way of update on the standard litter bin upgrade programme;

- Since the litter bin provision contract has been put in place a total of 200 bins have been replaced across the Council area. Members are reminded that those bins that required replacement or installation due to a health and safety issue have been prioritised. Following that litter bins in a very poor state of repair are replaced.
- We have a total of 463 bins requiring replacement across the city. These are bins which have a significant amount of rust, have been damaged irreparably and been removed or individual mechanisms have been broken (ash trays/locks etc). We are working with property maintenance unit on a programme of replacement.
- We have 518 litter bins which require general maintenance. This includes painting / graffiti removal. Operational teams are using this information to inform a regular programme of maintenance, which will work in tandem with the new sharps and bin maintenance team.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our ability to replace litter bins is dependant upon regular supply and capacity within the property maintenance unit to carry out replacements and or installations. There have been delays with supply due to an issue within the supply chain. This has now been resolved. Replacement and installation are carried out by the property maintenance unit, and is dependant upon capacity.
3.9	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no financial or resource implications within this report. All actions to date, and proposed actions regarding the SMART bin can be covered within existing service revenue budgets.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessments associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices
4.1	Appendix 1 - Area / Streets focus for Dog Fouling Litter Bin Provision

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Appendix A

Streets to be considered for additional post mounted and / or standard litter bins

North	Whitewell Road
	Cavehill Road
	Oldpark Road

East	Orby Drive
	Belmont Road
	Clarawood Park
	Cregagh Road

South	Ravenhill Road
	Farnham Street
	Cranmore area

West	Clonard Street
	Lenadoon Avenue
	Rockvill Street
	Springfield Road

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Subject:	Request for the use of Parks for 2025 Events
Date:	Tuesday 7 th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	David Sales, Strategic Director of City and Neighbourhood Services.
Contact Officer:	Stephen Leonard, Director of Resources, Fleet and OSS.

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 type="checkbox"/></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> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	<p>The Committee is asked to note that Council has received a request from event organiser to host their event at a Belfast City Council Park - 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIYMS Boxing Day Fun Run – Orangegrove Athletics Club – Belmont Park
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to grant authority to the applicants for the proposed events on the dates noted; subject to the completion of the appropriate event management plans and satisfactory terms being agreed by the Director of City & Neighbourhood Services and on the condition that the Event Organisers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> resolves all operational issues to the Council's satisfaction; meets all statutory requirements including Public Liability Insurance cover, Health and Safety, and licensing responsibilities; and shall consult with adjoining public bodies and local communities as necessary. <p>Please note that the above recommendations are taken as a pre-policy position in advance of the Council agreeing a more structured framework and policy for 'Events', which is currently being taken forward in conjunction with the Councils Commercial team.</p>
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.2	<p>If agreed, the event organiser or promoters will be required in advance of the event to submit an event management plan for approval by the Council and all relevant statutory bodies. This will include an assessment of how the event will impact upon the surrounding area and measures to mitigate these impacts.</p>
3.3	<u>CIYMS Boxing Day Fun Run – Orangegrove Athletics Club – Belmont Park – Friday 26 December 2025</u>
3.4	<p>Belfast City Council have received a request from Orangegrove Athletics Club to host their annual boxing day fun run at Belmont Park on Friday 26 December 2025. The fun run has been running for 41 years, and this is the third year it will be hosted by Orangegrove Athletics club. Participants are encouraged to come in fancy dresses with prizes being awarded to the best entrants. The number of entrants will be capped at 250 to safely accommodate all runners</p>
3.5	<p>The event is aimed at raising money for Northern Ireland Hospice with the entrance fee being £10 per person. The entrance fee will be used to cover the costs for hosting the event including first aid, with all remaining funds being donated to the NI Hospice.</p>
3.6	<p>The event organiser has requested permission to collect money on site during the event. Belfast City Council are in receipt of a letter from NI Hospice authorising Orangegrove to fundraise on their behalf.</p>
3.7	<p>NI Hospice charity number: NIC102337</p>

3.8	<p>Key Dates for the event are.</p> <p>Set Up – Friday 26 December 2025 – 9am Event – Friday 26 December 2025 – 12pm to 2pm De-rig – Friday 26 December 2025 – 2pm</p>
3.9	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no known financial or resource implications</p>
3.10	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no known implications.</p>
4.0	Appendices
	None

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Subject:	Integrated Advice Partnership Fund In-year Allocation Uplift.
Date:	7 th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Jim Girvan – Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Nicola Lane, Neighbourhood Services Manager Margaret Higgins, Lead Officer, Community Provision

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

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

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues																			
1.1	The main purpose of this report is to advise members that Council has received a Letter of Variance (LoV) from DfC in relation to the Community Support Programme (CSP). The LoV makes provision for an additional in-year allocation of £79,784.78 for the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund.																			
2.0	Recommendation																			
2.1	Members are asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• note the contents of the report,• approve the Chief Executive to accept the LoV on behalf of Council• consider the allocation options presented and agree their preferred option• grant delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to make awards for eligible activity based on the option agreed.																			
3.0	Main Report																			
3.1	Background information Members will recall that officers advised in November 24 of additional temporary funding from DfC of £248,253.48 through the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund for activity in 24/26. The objective of the fund is to ‘Improve the uptake of free, independent regulated debt advice through a collaborative partnership approach’.																			
3.2	Following committee approval, members sought proposals from existing Lead partners within each advice consortia for projects that would meet the aims of the scheme. Advice Space (formerly Citizens Advice) was the only provider to submit a project proposal for 2024-25 and was awarded funding for delivery of a citywide project in January 2025, which includes delivery in central and east Belfast.																			
3.3	Members agreed that council would invite further applications from all BCC funded advice organisations. Based on all proposals received covering the duration of the fund the following funding allocations were agreed; <table><tr><th>Area</th><th>Organisation</th><th>Allocation</th></tr><tr><td>City Centre and East Belfast</td><td>Advice Space</td><td>£94,022.80</td></tr><tr><td>South Belfast</td><td>Southcity Resource and Development Centre (SRDC)</td><td>£36,389.43</td></tr><tr><td>North Belfast</td><td>The Vine Centre</td><td>£60,392.32</td></tr><tr><td>West Belfast</td><td>Upper Springfield Development Trust (USDT)</td><td>£57,448.94</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>£248,253.49</td></tr></table>		Area	Organisation	Allocation	City Centre and East Belfast	Advice Space	£94,022.80	South Belfast	Southcity Resource and Development Centre (SRDC)	£36,389.43	North Belfast	The Vine Centre	£60,392.32	West Belfast	Upper Springfield Development Trust (USDT)	£57,448.94			£248,253.49
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3.4	Table 1 Council received a Letter of Variance (LoV) from DfC in relation to the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund on 10 th September 2025, this was provided through the Community Support Programme (CSP).																			

	<p>The LoV makes provision for an additional in-year allocation of £79,784.78 for the Integrated Advice Partnership Fund.</p>																														
3.5	<p>The department have advised that the additional funds must be spent in line with the existing Memorandum of Understanding for the Fund. However, councils retain flexibility to determine whether the funding will be used to enhance current delivery or support new initiatives.</p>																														
3.6	<p>Members may wish to note that following an in-year review of the Fund and the success of initiatives, the Department will consider extending the Fund beyond March 2026. This may also include consideration of an Account Directive to allow funds to be carried over into 2026/27. Timely reporting will be essential to support this assessment and to enable us to notify councils of any extension.</p>																														
	<p>However, there is no guarantee that DfC will permit funds to spent after 31st March 2026 and council will allocate funds on the basis that they support activity which takes place before 31st March 2026.</p>																														
3.7	<p>Officers have contacted the four organisations that are currently in receipt of funds and they have advised that they would have the ability to use additional funds. Following committee approval of an agreed approach, all projects will be asked to submit proposals outlining how they will spend funds to deliver activity that meets the parameters of the Fund.</p>																														
3.8	<p>Members are asked to consider the following options for the additional in-year allocation and agree their preferred option. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the allocation per option.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Option 1 Allocation based on % of the current funding to each group.• Option 2 Allocation based on an equal split between the four organisations <table><tr><th>Organisations</th><th>Current Allocation</th><th>Allocation % Of Total</th><th>Option 1 Uplift based on %</th><th>Option 2 Uplift Equal Split</th></tr><tr><td>Advice Space</td><td>£94,022.80</td><td>38%</td><td>£30,217.45</td><td>£19,946.20</td></tr><tr><td>SRDC</td><td>£36,389.43</td><td>15%</td><td>£11,694.99</td><td>£19,946.20</td></tr><tr><td>Vine Centre</td><td>£60,392.32</td><td>24%</td><td>£19,409.14</td><td>£19,946.20</td></tr><tr><td>USDT</td><td>£57,448.94</td><td>23%</td><td>£18,463.19</td><td>£19,946.20</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>£248,253.49</td><td>100%</td><td>£79,784.78</td><td>£79,784.78</td></tr></table> <p>Table 2</p>	Organisations	Current Allocation	Allocation % Of Total	Option 1 Uplift based on %	Option 2 Uplift Equal Split	Advice Space	£94,022.80	38%	£30,217.45	£19,946.20	SRDC	£36,389.43	15%	£11,694.99	£19,946.20	Vine Centre	£60,392.32	24%	£19,409.14	£19,946.20	USDT	£57,448.94	23%	£18,463.19	£19,946.20	Total	£248,253.49	100%	£79,784.78	£79,784.78
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Total	£248,253.49	100%	£79,784.78	£79,784.78																											
3.9	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The administration of this fund will be carried out by existing staff, there is no financial impact for council as 100% funding is being provided by DfC. The allocation for Belfast is as listed below. All expenditure must be incurred by 31/3/2026.</p>																														
3.10	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>Belfast City Council is undertaking a screening exercise on this fund.</p>																														
4.0	<p>Appendices</p>																														
4.1	<p>N/A</p>																														



Subject:	Proposal re: Neighbourhood Renewal Advice Services Funding
Date:	7 th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Jim Girvan – Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Nicola Lane, Neighbourhood Services Manager Margaret Higgins, Lead Officer, Community Provision

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

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

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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

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues																																		
1.1	The main purpose of this report is to advise members that the Department of Communities has contacted Council to seek their views on the potential to administer existing Neighbourhood Renewal Funding for Advice Services through the Community Support Plan (CSP) LoO in 25/26 and 26/27																																		
2.0	Recommendation																																		
2.1	Members are asked to consider the contents of the report and advise whether they wish to accept the DfC proposal to administer existing Neighbourhood Renewal Funding for Advice Services through the Community Support Plan (CSP) LoO in 25/26 and 26/27.																																		
3.0	Main Report																																		
3.1	Background information																																		
	Members will be aware that Council receives funding from the Department for Communities Voluntary and Community Division (VCD) through the Community Support Plan (CSP). This funding is used to fund community support activity and also to fund a range of advice services.																																		
	DfC has contacted council officials to advise that DfC also funds some community-based advice projects through DfC Community Empowerment Division (CED) / Neighbourhood Renewal (NR). The projects were initially identified through Neighbourhood Renewal action plans and have received core funding from Neighbourhood Renewal for more than ten years.																																		
	The Department is keen to establish if there is potential to transition the NR funded projects to within the existing council-delivered programmes. This would mean that funding for these projects would be administered by Council through an allocation from the CSP.																																		
	DfC has indicated there will not be significant changes to the NR funding in 2025/26 with 2026/27 likely to be a transitional period within the programme. DfC propose that projects transitioned into the CSP programme would continue to be funded in line with NR funding until 2026/27.																																		
	DfC would engage with the impacted organisations during this period to ensure each is aware of the impact on it in respect of funding, how the council-delivered programme operates, and how to engage with the funding mechanisms in place through the existing programme.																																		
3.5	Neighbourhood Renewal funding in 2024/25 for projects delivering advice services totalled £286k. DfC would provide this additional amount to be allocated to the affected organisations. Funding is provided to the following organisations through the Neighbourhood Renewal Programme.																																		
3.6	<table><tr><th>Organisation</th><th>Project Title</th><th>Constituency</th><th>23/24 Award Amount</th><th>24/25 Award Amount</th></tr><tr><td>North Belfast Advice Partnership Vine Centre, BCF, Ligoniel.</td><td>Welfare & Benefit Support</td><td>North Belfast</td><td>£116,846.88</td><td>£124,335.82</td></tr><tr><td>Upper Springfield Development Company Limited</td><td>Advice Services</td><td>West Belfast</td><td>£107,907.20</td><td>£113,302.56</td></tr><tr><td>CCRF - North Belfast Senior Citizens Forum</td><td>Advice Services</td><td>North Belfast</td><td>£11,077.04</td><td>£11,077.04</td></tr><tr><td>Springfield Charitable Association</td><td>Social Environment</td><td>West Belfast</td><td>£35,301.90</td><td>£37,732.14</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td></td><td></td><td>£271,133.02</td><td>£286,477.56</td></tr></table>					Organisation	Project Title	Constituency	23/24 Award Amount	24/25 Award Amount	North Belfast Advice Partnership Vine Centre, BCF, Ligoniel.	Welfare & Benefit Support	North Belfast	£116,846.88	£124,335.82	Upper Springfield Development Company Limited	Advice Services	West Belfast	£107,907.20	£113,302.56	CCRF - North Belfast Senior Citizens Forum	Advice Services	North Belfast	£11,077.04	£11,077.04	Springfield Charitable Association	Social Environment	West Belfast	£35,301.90	£37,732.14	Total			£271,133.02	£286,477.56
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3.7	Members should note that DfC have advised that they will only provide the additional allocation through the CSP Letter of Offer until 26/27 to the organisations listed above. After that time, there will be no allocation from the DfC NR Team as it is expected that new arrangements for Neighbourhood Renewal will be in place by that time.
3.8	<p>Members should consider that the provision of funding for these organisations may create an expectation that this support will be provided by Council after 26/27, however, since this funding is 100% funded by the DfC NR team there would be no budget to do this. Officers would highlight the risk associated to council of this increased expectation and also the value of implementing a new funding arrangement for such a short period of time.</p> <p>Members are asked to consider this request and advise of their decision.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>The administration of this fund would have to be carried out by existing staff, there is no immediate financial impact for council as 100% funding is being provided by DfC. However, there is a risk that an expectation to maintain this funding would be created.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>Belfast City Council will have to undertake a screening exercise and rural needs risk assessment on any council decision.</p>
4.0	Appendices
4.1	N/A

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Subject:	Proposals for dual language street signs
Date:	7 th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
Contact Officer:	Ian Harper, Building Control Manager, ext. 2430 Heather Wylie, Property and Legal Coordinator, ext. 2464

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

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Insert number

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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

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues																														
1.1	To consider applications for the erection of dual language street signs for six existing streets within the city.																														
2.0	Recommendation																														
2.1	The Committee is asked to agree to the erection of a second street nameplate in Irish at Deerpark Gardens, Grasmere Gardens, Ravensdene Crescent, Ardilea Court, Kingsmere Avenue & St Judes Parade.																														
3.0	Main Report																														
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> The Council may erect a second street nameplate in a language other than English pursuant to Article 11 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1995.																														
3.2	Members are asked to consider the following applications to erect dual language street nameplates showing the name of the street expressed in a language other than English. The second language is Irish.																														
3.3	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>English Name</th><th>Non- English Name</th><th>Location</th><th>Persons surveyed</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Deerpark Gardens</td><td>Gairdíní Pháirc na bhFia</td><td>Off Deerpark Road, BT14</td><td>39</td></tr> <tr> <td>Grasmere Gardens</td><td>Gairdíní Grasmere</td><td>Off Salisbury Avenue, BT15</td><td>50</td></tr> <tr> <td>Ravensdene Crescent</td><td>Corrán Fhothair an Fhéich</td><td>Off Ravensdene Park, BT6</td><td>51</td></tr> <tr> <td>Ardilea Court</td><td>Cúirt Ard an Lao</td><td>Off Ardilea Drive, BT14</td><td>31</td></tr> <tr> <td>Kingsmere Avenue</td><td>Ascaill Kingsmere</td><td>Off Cliftonville Road, BT14</td><td>84</td></tr> <tr> <td>St Judes Parade</td><td>Paráid San Iúd</td><td>Off Ormeau Road, BT7</td><td>67</td></tr> </tbody> </table>			English Name	Non- English Name	Location	Persons surveyed	Deerpark Gardens	Gairdíní Pháirc na bhFia	Off Deerpark Road, BT14	39	Grasmere Gardens	Gairdíní Grasmere	Off Salisbury Avenue, BT15	50	Ravensdene Crescent	Corrán Fhothair an Fhéich	Off Ravensdene Park, BT6	51	Ardilea Court	Cúirt Ard an Lao	Off Ardilea Drive, BT14	31	Kingsmere Avenue	Ascaill Kingsmere	Off Cliftonville Road, BT14	84	St Judes Parade	Paráid San Iúd	Off Ormeau Road, BT7	67
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3.4	The translations were authenticated by Queens University, the approved translator for Belfast City Council.																														
3.5	In accordance with the Council's policy for the erection of dual language street signs, surveys of all persons appearing on the electoral register plus owners or tenants in actual possession of commercial premises for the above streets were carried out and the following responses were received.																														

3.6	<p>Deerpark Gardens, BT14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 occupiers (33.33%) were in favour of the erection of a second street name plate. • 6 occupiers (15.38%) were not in favour of the erection of a second street name plate.
3.7	<p>Grasmere Gardens, BT15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 occupiers (54%) were in favour of the erection of a second street name plate. • 1 occupier (2%) was not in favour of the erection of a second street name plate. • 1 occupier (2%) had no preference either way.
3.8	<p>Ravensdene Crescent, BT6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 occupiers (48.97%) were in favour of the erection of a second street name plate. • 1 occupier (2.04%) were not in favour of the erection of a second street name plate. • 2 occupiers (4.08%) had no preference either way.
3.9	<p>Ardilea Court, BT14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 occupiers (32.25%) were in favour of the erection of a second street name plate.
3.10	<p>Kingsmere Avenue, BT14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32 occupiers (38.09%) were in favour of the erection of a second street name plate. • 4 occupiers (4.76%) were not in favour of the erection of a second street name plate. • 1 occupier (1.19%) had no preference either way.
3.11	<p>St Judes Parade, BT7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 occupiers (37.31%) were in favour of the erection of a second street name plate. • 2 occupiers (2.98%) were not in favour of the erection of a second street name plate. • 2 occupiers (2.98%) had no preference either way.
3.12	<p><u>Assessment against policy</u></p> <p>The Council's policy on the erection of a second street nameplate requires that at least fifteen percent (15%) of the occupiers surveyed must be in favour of the proposal to erect a second street sign in a language other than English, to progress to Committee for consideration.</p>
3.13	<p>All the surveys listed above demonstrate compliance with the threshold contained within the Policy.</p>

3.14	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There is a cost of approximately £3690 to cover the cost of the manufacturing and erection of the dual language street signs. The cost for these street signs has been allowed for in the current budget.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>Each application for a dual language street sign is subject to an initial assessment and an elected member notification process to identify any potential adverse impacts on equality, good relations and rural needs.</p> <p>The initial assessments and elected member notification carried out for these applications did not identify any potential adverse impacts to prevent the surveys being carried.</p>
4.0	Appendices
	None



Belfast
City Council

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

Applications for dual language street signs for Knock Eden Crescent, Willowfield Gardens, Wynchurch Road, Sicily Park, Upper Knockbreda Road, Annandale Crecent, Kingsberry Park and Ardenlee Court

Subject:	Applications for dual language street signs with the second language in Irish for Knock Eden Crescent, Willowfield Gardens, Wynchurch Road, Sicily Park, Upper Knockbreda Road, Annandale Crecent, Kingsberry Park and Ardenlee Court.
Date:	7 th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
Contact Officer:	Ian Harper, Building Control Manager ext 2430 Alan Mayrs, Principal Building Control Surveyor, ext. 2428

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

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

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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 <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider if a street survey of occupiers will be carried out for eight applications for the erection of dual language street signs in Irish within the city where potential adverse impacts have been identified by the initial assessments and/or elected member objections
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>1. Members are asked to consider the report and matters raised in relation to the applications for dual language street signs in Irish received for Knock Eden Crescent, Willowfield Gardens, Wynchurch Road, Sicily Park, Upper Knockbreda Road, Annandale Crecent, Kingsberry Park, Ardenlee Court and either:</p> <p>a) Agree that surveys of occupiers of these streets be carried out.</p> <p>or</p> <p>b) Agree that no surveys will be carried out on the grounds of the potential adverse impacts identified and that these applications are closed.</p>
	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The power for the Council to consider applications to erect a second street nameplate in a language other than English is contained in Article 11 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1995.</p> <p>Initial Assessments</p> <p>The Dual Language Street Sign policy states that “<i>each application will be subject to an initial assessment for any potential adverse impacts on equality, good relations and rural needs and where any adverse impacts are identified that information will be brought to Committee.</i>”</p> <p>The initial assessments were carried out for all the streets listed and potential adverse impacts were identified in relation to the following streets: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knock Eden Crescent • Willowfield Gardens • Sicily Park • Upper Knockbreda Road • Annandale Crecent <p>Draft equality screenings were therefore carried out, assessing the request for dual language street signs in Irish for Knock Eden Crescent, Willowfield Gardens, Sicily Park, Upper Knockbreda Road and Annandale Crecent for equality and good relations issues.</p> <p>The screenings have identified that the carrying out of surveys and the erection of Irish language street signs in these areas has the potential to give rise to community tension.</p>

	<p>Conversely the screenings also identified that the process could assist in promoting cultural and linguistic diversity. The findings are outlined in the equality and good relation section below.</p> <p>Objections from Elected Members</p> <p>Objections have also been received from elected members for the following streets during the elected member notification procedure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wynchurch Road • Annandale Crecent • Kingsberry Park • Ardenlee Court <p>Details of the objections are as follows: -</p>
3.7	
3.8	<p>Wynchurch Road - Cllr Davy Douglas, member for Lisnasharragh raised an objection stating: -</p> <p><i>“Wynchurch is a mixed area close to the Cregagh estate and Flush Park, both traditional unionist areas. It is an area where people of both denominations live side by side without issue. I feel that the adoption of Irish street signage could be seen as divisive and have an adverse impact on good relations within the community, creating division where none currently exists. This has already been seen recently in Wynchurch Avenue where the street was surveyed twice, resulting in an increasing majority rejecting the proposal each time. Despite this, the views of the people who live in the street were ignored and dual language street signage was imposed against their wishes, damaging community relations in the process”.</i></p>
3.9	<p>Annandale Crecent, Kingsberry Park and Ardenlee Court – Cllr Bradley Ferguson member for Lisnasharragh raised an objection stating: -</p> <p><i>“While I fully respect the cultural traditions and identities of all communities in Northern Ireland, I believe the introduction of bilingual signage in Lisnasharragh is divisive, unnecessary, and does not reflect the wishes of the majority of residents in the area. Lisnasharragh is a diverse and shared space and introducing street signs that are strongly associated with one particular political and cultural identity risks undermining community cohesion and alienating those from a different background.</i></p>
3.10	<p><i>Public consultation should play a central role in decisions of this nature. However, I have serious concerns about the consultation process, particularly around the weighting of responses, the level of local engagement, and whether it genuinely reflects the majority opinion in each affected street. The interests of the whole community must be taken into account – not just those of activists or lobby groups.</i></p>
3.11	<p><i>The Irish language is, for some, a deeply valued part of their cultural heritage. However, for others, it is seen – fairly or not – as a political symbol. As such, I strongly believe that street signage should remain neutral and inclusive to foster a shared future for everyone in Belfast.</i></p>
3.12	<p><i>I urge the council to prioritise policies that promote inclusivity and mutual respect rather than those that risk increasing division”</i></p>

3.13	<p>These applications are therefore being brought to Committee to determine if surveys of residents of these streets will take place, considering this information.</p> <p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p>
3.14	<p>If it is decided to carry out surveys, the resulting tasks are included within existing resources and budgets for the process.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.15	<p>An EQIA was carried out on the main Dual Language Street Signs policy in 2021-22. This confirmed the initial assessment process to be carried out, which may indicate the requirement for equality screening.</p>
3.16	<p>The applications for dual language street signs (with the second language in Irish) at Knock Eden Crescent, Willowfield Gardens, Sicily Park, Upper Knockbreda Road and Annandale Crecent were assessed for equality of opportunity and good relations issues through the initial assessment process. This process identified that the potential for adverse impact existed and recommended further screening prior to referral to committee for authority to proceed to survey.</p>
3.17	<p>The draft screenings have identified that the carrying out of a survey in itself in these areas has the potential to give rise to community tension, as could the erection of the street signs and therefore has the potential to give rise to adverse impact on the grounds of good relations. It is acknowledged; however, the process could alternatively assist in promoting cultural and linguistic diversity.</p>
3.18	<p>The applications were also presented to elected members as part of the elected member notification procedure and objections were received from Cllr Davy Douglas with regard to Wynchurch Road and from Cllr Bradley Ferguson with regard to Annandale Crecent, Kingsberry Park and Ardenlee Court. The members were concerned about the potential for adverse impacts on good relations with full details of their objections in paragraphs 3.5-3.15 above.</p>
3.19	<p>The council retains 'residual discretion' in relation to these applications. In effect this gives elected members the option to not proceed to survey and/ or halt the erection of an Irish language street sign in this street where, in the view of elected members taking into account the agreed criteria, this action would be considered inappropriate.</p>
4.0	Appendices
4.1	None



Belfast
City Council

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

AGENDA ITEM : UPDATE ON DUAL LANGUAGE
STREET SIGNS POSTAL ISSUES

Subject:	Update on dual language street signs postal issues
Date:	7 th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
Contact Officer:	Ian Harper, Building Control Manager, ext. 2430 Alan Mayrs Principal Building Control Surveyor, ext. 2428

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

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

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To update members on the review that has taken place into the postal issue.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the contents of the report
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u>
	<u>Background</u>
3.2	The Director of Planning and Building Control provided an update to members at the People and Communities Committee on 5 th August regarding an issue which affected the return of dual language street sign surveys using prepaid envelopes.
3.3	An account suspension applied to BCC Royal Mail account between 15 th April 2025 and 17 th July 2025 has impacted a number of survey returns being processed and delivered to BCC by Royal Mail. It is unclear and we have been unable to ascertain to date when this suspension resulted in letters being held by Royal Mail. During our account suspension the Royal Mail Delivery Centre held 375 surveys. In addition, a number of surveys had been internally transferred to their National Returns Centre for return to sender (residents).
3.4	Whilst we have received all the survey returns held by the Royal Mail Delivery Centre and are continuing to receive surveys from the National Returns Centre, we are unable to obtain accurate numbers for the surveys which were sent back to residents. A small number of residents have contacted BCC directly to advise they had received their survey back. This involved the surveys of Rosetta Avenue, Skegoneill Avenue and Victoria Road.
3.5	A further report was brought in September where members agreed to resurvey 20 streets at the People and Communities committee on 9 th September.
	Internal Review
3.6	Around the middle of June, the team who deal with dual language street sign surveys notified Building Control management that the number of survey returns for recent surveys were lower than expected.
3.7	Investigations by officers using a personal contact within Royal Mail discovered the account used for survey returns had been suspended due to an unpaid invoice. This was confirmed to Building Control on the 4 th July.
3.8	On 7 th July the Building Control Manager referred this matter to Central Transaction Unit (CTU). CTU were able to identify an invoice from June that had not been paid and confirmed our account was suspended. This invoice was paid into Royal Mails bank account on the 10 th July, and they were notified via CTU directly to remove the suspension.
3.9	On 21 st July Building Control were made aware of completed surveys being returned to residents and further communications with Royal Mail Finance department confirmed our account was suspended from 15 th April based on three invoices which had not been paid in April. One of these invoices was paid on 16 th April with the other two being paid on 20 th May.

3.10	The suspension on the account was not lifted following the payment of these invoices and remained suspended until 17 th July following the further unpaid invoice in June. On all invoices received from Royal Mail in relation to our account, incorrect PO's were quoted and original invoices were not emailed but instead posted hardcopy. Without valid PO's on invoices, CTU could not determine the location or department responsible for the charges as this was not stated on the invoice.
3.11	As previously reported, Royal Mail have confirmed the account is now operational, and new surveys relating to dual language street signs applications are continuing unaffected.
3.12	CTU have conducted an internal review to assess the issues and have put in place measures to prevent the same situation occurring again.
3.13	<p>The preventative measures that have been taken are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created online account access with Royal Mail and amalgamated all BCC accounts with them so that we can access PDF invoices online • Switched all accounts to billing via e-invoice as well as statements. • Updated the customer account with the correct PO so that this will feed directly into DB Capture when received into the designated mailbox. • Run a weekly check for invoices on the online account to ensure they are prioritised into the E5 system • Marked all Royal Mail supplier accounts in E5 as PRIORITY suppliers which will move their invoices to the front of the queue in DB Capture when received • Established a direct contact point with Finance personnel in Royal Mail to address any issues when they arise. <p><u>Review with Royal Mail</u></p>
3.14	Several attempts have been made to obtain an operational contact with Royal Mail to discuss this matter. This has included email communications with their finance, media, public affairs and customer services team, in an attempt to establish a senior operational contact in Belfast to discuss this matter to ensure this issue cannot happen in the future. At this time Royal Mail have not provided any local contact, but we will continue to explore options.
3.15	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Internal mitigations outlined will be undertaken by existing staff.</p>
3.16	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None</p>
4.0	Appendices
	None

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Subject:	Dilapidation Bill - consultation response
Date:	7 th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
Contact Officer:	Ian Harper, Building Control Manager

Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	A draft consultation report (Appendix 1) has been prepared in response to the current Dilapidation Bill consultation which requires a response by 10 th October.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Members are asked to consider the draft response and agree that it be submitted to meet the deadline of 10 th October. It would include a note that this is subject to ratification by full council in November.
2.2	Members are also asked to note that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The first draft of the statutory guidance on the Bill was only provided by the Dept. on 23rd September, with a request for input from councils. This requires detailed review and has not been considered as part of the current consultation response. SOLACE have now requested that councils Building Control, Environmental Health and other appropriate council officers, review this guidance and provide feedback for the consideration and approval by Solace NI, at either the meeting on 7 November or 5 December 2025
2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SOLACE have also requested that Building Control Northern Ireland (BCNI) and Environmental Health Northern Ireland (EHNI) prepare a joint response to the Call for Evidence on the Dilapidation Bill
3.0	Main Report

3.1	The consultation relating to the Dilapidation Bill was released on 07 July 2025 with a deadline date for responses of 10 th October.
3.2	Building Control Officers have met and drafted the response provided, with the assistance from Environmental Health officers. We met with Kevin McDonnell in Legal Services who is assisting in completing the final draft for issue.
3.3	<p><u>The main aspects of the Bill are as follows:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clause 1-3 Detriment to local amenity • Clauses 4-6 Serious detriment to local amenity • Clauses 7-10 Dangerous structures • Clause 11 Defective premises notice • Clauses 12-15 Liability for costs • Clauses 16-20 Miscellaneous functions of district councils • Clauses 21-23 General procedural matters • Clauses 24-25 Interpretation • Clauses 26-28 Supplementary • Clauses 29-31 Final
3.4	The Bill as drafted includes many of the provisions in the other legislation which are required to take the appropriate action. It is welcomed that there are items such as emergency powers, powers of entry and taking action on land included.
3.5	However, it is believed that the Bill is inadequate to allow councils to deal with dangerous and dilapidated buildings and structures and indeed would leave councils in a worse position than with the current legislation available. In summary, the main concerns include:
3.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of detriment and serious detriment – this has always proven to be subjective when using the Pollution Control Order and further detail is required with additional guidance from the Department as this is too subjective. • The Bill covers buildings, but also needs to include structures, which is not clearly set out. • Inadequate cost recovery – Historically cost recovery has proven to be very difficult to achieve, where works to remove a danger are undertaken in default. The Bill does not address this difficulty adequately, and wider scope of recovering costs should be included and include costs for staff and consultants. • Adequate resources will be needed to administer the legislation, in particular due to the proactive nature. For example, there is now a section on maintenance notices, used where a situation is 'detrimental to local amenity', which could lower the bar for potential enforcement action and raise expectations of what can be considered suitable for action.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner unknown: It is essential that there are powers for councils to act where an owner is unknown. This is not included. • Penalties and fines must be of significant scale to act as a motivating factor in those responsible for the building or structure to carry out the required work, or for the fine to be sufficient to cover the costs of any default works. It is our view that this is not adequately considered in the Bill. • Clarification on the appeals mechanism proposed, and confirmation that this will not delay any required action being undertaken. This requires further clarity and detail. • Clarification on the owner having to seek permission to demolish. • Clarification on the assessment required as part of emergency action being undertaken.
3.7	<p>Legislation that is currently used and which will be repealed is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belfast Improvement Act 1878 – Part 9 • Belfast Corporation Act 1911 (for owner unknown) • Pollution Control and Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 - Articles 65 and 66 • Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 – In schedule 3, Paragraph 9(4)
3.8	<p>This legislation is currently widely used by the Building Control Service, and it is of concern that the new Bill does not appear to bring an improvement as desired.</p>
3.9	<p>Given the views above expressed in the response, officers are recommending that direct engagement between council officers and Departmental officials takes place to deal with the issues raised.</p>
3.10	<p><u>Ongoing work</u></p> <p>In several areas of the response officers have asked for further clarity or guidance. The first draft of the statutory guidance on the Bill was only provided by the Dept. on 23rd September, with a request for input from councils. This requires detailed review and has not been considered as part of the current consultation response. SOLACE have now requested that councils Building Control, Environmental Health and other appropriate council officers, review this guidance and provide feedback for the consideration and approval by Solace NI, at either the meeting on 7 November or 5 December 2025</p>
3.11	<p>SOLACE have also requested that Building Control Northern Ireland (BCNI) and Environmental Health Northern Ireland (EHNI) prepare a joint response to the Call for Evidence on the Dilapidation Bill</p>
4.0	Financial & Resource Implications
4.1	<p>Issues relating to finance are included in the response and outlined above. In summary these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for adequate costs recovery where councils take action in default including staff and consultant costs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for adequate resourcing to ensure adequate enforcement relating to the new bill • Clarification on charging when using the emergency powers
5.0	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
5.1	None identified.
6.0	Appendices
	Appendix 1 – Draft Dilapidation Bill consultation response.

DRAFT

Introduction

1. What is your name? Ian Harper
2. What is your email address? harperi@belfastcity.gov.uk
3. If you are providing a submission on behalf of an organisation or business, please state its name. Belfast City Council
4. Please confirm that you have read the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee's Privacy Notice by clicking the button below.

Clicked

5. How would you like your submission to be published?

Publish in full.

Clauses 1 to 3 - Detriment to local amenity

- Clause 1 - Maintenance notice
- Clause 2 - Appeal against maintenance notice
- Clause 3 - Breach of maintenance notice

Information:

Clauses 1 to 3 allow district councils to serve a **maintenance notice** to require owners, occupiers and others with a relevant interest to take appropriate remedial action to deal with low level dilapidation and neglect. The clauses also deal with the appeals procedure and offences and penalties for breaches of a notice.

6. Do you agree that Clauses 1 to 3 will empower councils to tackle the issue of 'detriment to local amenity' (regarding buildings or other land in its district) that because of its condition is/are detrimental to the amenity of a part of the council's district or of an adjoining district - If not, why not?

No

If no, please explain.

Please provide comment on your understanding of 'detriment to local amenity' in the context of this Bill.

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

- Council recognises that it is the Department's aim that such provisions should be used proactively by Councils thereby ensuring that local areas are consistently maintained - such efforts will require regulatory resources to successfully deliver on this aim. Whilst the legislation is written that Council 'may' take action and use discretion – in practice and with the interest of communities and Elected Members, Councils are more likely to find that there is an expectation that action will be taken, Council would request that any new guidance reflects the discretionary nature of the legislation, and confirm that action will only be taken where the Council deems it expedient to do so.
- The Council considers the threshold of 'detrimental to the local amenity' to be subjective. In the case of Liverpool City Council – v- Derwent Holdings Ltd (2008), the appeal judge stated that 'pleasantness' is a reasonable simile for 'amenity' in the case of the terminology of the (GB) 1984 Building Act. In practice, that is very subjective – i.e., that a detriment to local amenity is a detriment to the pleasantness of the location in which the relevant site is situated, from the perspective of residents and also of visitors to the location. It is imperative that Councils are provided with appropriate guidance documents from the Department. Guidance will be essential on this issue to ensure consistency of approach and the avoidance of potential legal challenges which could undermine the intent of the legislation. This guidance should reflect the learning from other jurisdictions where similar legislation has been implemented.
- There needs to be a provision to allow the council to take action where an owner of a detrimental site cannot be found. This scenario is commonplace. There also needs to be a robust mechanism for the council to recover costs incurred – where there is no identifiable owner, prompt cost recovery can only be achieved by having the power to vest and dispose of the land. The inability to do anything other than to build up an expensive raft of charges against a multitude of pieces of land over many years, would be an ineffective remedy to the underlying issue and gives rises to concerns about managing public money responsibly.
- Section 1(1) states "building or other land". The inclusion of both land and building should be repeated in Sections 1 & 2 where the word 'land' is used. E.g. Section 2 (1) should read 'person with an interest in land or buildings'.

Please comment on the maintenance notice, the appeal and action for breaches as appropriate.

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

- The notice, the appeal and action for breaches are generally agreeable to the council, except that there is no provision for the District Judge to order the owner to carry out the works stipulated in the notice, if works not completed then that should be treated as either a breach of court order or contempt of court.
- The £500 fixed penalty notice may be significantly less than the cost of remedial works and therefore may not act as sufficient deterrent.
- Where the interested party does not carry out works to remedy the issue and it continues, how then will a building be remedied/ fixed?
Remedial costs may be many multiples of the cost of the fine imposed, and remedial works may fall to the council. There should be a provision to allow the District Judge to order the owner to carry out the works to the satisfaction of the Council. This provision is also absent from Article 66 of the Pollution Control Order, to its detriment as an effective enforcement tool.

Clauses 4 to 6 – Serious detriment to local amenity

Clause 4 - Dilapidation notice

Clause 5 - Appeal against dilapidation notice

Clause 6 - Breach of dilapidation notice

Information:

Clauses 4 to 6 allow district councils to serve a **dilapidation notice** to require owners, occupiers and others with a relevant interest to take appropriate remedial action to deal with more serious dilapidation and neglect. The clauses also deal with the appeals procedure and offences and penalties for breaches of a notice or condition.

7. Do you agree that Clauses 4 to 6 will empower councils to tackle the issue of 'serious detriment to local amenity' (regarding buildings or other land in its district) that because of its condition is/are seriously detrimental to the amenity of a part of the council's district or of an adjoining district - If not, why not? **No**

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

Clauses 4 - 6 will only work where ownership can be proven.

- In many cases, ownership cannot be proven, and if the detriment is to be remedied, the council must be provided with the powers to carry out work in default of an unknown owner - and be able to recover costs incurred. This should also include the power to vest and dispose of the land.
- Much land is unregistered, or the owner's address cannot be established. Power to sell land in these circumstances is essential, especially if it anticipated that enforcement levels will be increased following the introduction of new legislation.
- A 'rolling fund' is essential – the council cannot incur significant costs repeatedly with no prospect of recovery.

Please provide comment on the dilapidation notice, the appeal and action for breaches as appropriate.

Clauses 7 to 10 - Dangerous structures

Clause 7 - Dangerous structure notice

Clause 8 - Appeal against dangerous structure notice

Clause 9 - Breach of dangerous structure notice

Clause 10 - Emergency action

Information:

Clauses 7 to 9 allow district councils to serve a **dangerous structure notice** to require owners, occupiers and others with a relevant interest to take appropriate remedial action to deal with dangerous buildings and structures. The clauses also deal with the appeals procedure, fee provisions and offences and penalties for breaches of a notice or condition.

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

8. Do you agree that Clauses 7 to 9 will empower councils to tackle the issue of 'dangerous structures' (apart from if Clause 10 Emergency Action is to be used) regarding a building in its district that is in such a condition as to be dangerous, or is used to carry such loads as to be dangerous - If not, why not?

No

If no, please explain further.

DRAFT

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

- Section 7 refers only to dangerous buildings, whereas many other types of structure commonly become dangerous, such as free-standing walls, retaining walls, fences, footbridges, a structure within a building such as a realised storage floor, and commercial 'for-sale' signs. The section should read 'building or structure and anything attached to them', not just buildings.
- The Victorian and Edwardian cohort of buildings in Belfast contributes a disproportionately high percentage of the dangerous structure complaints Belfast City Council receives each year. The majority of these present as vacant buildings – and often the owner 'cannot be found'.
- There is a need for legislation that allows Council to take action (not necessarily emergency action as Section 10) in the case of an unknown owner (or more strictly, where the owner's address cannot be proven) and to have a very robust mechanism for recouping costs where we act in default.
- Section 76 of the Belfast Corporation Act 1911 permits the council to take action where the name of the owner/occupier is unknown or where their name is known but their address is not. This action is under the 1878 Act, from which the 'owner unknown' provision is missing – so it is a combination of the 1878 Act and the 1911 Act which permits this course of action.
- As compulsory first registration of properties was only introduced in Northern Ireland in 2003, and most of the dangerous properties we encounter have been vacant for some years, one of the following often applies. In all of these scenarios, notices/summons cannot be served.
 - There is no record of ownership on Landweb or Register of Deeds
 - There is no record on Landweb and information on the Register of Deeds is many decades old. Much of the information is no longer valid.
 - There is a record on Landweb, but the owner's address given is the vacant (possibly 'bricked up') property itself.
 - There is a recent record on the Register of Deeds or Landweb but the owner's address on the documentation is no longer correct.
 - There is a record on the Register of Deeds or Landweb, but the owner is now deceased.
 - In instances where the owner's name is known, the owners address is also required in order to serve enforcement documents. For prosecutions the Council must prove to the court, service of the notice and we need the correct address in order to serve a summons to have the ability to prosecute.
- Section 12(9) and (10) of the proposed new bill are of limited benefit – this appears to have been copied from Section 118 *et seq.* of the Belfast Improvement Act 1878. Material arising from demolition is of much less value than the costs of removing or disposing of it. 12(9) and (10) are of limited value in the present day but could remain as an option.
- The ability to sell buildings or land to recover costs would be the most efficient way of ensuring that public money is used in a responsible manner and to allow for regeneration of long neglected blights on neighbourhoods.
- Where a building is used to carry such loads as to be dangerous, i.e. whilst being occupied, would require a specific risk assessment to be conducted, as potentially the council would be preventing a business to operate.

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

Please provide comment on your understanding of ‘dangerous’ in the context of this Bill.

- Dangerous means that imminent or potential full or partial collapse of a building or structure, or material coming off a building or structure, for example during high winds, poses a risk to the health and safety of all possible members of the public, including trespassers, or damage to vehicles.

Please provide comment on the dangerous structure notice, the appeal and action for breaches as appropriate

- Council would seek clarification on the purpose of the owner having to ask the council for permission to demolish. What are the parameters against which councils are expected to judge such a request? Planning permission is required to alter and demolish listed buildings and those within a conservation area. It appears to the Council that inclusion of requiring permission to demolish non-protected buildings places an unnecessary burden on land owners and possible delay in circumstances where there is a danger to the public.
- The appeal mechanism against the issue of a dangerous structure notice (Section 8) is not realistic. Section 22 (1) states that the notice is of no effect pending final determination. If the person of interest appeals on the first day, the time period cannot be considered to be 14 days as up to six weeks must be added to the timeframe to allow for a date for the case to be heard in court. That means a dangerous structure could sit in limbo for 2 months. This would be a regressive measure. Ultimately Council must have power to take action in default without having to wait for an appeal or prosecution. Ultimately the landowner will have avenues to challenge the Council's decision through either an injunction application or resisting Council attempts to recover costs.
- We are content with the proposed action on breaches.

Clause 10 (Emergency action)

Information:

Clause 10 (Emergency Action) deals with a building which is considered by a council to be in such a state or is carrying such loads as to be dangerous and immediate action should be taken to obviate the danger and allows a council to take the necessary steps for that purpose.

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

Clause 10 also requires that after seven days from the date when remedial works began, a council must give notice to at least one person with an interest in the building advising of the action being taken and that an appeal may be made to a Magistrates' Court against that action, stipulating the grounds for appeal.

Clause 10 also deals with cases where an interested person sustains damage as a result of the exercise of a council's power under clause 10 - in such cases the person is entitled to compensation if a Magistrates' Court determines that the council was not justified in its exercise of the power (whether on an appeal under clause 10 or by a separate application under clause 10). Any disputes around compensation shall be determined by the Lands Tribunal or by an agreed arbitrator.

Clause 10 also allows a district council to charge a fee for exercising its powers under the clause. The fees may be specified in regulations to be made by the Department.

9. Do you agree that Clause 10 will empower councils to tackle the issue of 'dangerous structures' requiring 'Emergency Action' regarding a building in its district that is in such a condition as to be dangerous, or is used to carry such loads as to be dangerous and immediate action should be taken to remove the danger, and that the council may take whatever steps are necessary to remove the danger - If not, why not?

No

If no, please explain further.

- See answer above in relation to this question. To allow this process would create a further burden on the rate payer and act as a disincentive to taking action in default. Also it is not clear what is meant by compensate.
- In the common case in which no owner is to be found, the council will still carry out the emergency work, but at the ratepayers' expense unless the building or land can be sold.
- Charges against land only work where there is a current demand for the development of the site/property and its value is well in excess of the charges against it. This is an ineffective remedy as in most cases the land would be developed if it was economically viable. Charges against the land only make it less likely to be redeveloped.

Please provide comment on any aspect of the Emergency Action powers provided for in Clause 10, including the assessment the council must conduct; the notice of its intention to exercise the power; the proposal of a fee; the appeal; and the timescales

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

- It is standard practice, in deciding how to proceed when assessing a dangerous structure (we have been enforcing the 1878 Belfast Improvement Act, since 1973 as Belfast City Council, and prior to that as the Belfast Corporation), to conduct such an assessment. However, clarification is required in relation to what this assessment entails.
- Is the fee associated with a third-party assessment of a structure?
- An appeal against a notice served under Section 10 cannot be allowed to delay the removal of the danger.

Clause 11 - Defective premises

Clause 11 - Defective premises notice

Information:

Clause 11 allows district councils to serve a **Defective Premises Notice** in circumstances requiring rapid remediation (e.g. a building which had an incorrectly installed staircase). This is to be used where the premises appear to be in such a state as to be "prejudicial to health or a nuisance."

The building does not have to be dilapidated or dangerous, but the council considers the problem needs to be tackled quickly.

The council may serve a notice stating that it intends to remedy the defective state of the premises and specifying the defects which it intends to remedy. Nine days after the Notice takes effect, a council may carry out whatever remedial works are necessary.

Clause 11 also allows the person on whom the notice was served to serve a counter notice within seven days of the defective premises notice taking effect stating that they intend to remedy the defects themselves. In this case the council is prohibited from taking any action unless the person fails to remedy the defects within a specified time or to a specified standard.

Clause 11 further requires that after seven days from the date when remedial works began, a council must serve notice on the person who received the original notice advising that an appeal may be made to a Magistrates' Court against the works, stipulating the grounds for appeal.

10. Do you agree that Clause 11 will empower councils to tackle the issue of premises in its district which are in a defective state, but there would be an unreasonable delay in remedying the defective state of the premises if the procedure

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

under Part 7 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (statutory nuisance) were to be followed - If not, why not?

No

If no, please explain further.

DRAFT

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

- The preferred option in the 2016 consultation was for a new Bill to provide a single source of powers and enforcement. Whilst the rationale to have a suite of composite powers to address all aspects of dilapidation appears logical, it should be noted that Council officers who are assessing conditions in premises that may be deemed to constitute a statutory nuisance must consider each case and determine the most appropriate legislation to achieve the desired outcome. Therefore, for most cases, the primary powers contained within the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 are used by Councils to remedy cases where a statutory nuisance exists.
- Councils rely upon the existing “Defective Premises” provisions under Article 65 of the Pollution Control and Local Government (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 to deal with statutory nuisance conditions in premises/on lands which either require urgent attention and/or where there is no known owner. The current powers enable the Council to undertake necessary urgent works after a nine-day Notice has been served and these provisions are only used for a limited number of cases.
- It should be noted that there is a difference between a nuisance which is prejudicial to health and defective premises which relate to the physical structure of the building.
- The proposed Clause 11 re-enacts powers within Art 65 of Pollution Control & LG Order 1978 with some changes. However, the example of using the proposed clause 11 powers to address a “defective staircase” cannot be dealt with under nuisance provisions under this clause. (See *R v Bristol City Council, ex-parte Everett* (13 May 1998) High Court, Queen's Bench Division) as matters of health and safety, aesthetic appearance or danger from derelict / dilapidated property are not deemed to be a statutory nuisance. Therefore, Councils will only be able to use this provision in the limited circumstances as outlined above to address conditions which meet the definition of a statutory nuisance and require an urgent remedy or where there is no known owner.
- It is noted that an appeals provision has been introduced under clause 11(7) & 11(8) and only allows Councils to serve an appeals notice within seven days after the Council has commenced the remedial works specified in the notice. Clause 22 (1) effectively means that if an appeal is taken, all works specified by the Notice will have to await the outcome of the court appeal process. This would cause any outstanding urgent works being undertaken by the Council to cease and the proposed works would be subject to court efficiency resulting in potential long delays to any remedial action. This would negate the purpose of this legislation to allow Councils to expedite urgent remedial works as the appeals process will result in an unreasonable delay.
- A review of these clauses would be welcomed following further engagement with Councils.
- The Council notes that under this clause, there are powers to serve Notice on the owner, occupier or responsible person only. The Council relies on these powers to deal unoccupied premises with no known owner, occupier or responsible person and would therefore welcome further consideration under this provision to address the service of a Notice when no owner, occupier or responsible person is known or exists.
- The provision allowing for counter notices is unnecessary. As with any circumstance in which a council service a notice, if an owner advises they intend to do the works then the Council will allow reasonable time for that to take place. This provision adds an unnecessary burden on both owners and councils.
- In conclusion, the Council wishes ensure that the powers contained in the Dilapidations Bill under clause 11 do not impede the efficacy of the powers that are already at the disposal of the Council under Article 65 of the Pollution Control & LG Order 1978.

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

Please provide comment on any aspect of the Defective Premises powers provided for in Clause 11, including the Defective Premises Notice, the timescales and the appeal.

Clauses 12 – 15 Liability for Costs etc.

Refer to answer to Q10 above.

Clause 12 - Costs of district council

Clause 13 - Charge on land

Clause 14 - Costs of interested person

Clause 15 - Obstruction by occupier etc.

Information:

Clause 12 - Costs of district council - provides that where a district council has issued a maintenance notice, a dilapidation notice, a dangerous structure notice, a defective premises notice; or where a council has to take emergency action in order to remove danger, it may recover its costs from the relevant person where it has taken the necessary remedial action itself.

Clause 13 - Charge on land - provides for a district council to register a charge on the land in the Statutory Charges Register (Schedule 11 to the Land Registration Act (Northern Ireland) 1970) in respect of any costs incurred under clause 12 until such costs are recovered. It also provides for councils to register a Dilapidation Notice in the Register - to allow a property to be sold "with information" and binding the purchaser to the terms of the original notice where works have not been carried out.

Clause 14 - Costs of interested person - provides that where costs have been demanded under clause 12 a person who is receiving the rent for the land on behalf of another person would not be pursued for costs as it is not likely that they could be deemed responsible for causing a relevant nuisance.

Clause 15 - Obstruction by occupier etc. - provides that a court order may be made in a case where an occupier is preventing an owner from carrying out works to comply with a notice. It also provides for the associated offence and penalty.

11. Do you agree that Clauses 12 to 15 will empower councils to recover the costs which it incurs in so acting under section 3(1), 6(2), 9(2) or 10(2) (carrying out work) of the Bill, from the persons (who at that time have an interest in the land in question) as the council considers appropriate - If not, why not?

No

If no, why not?

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

Proposals on cost recovery should have consideration to the following points:

- Is the power to sell land (1881 Conveyancing Act) compatible with the 1998 Human Rights Act? A power to sell land is essential to the council affording the level of enforcement as envisaged.
- Charges on land are frequently little better than useless.
- There should be provision for any council to be able to vest the land that they have had to carry out works in default on. The ability to vest the land will provide the council with the ability reuse, develop or sell the land and provide the council with an ability to generate funds for future works in default on other land.
- Dangerous and severely dilapidated buildings are frequently in areas where the land is of low value and the prospect for redevelopment is low, and for many years into the future.
- Demolition costs are high.
- Vacant sites often sit undeveloped for decades. In such circumstances, our charges are usually higher than the site value, thus effectively acting as a deterrent to development. We have had experience where after we have incurred costs of carrying out works in default, a company has simply been dissolved.
- It also important that the council is given powers to recover costs from liquidators and receivers.
- Section 13 refers only to a charge on land due to a dilapidation notice – a dangerous structure notice is not mentioned. Why is this?

Please provide comment on any aspect of the cost recovery actions provided for in Clauses 12 - 15, including costs of the district council; charge on land; costs of interested person and obstruction by occupier.

- Charges on land are ineffective and cumbersome for councils to recover costs in respect of works carried out in default. As outlined above the legislation should provide councils with the ability to vest the land to recover costs.
- Please refer to the answer to question 11 above.
As an example, Council demolished three very large, dangerous Victorian terraced (former) dwellings in 2011. Key issues:
 - The properties were at that time in the hands of a receiver.
 - The site currently remains undeveloped.
 - The council has no prospect of recovering the costs, which fell to the ratepayer.
- Clauses 14 and 15 go into much detail for scenarios which we have never encountered or, more accurately, never failed to overcome using current legislation. We have no objection to their inclusion, however.

Clauses 16 – 20 Miscellaneous functions of district councils

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

Clause 16 - Information

Clause 17 - Consultation with planning department

Clause 18 - Power of entry

Clause 19 - Fixed penalty

Clause 20 - Guidance

Information:

Clause 16 – Information - gives district councils the power to require information with regard to ownership, other persons having an interest in the premises, use to which the property is being put, etc. The clause also provides for two offences and penalties.

Clause 17 - Consultation with planning department (Heritage Sites) and relevant officers of DfC if the Heritage Site is a Historic Monument - requires a district council to consult relevant colleagues before issuing a notice in relation to a heritage site. It also provides that regulations may be made by the Department amending the definition of “heritage site” in subsection (2).

Clause 18 - Power of entry - provides for occasions where an authorised officer of the council may enter land in the council's area for the purposes of the Act. There are various notice periods provided for in the Bill. It also covers compensation and inserts a relevant offence provision of obstructing an authorised officer.

Clause 19 - Fixed penalty - provides for a discretionary £500 fixed penalty to be issued by councils to discharge liability for conviction for breach of a maintenance notice and for failure to provide information without reasonable excuse. The Department may amend the fixed penalty amount by regulations - Schedule 1 makes further provision regarding fixed penalties.

Clause 20 – Guidance - provides that a district council must have regard to any guidance issued by the Department.

12. Please provide comment on any of the miscellaneous functions of district councils to be found in Clauses 16 to 20.

Consultation with planning regarding heritage sites (Clause 16).

- Clause 16 allows the council to require a person who occupies land or received rent for it to provide the owner's details. This is a downgrade on Article 72 of the Pollution Control Order. We have used Article 72 to obtain information on owners from Estate Agents and Solicitors for example, which under Clause 16 we could not do. Otherwise, no comment.

The powers of entry or an authorised officer of a district council (Clause 18).

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

No comment.

The fixed penalty provided for in Clause 19 when an authorised officer of a district council has reason to believe that a person has, in relation to land in the council's district, committed an offence under section 3(2) (breach of maintenance notice), or an offence under section 16(4) (failure to provide information without reasonable excuse).

- Council agrees with the proposal to introduce a penalty for the failure to provide information. However, there is a likelihood of applying a £500 fixed penalty with the detrimental site still not remedied. There are not many detrimental sites that could be remedied for £500.

The guidance for the time being issued by the Department for the purposes of this Act. A draft of the guidance, or a proposed revision of the guidance, must be laid before the Assembly.

- The ability to review proposed guidance documentation would be very useful in order to allow a full and comprehensive response to this consultation.
- Belfast City Council would welcome such guidance and would welcome the opportunity to share our experiences based over many years and many hundreds of enforcement cases using various acts and orders.

Clauses 21 – 23 General procedural matters etc.

21. Notices

22. Appeal

23. Offences: defendant

Clause 21 – Notices - provides for general issues relating to notices issued under the Act by district councils, such as variation and withdrawal.

Clause 22 - Appeal - provides that an appeal against a notice issued under the Act will suspend that notice being appealed until the appeal is concluded or withdrawn. However, this does not apply to an appeal against works under clauses 10 or 11. On the determination of any appeal under the Act, the court must give directions for giving effect to its determination. A subsequent appeal to the County Court may be brought against the original appeal decision.

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

Clause 23 - Offences: defendant - provides for the procedures in cases where proceedings have been brought but the defendant ceased to be the owner/occupier before the end of the notice period.

13. Please provide comment on any aspect of the general procedural matters provided for in Clauses 21 - 23, including notices served under this Bill (Clause 21); appeals against a notice brought under this Bill (Clause 22) and for the procedures in cases where proceedings have been brought but the defendant ceased to be the owner/occupier before the end of the notice period (Clause 23).
General procedural matters Clauses 21 - 23.

- Comments on procedural matters are reflected in statements made earlier in this document – please refer to the answer given for Question 8.

Clauses 24 – 25 Interpretation

24. Meaning of “interested person” etc.

25. Other definitions

Information:

Clause 24 - Meaning of “interested person”, etc. - provides for the definition of “interested person” and also defines “owner” in relation to land.

Clause 25 - Other definitions - provides for definitions in respect of “building”, “land”, “authorised officer”, “use” and “the Department”.

14. Please provide comment on any aspect of the interpretation clauses provided for in Clauses 24 and 25, regarding the meaning of ‘interested person’ and other definitions.

Interpretation Clauses 24 and 25

- Clause 25 (2) states that a building includes ‘any other structure’. Is it the departments intention that this provides for application to such items as a retaining wall, posts, gates, wind turbines etc?

Clauses 26 – 28 Supplementary

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

Clause 26 - Repeals and consequential amendments

Clause 27 - Savings

Clause 28 - Regulations

Information:

Clause 26 - Repeals and consequential amendments provides for the repeals set out in Schedule 2 and allows the Department by regulations to make consequential amendments.

Clause 27 - Savings - preserves the effect of a notice served under any legislation being repealed by the Act, therefore allowing a district council to complete works which it has begun under such a provision before its repeal.

Clause 28 - Regulations - provides the Department with a power, when making regulations under the Act, to make incidental, supplementary, consequential, transitional, transitory or saving provisions. Regulations under the Act will be subject to the negative resolution procedure unless they amend a fixed penalty amount or amend the definition of “heritage site” in which case they will be subject to the draft affirmative resolution procedure.

15. Please provide comment on any aspect of the supplementary clauses provided for in Clauses 26 to 28.

Supplementary Clauses 26 to 28.

No comment

Clauses 29 - 31 General Interpretation, Commencement & Short Title

Clause 29 - General Interpretation

Clause 30 - Commencement

Clause 31 - Short Title

Information:

Clause 29 - General interpretation - contains general interpretation provisions.

Clause 30 – Commencement - concerns the commencement of the Act.

Clause 31 - Short title - provides for the short title of the Act.

16. Please provide comment on any aspect of Clauses 29 – 31 regarding general interpretation.

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

General Interpretation Clauses 29 – 31.

No comment

Schedules

Schedule 1 Fixed Penalties

Schedule 2 Repeals

Schedule 1 - Fixed Penalties sets out the form and content, etc. of fixed penalty notices issued under clause 19. It also contains information regarding the use of fixed penalty receipts by district councils and gives the Department powers to make regulations regarding the use of receipts.

Schedule 2 – Repeals lists the necessary repeals.

17. Please provide comment on any aspect of Schedule 1 regarding the fixed penalties, fixed penalty receipts and the power to make regulations regarding the use of receipts.

Schedule 1

No comment.

18. Please provide comment on any aspect of Schedule 2 regarding the necessary repeals.

Schedule 2

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

- The 2025 bill proposes to repeal three pieces of legislation used frequently, and successfully, by Belfast City Council's Building Control Service.

The first two of these are :

- The 1878 Belfast Improvement Act Part IX and
- The Belfast Corporation Act 1911, Section 76.

The use of these two Acts allows Council to take action on dangerous structures where the 'owner cannot be found'. The ability to take this action is crucial but it appears absent from the proposed bill. It is essential that any aspects of current legislation that allow Council to take action in all circumstances are not absent from the proposed Bill.

- Improved legislation to allow more effective enforcement is the aim, but what we have now (1878/1911) works for known and unknown owners. The Pollution Control Order Article. 66 works for known owners only with the added disadvantage that the magistrate cannot order the owner to carry out the works. Belfast City Council have also used Article. 72 of the Pollution Control Order successfully on many occasions. Refer comments to Q12 above.

Additional Information/Comments

19. Please provide any additional information or comments on any aspect of the Bill that you feel is relevant.

- Departmental guidance is essential particularly on subjective definitions such as "*detrimental to amenity*", in order to ensure consistency of approach and avoid potential legal challenges which could undermine the intent of the legislation.
- Given the absence of departmental guidance at this stage, Council would have reservations that the proposed Bill will have a significant financial and resource impact on Council. A full and comprehensive financial and resource appraisal to this consultation can only be made when in receipt of this information.
- As the consultation progresses, due consideration must be given to the resource implications associated with any new legislation, particularly the Council's ability to recover costs related to default works undertaken to address issues with dilapidated and/or dangerous buildings.
- Post conviction powers of the court need to be addressed, the ability of a District Judge to make an order specifying date that the works have to be completed by, consideration of a daily penalty post conviction and the ability to effectively implement same.

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR DILAPIDATION BILL CONSULTATION

Additional information or comments.

Proposed Additions and Amendments

20. Please provide information on any potential amendments that you feel would enhance the Bill and the rationale for those.

Information on any potential amendments

Almost done...

You are about to submit your response. By clicking 'Submit Response' you give us permission to analyse and include your response in our results. After you click Submit, you will no longer be able to go back and change any of your answers.

If you provide an email address you will be sent a receipt and a link to a PDF copy of your response.

Email address

harperi@belfastcity.gov.uk

Submit Response



Subject:	Proposal for naming a new street
Date:	7 th October 2025
Reporting Officer:	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
Contact Officer:	Ian Harper, Building Control Manager, ext. 2430 Heather Wylie, Property and Legal Coordinator, ext. 2464

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted?

Yes

☐

No

☒

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

☐

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues						
1.1	To consider the application for the naming of one new street in the city.						
2.0	Recommendation						
2.1	Based on the information presented, the Committee is required to make a recommendation in respect of the application for naming one new street in the city. The Committee may either: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grant the application, or• Refuse the application and request that the applicant submits other names for consideration.						
3.0	Main Report						
3.1	<u>Key Issues</u> The power for the Council to name streets is contained in Article 11 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (NI) Order 1995.						
3.2	<u>New street</u> Members are asked to consider the following application for naming a new street in the city. The application particulars are in order and the Royal Mail has no objections to the proposed name. The proposed new name is not contained in the Council’s Streets Register and does not duplicate any existing approved street name in the city.						
3.3	<table><tr><th>Proposed Name</th><th>Location</th><th>Applicant</th></tr><tr><td>Hopewell Gardens</td><td>Off Hopewell Crescent, BT13</td><td>Hall Black Douglas Architects</td></tr></table>	Proposed Name	Location	Applicant	Hopewell Gardens	Off Hopewell Crescent, BT13	Hall Black Douglas Architects
Proposed Name	Location	Applicant					
Hopewell Gardens	Off Hopewell Crescent, BT13	Hall Black Douglas Architects					
3.4	Hall Black Douglas Architects are developing lands to the north of Hopewell Crescent, BT13 for residential use. The development includes one new street containing 28 domestic properties.						
3.5	The developer has proposed Hopewell Gardens as their first choice for the new street located between Hopewell Crescent and Hopewell Square. The new street will connect to a shared garden space within the Hopewell area. The second name choice for the new street is Hopewell Green, continuing the association of the shared garden space. The third name choice for the new street is Hopewell Lane.						
3.6	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> There are no Financial, Human Resources, Assets and other implications in this report.						
3.7	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> There are no direct Equality implications.						

4.0	Appendices
	None

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