

Public Document Pack

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



**Belfast
City Council**

MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE COMBINED PACK

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will meet in the Lavery Room - City Hall on Friday, 20th February, 2026 at 9.30 am, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

John Walsh

Chief Executive

AGENDA:

1. Routine Matters

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

2. Restricted Items

- (a) Quarter 3 Finance Report 2025-26 (Pages 1 - 18)
- (b) Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann (Pages 19 - 40)
- (c) City Innovation Programme Update (Pages 41 - 44)
- (d) St Brigids GAC Management Agreement at Musgrave Park (Pages 45 - 50)
- (e) New Crematorium at Roselawn (Pages 51 - 104)
- (f) Asset Management (1) (Pages 105 - 108)
- (g) Physical Programme Update (Pages 109 - 118)

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

- (a) Motions - Quarterly Update report (Pages 119 - 124)
- (b) Motion Update - Correspondence received from Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs - Greyhound Racing (Pages 125 - 130)
- (c) Notice of Motion - City Centre Gritting Feasibility Study (Pages 131 - 134)
- (d) Notice of Motion - Funding for Faith-Based Organisations and Addiction Services (Pages 135 - 138)
- (e) Notice of Motion - Fleadh Cheoil 2026 - Legacy Monument for Belfast (Pages 139 - 140)
- (f) Correspondence received from Minister of Justice - Standalone Hate Crime Bill (Pages 141 - 146)

4. **Belfast Agenda/Strategic Issues**

- (a) Draft City Centre Byelaws (Pages 147 - 164)
- (b) Planning Information (Pages 165 - 182)
- (c) Online Pitch Bookings (Pages 183 - 188)
- (d) #Not Just for Boys Initiative (Pages 189 - 192)
- (e) Social Supermarket Fund 26/28 (Pages 193 - 202)
- (f) Transformation and Efficiency Workshops Update (Pages 203 - 206)

5. **Physical Programme and Asset Management**

- (a) Physical Programme Update (Moved to restricted)
- (b) Asset Management (Pages 207 - 212)

6. **Finance, Procurement and Performance**

- (a) Contracts Update (Pages 213 - 222)
- (b) Request for Funding (Pages 223 - 232)

7. **Equality and Good Relations**

- (a) Minutes of Shared City Partnership Meeting (Pages 233 - 276)

8. **Operational Issues**

- (a) Minutes of the Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum (Pages 277 - 280)
- (b) Requests for use of the City Hall and the provision of Hospitality (Pages 281 - 286)

- (c) Minutes of Language Strategy Working Group of 30th January, 2026 (to follow)
- (d) Minutes of the Special Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum of 5th February, 2026 (Pages 287 - 288)
- (e) Minutes of the Social Policy Working Group of 16th February, 2026 (Pages 289 - 292)

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Subject:	Notices of Motion – Quarterly Update
Date:	20 February 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor & Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer(s):	Russell Connelly, Policy, Research and Compliance Officer Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer Clare Hutchinson, Strategic Planning and Policy 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 or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Committee on the progress of all Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance for which SP&R Committee is responsible for.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	It is recommended that SP&R Committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the updates to all Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance that SP&R Committee is responsible for and • Agree to the closure of Notices of Motion 7, 407 and 479.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>At SP&R Committee on 25th October 2019, the following Notice of Motion was agreed: “That this Council notes that other Councils produce a monthly status report in relation to Notices of Motion; and agrees Belfast City Council adopts a similar practice and produces a monthly Notice of Motion Update which will be brought to each full Council Meeting, detailing the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Date received 2. Notice of motion title 3. Submitted by which Councillor 4. Council meeting date 5. Committee motion is referred to 6. Outcome of committee where Notice of Motion will be debated 7. Month it will be reported back to committee 8. Other action to be taken.”
3.2	Following a review exercise, a new database containing all Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance at Committee was created and quarterly reporting to Committee commenced in March 2021. Appendix 1 is the latest quarterly update showing all active Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance which SP&R Committee is responsible for.
3.3	<p>Closure of Notices of Motion and Issues Raised in Advance</p> <p>At SP&R Committee on 20th November 2020, it was agreed that Notices of Motion could be closed for one of two reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notices of Motion which contained an action(s) that has been completed; and • Notices of Motion have become Council policy. <p>SP&R Committee are asked to agree that the following are now closed:</p>

3.4	<p>Category 1 Recommended Closure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childcare Strategy (7): This Notice of Motion called on the Council to agree to investigate options to co-create a Childcare Strategy for the city. The NI Executive are moving forward with the Childcare Strategy, with the recent announcement by the Department of Education (on 16 May 2025) that £55million would be invested in early learning and childcare in 2025-26. The Minister also announced that the Northern Ireland Childcare Subsidy Scheme will now be extended to include school age children from 1 September 2025. In this context and given the limited role or responsibility of Council around childcare provision, it is proposed that this Notice of Motion is now closed. Blood and Bone Marrow Donations (407): This Notice of Motion called on the Council to provide staff with adequate paid time off to give blood and/or to donate bone marrow and explore ways in which it can be made easier for staff to donate blood, such as, blood donation events at the workplace. Corporate HR have worked with the Internal Communications Team to raise awareness on blood and bone marrow donations, including an article on Interlink on organ and stem cell donations, details on how to register to become an organ or stem cell donor and how the process works. After a very successful blood donation session in City Hall last year, another session is planned before the summer. It is proposed that this Notice of Motion is now closed. Levels of criminality and violence in the city centre (479): This Issue Raised in Advance called on the Council to convene a multi-agency meeting to address the levels of criminality and violence in the city centre. A multi-agency meeting was held on the 8th Dec 2025, therefore it is proposed that this Issue Raised in Advance is now closed.
3.5	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no additional financial implications required to implement these recommendations.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no equality, good relations or rural needs implications contained in this report.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices</p>
	<p>Appendix 1: Notices of Motion Live Database – SP&R Committee</p>

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Belfast City Council Notice of Motion Database

Ref	Type	Meeting Date	Motion Title	Proposed by	Reporting Committee	Reporting Officer	Lead Department	Status	Status Update
7	Notice of Motion	09/04/2018	Childcare Strategy	Cllr Mal O'Hara	SP&R	John Tully	City & Organisational Strategy	Recommend Close	The NI Executive are moving forward with the Childcare Strategy with the recent announcement by the Dept of Education (on 16 May 2025) that £55million would be invested in early learning and childcare in 2025-26. DoE Minister also announced that the Northern Ireland Childcare Subsidy Scheme will now be extended to include school age children from 1 September 2025.
23	Notice of Motion	01/07/2019	Removal of Banners and Paramilitary Flags in Belfast	Cllr Ciaran Beattie	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	Since the decision by SP & R in 2019, the PICT report commissioned by the Executive was published which covers similar issues. Extensive consultation was undertaken between 2016 - 19 on this and the contents of this report have the agreement of the 5 main political parties represented on the Commission Report to be brought to CMT and potentially Party Group
25	Issue Raised in Advance	23/08/2019	Abortion Imagery	Cllr Aine Groogan	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	Officers are engaging with the Department for Communities regarding the revised draft byelaws that relate specifically to arrangements for special events, such as the Fleadh. A further report will be brought to SP&R in February outlining options for the remaining revised byelaws, including proposals for separate byelaws to address the display of graphic imagery.
35	Notice of Motion	02/12/2019	Pridestrian Animation	Cllr Matt Garrett	SP&R	Keith Forster	Place & Economy	Ongoing	Following the September meeting of SP&R Committee, officers contacted DfI Western Division in relation to the existing pride flag crossing at the Foyle Bridge in Derry-Londonderry. The Department confirmed that careful consideration was given before permitting the rainbow markings on Foyle Embankment, (which were installed in 2021) to make sure it did not conflict Traffic Signs regulations. Following the introduction of the coloured markings, safety concerns were raised from a number of sources including IMTAC. DfI subsequently decided that following the representation from IMTAC, that no further such installations would take place. On a local level, the DfI Western Division confirmed that they were unaware of any safety issues that members of the public have experienced at the Foyle Embankment crossing; however they recognise that the concerns raised by IMTAC are often of a sensory and perception nature and that these issues may not always be reported to the Department and that the absence of a reported problem may not mean that the issue does not exist. On a practical level, the Department also highlighted the durability of such markings (https://url.uk.m.mimecastprotect.com/s/3fMJC9g2kFXM92gFofqHqPeP8?domain=google.co.uk). Further contact is being made with the Eastern Division to understand the latest status of the pedestrianisation of Union Street and discuss options for alternative designs like those implemented elsewhere in the UK and Ireland.
49	Notice of Motion	03/02/2020	Market Gardens and Urban Farming	Cllr Seamas de Faioite	SP&R	John Tully	City & Organisational Strategy	Ongoing	The Climate Team have established a Belfast Sustainable Food Partnership, which is currently developing a sustainable food strategy for the city and will consider the potential for market gardens and urban farming in the city as part of this. Also links with Right to Grow motion. The UPSURGE and UP2030 projects are also looking at the use of green space and nature based solutions, and will include community and urban food growing opportunities. Engagement to develop Sustainable Food Strategy completed with Area Working Groups in February/March 2025 - draft strategy under review.
50	Notice of Motion	03/02/2020	Belfast Zoo	Cllr Conor Maskey	SP&R	Keith Forster	Place & Economy	Ongoing	At the June 2025 meeting of the CG&R Committee, members requested a specific governance structure be established to look at a range of issues within Belfast Zoo. An initial meeting of the Zoo Long-Term Financial Sustainability Group was held on Wednesday 10th December 2025, the minutes of which were reported to the January 2026 meeting of the CG&R Committee. This motion will be addressed by this group.
51	Notice of Motion	03/02/2020	Growth Deal	Cllr Ciaran Beattie	SP&R	Sharon McNicholl	Corporate Services	Ongoing	To be progressed as resources become available
131	Notice of Motion	02/11/2020	Sealing of the Records of Mother and Baby Homes	Cllr Michael Collins	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	Response from Irish Gov still outstanding - 06/09/21
176	Notice of Motion	04/05/2021	Mater Hospital Services	Cllr Fiona Ferguson	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	This motion related to provision of services during the pandemic - this was resolved with services returning to normal from November 2022. 12.03.23 This motion recommendation for closure was rejected at Feb 2023 SP&R and therefore remains on-going
187	Notice of Motion	01/06/2021	Local Government Pension Scheme - Responsible Investment Strategy	Cllr Ryan Murphy	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	Letter sent 2/7/21. Meeting with NILGOSC requested by S P and R 20/8/21 - to be arranged
199	Notice of Motion	01/09/2021	Four-Day Working Week	Cllr Matt Garrett	SP&R	Christine Sheridan	Human Resources	Ongoing	There is a scheduled workshop on the NOM for management and Trade Unions on 26 March 2026.
203	Notice of Motion	04/10/2021	Electric Charging Points	Ald George Dorrian	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	Responses from Ministers being considered by officers
209	Notice of Motion	04/10/2021	Environmentally Sustainable Event Spaces	Cllr Matt Garrett	SP&R	Sinead Grimes	Property & Projects	Ongoing	A report is required to SP&R Committee to outline the next steps. Progressing.
228	Notice of Motion	10/01/2022	Playing Pitches in Belfast	Cllr David Brooks	SP&R	David Sales	City & Neighbourhood Services	Ongoing	It is anticipated that a draft Pitches Strategy report will be presented to P&C Committee in Spring 2026.
235	Notice of Motion	22/02/2022	Energy Price Crises	Cllr Brian Smyth	SP&R	John Tully	City & Organisational Strategy	Ongoing	The Belfast Local Area Energy Plan provides an evidence base which will help to inform investment in community energy schemes. The Plan specifically includes an action to support community energy organisations to develop rooftop solar PV installations and engage in area based retrofit projects. In parallel discussions are ongoing with projects such as Edenderry District Energy initiative, to explore opportunities to support community ambitions. A new permanent post has been created within the team specifically to support delivery of the LAEP effective Jan 2025 and a new Net Zero Officer is under recruitment. This will provide additional capacity to support energy projects. The development of a neighbourhood retrofit pathfinder project is being progressed through the Retrofit Hub and discussions are ongoing with DfC and DfE regarding support for this project. We are also engaging with the Advice NI supported community planning project in Mount Vernon and exploring how Council might support delivery of emerging community energy projects in this area. A solar PV and battery system is being installed on Donegall Pass Community Centre and a solar PV web portal is being developed to provide information on the rooftop solar potential in the UP2030 project area.
243	Notice of Motion	14/03/2022	Cost of Living	Cllr Matt Garrett	SP&R	John Tully	City & Organisational Strategy	Ongoing	The 2024-2025 Hardship Programme has been delivered. SP&R Committee to allocate in-year underspend of £75k as a top-up to Family Support Hubs across the city. Refresh Cost-of-Living Support Guide disseminated across the city signposting those in need to sources of support and advice. Second session with the citywide 'Anti-Poverty Network' is scheduled for January 2026. This forum brings together those agencies and organisations who provide much needed support to those impacted by poverty within the city, to share information, discuss opportunities to collaborate and importantly help strengthen working relationships.
264	Issue Raised in Advance	19/08/2022	Electric Vehicle Charging Points Strategy	Cllr Michael Long	SP&R	John Tully	City & Organisational Strategy	Ongoing	An internal task and finish working group continue to coordinate work on the implementation of phase 1 and phase 2 of the Low Emission Vehicle Strategy which will allow Council to bring forward locations for low emissions infrastructure investment. Site assessment and market testing has been completed. A tender is being prepared based on a concession
284	Issue Raised in Advance	18/11/2022	Use of the Ceremony Room, City Hall	Cllr Michelle Kelly	SP&R	Sinead Grimes	Property & Projects	Ongoing	A report on the potential reinstatement of the Ceremony Room to be submitted to a future Committee meeting.
297	Notice of Motion	05/01/2023	Comber Greenway	Cllr Anthony Flynn	SP&R	Sinead Grimes	Property & Projects	Ongoing	Project has significant resource and financial implications. Officers are starting the process of reengaging with DfI on the Comber Greenway.
298	Notice of Motion	05/01/2023	School Street Schemes	Cllr Seamas de Faioite	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	Letters issued to DfI on 17 Apr 2023 in relation to Rosetta Way "quietway" and also to DAERA on 12 Feb 2024 re School Streets Air Quality but no letter specifically on School Streets Schemes appears to have been issued to DfI
305	Notice of Motion	24/01/2023	Support for striking Health Workers	Cllr Matt Collins	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	Adopted at Standards and Business Committee. Progress to be reported to SP&R
308	Notice of Motion	21/02/2023	Overdose Prevention Facility in Belfast	Cllr Mal O'Hara	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	At SP&R on 24th November 2023 the Committee agreed that, at the request of Councillor Smyth, that a report be submitted at its next monthly meeting with specific reference made to meetings held, legal advice sought and partners engaged with - see no. 346 for reference. A report was brought back to SP&R in January 2024. The Committee noted the contents of the report and that engagement would continue to take place with all the relevant agencies and stakeholders to advocate for such a facility in Belfast.
319	Notice of Motion	27/06/2023	CPR Training and Circuit	Cllr Christina Black	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	The Committee agreed to adopt the motion, with a report to be submitted to a future meeting outlining how it could be facilitated.
326	Issue Raised in Advance	18/08/2023	Data Protection	Cllr Ciaran Beattie	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	Agreed at SP&R that a report will be brought back to Committee
330	Notice of Motion	29/08/2023	Clean Indoor Air Motion	Cllr Jenna Maghie	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	The Committee agreed to adopt the motion, with a report to be submitted to a future meeting outlining how it could be managed, resourced, and facilitated.
331	Notice of Motion	29/08/2023	Save West Wellbeing Suicide Awareness	Cllr Michael Collins	SP&R	Trevor Wallace	Finance & Resources	Ongoing	Update August 24: At the request of Councillor Collins, the Council agreed that the Motion on Save West Wellbeing Suicide Awareness which had been recommended for closure, remained open and be brought back to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for further discussion. A paper was brought to SP&R on 19th April where committee further discussed and agreed that the request be dealt with via the discretionary payments process. The Discretionary payment processed opened at the end of June and closed on 2nd August. Again, West Wellbeing Suicide Awareness did not apply for funding. Update Jan 25 - at Dec Cttee meeting it was decided that this would remain open
337	Notice of Motion	26/09/2023	Right to Food Campaign	Cllr Paul Doherty	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	Response presented to S P and R 24/11/23 - Referred to Social Policy Working Group
347	Notice of Motion	28/11/2023	Cost of School Uniforms and P.E. Kits	Cllr Sarah Bunting	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	
356	Notice of Motion	04/01/2024	Memorial Wall - Covid-19	Cllr Emmett McDonough-Brown	SP&R	Sinead Grimes	Property & Projects	Ongoing	Discussed at the City Hall/ City Hall Grounds Installations Working Group on 18 November 2025.
358	Notice of Motion	04/01/2024	Ulster Bank Closures	Cllr Geraldine McAteer	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	Required letters were sent on 19th January 2024

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360	Notice of	23/01/2024	Transparency by Default at Belfast City Council	Cllr Gary McKeown	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	Motion referred to SP&R
361	Notice of Motion	23/01/2024	Rights-based Ethical Procurement Policy	Cllr Bronach Anglin	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	Motion referred to SP&R. The draft Ethical Procurement Policy is currently under consideration by the Social Value Policy working group which is due to meet on 17th June 2025.
385	Notice of Motion	30/04/2024	Plant Based Councils Initiative	Cllr Anthony Flynn	SP&R	John Tully	City & Organisational Strategy	Ongoing	Internal engagement with Procurement around how to take this forward ongoing. Report to SP&R in due course. To be considered as part of a Council Sustainable Food Policy which is under development.
395	Issue Raised in Advance	24/05/2024	Transfer of Powers - Licensing of Bus Tour Operators in the City	Cllr Ciaran Beattie	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	Discussions ongoing with DFI in relation to bus tour operators generally.
396	Issue Raised in Advance	24/05/2024	Connection of Water Supply to Social Homes	Cllr Michael Donnelly	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	
402	Issue Raised in Advance	20/09/2024	Sunday Trading - Pilot Scheme	Cllr Sam Nelson	SP&R	Kate Bentley	Place & Economy	Ongoing	Following Council's decision in July 2025, a public consultation will be launched in February to progress the Holiday Resort designation citywide, enabling extended Sunday trading hours.
407	Notice of Motion	24/10/2024	Blood and Bone Marrow Donations	Cllr Christine Bower	SP&R	Christine Sheridan	Human Resources	Recommend Close	Recommended for closure (category 1) Corporate HR have worked with our Internal Communications Team to raise awareness on blood and bone marrow donations across the organisation, including an article on Interlink on organ and stem cell donations, details on how to register to become an organ or stem cell donor and how the process works. After a very successful blood donation session in City Hall last year, another session is planned before the summer.
409	Notice of Motion	24/10/2024	NILGOSC - Disposal of Government Bonds	Cllr Carl Whyte	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	
411	Issue Raised in Advance	25/10/2024	Fundraising box at the City Hall Christmas Tree	Cllr Gary McKeown	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	
417	Notice of Motion	21/11/2024	Addressing Educational Inequalities in Belfast	Cllr David Bell	SP&R	John Tully	City & Organisational Strategy	Ongoing	Engagement continues with Departmental Officials and designated RAISE locality coordinators in the context of the Belfast Agenda and Community Planning partnership structures.
432	Notice of Motion	20/02/2025	Action to Address Empty Homes	Cllr Michael Collins	SP&R	Kate Bentley	Place & Economy	Ongoing	This motion is being progressed by the Planning and Building Control and City Regeneration and Development directorates, and a report will be brought to a future meeting.
433	Notice of Motion	20/02/2025	Developing a Sponsorship and Philanthropy Network in Belfast	Cllr Michael Long	SP&R	John Tully	City & Organisational Strategy	Ongoing	Work continues on the development of a draft Corporate Social Responsibility Framework which will reflect the intention behind the NOM (developing a sponsorship and philanthropy network in Belfast). Engagement planned for early 2026 with Social Policy Working Group. Party Groups leaders and Members to help inform the emerging thinking
439	Issue Raised in Advance	21/03/2025	LORAG - Youth Club Development - Council Land	Cllr Ciaran Beattie	SP&R	Sinead Grimes	Property & Projects	Ongoing	Assignment of the Lease from The Trustees of St John Vianney to LORAG has been completed on 25th November 2025 however Ministerial consent is pending. Application on process for less than best rent value being applied.
440	Issue Raised in Advance	21/03/2025	Bi-weekly meeting of Strategic Policy and Resources Committee: Efficiency/Consultancy Paper	Cllr Ciaran Beattie	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	Workshop taking place 13/06/25.
446	Notice of Motion	28/04/2025	Pathways to Work Green Paper	Cllr Paul Doherty	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic Services	Ongoing	Democratic Services sent letter to OFMDFM & Minister for Communities on 15/05/25. Awaiting response.
447	Notice of Motion	28/04/2025	US War Planes out of Belfast	Cllr Michael Collins	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	Democratic Services sent letter to OFMDFM, Westminster Government and Aldergrove Airport re NOM - Awaiting response.
448	Notice of Motion	28/04/2025	National Famine Commemoration Day	Cllr Conor McKay	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	Democratic Services sent letter to Irish Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media on 15/05/25. Awaiting response.
455	Issue Raised in Advance	23/05/2025	The installation of dual-language signage in Olympia, including GLL/BETTER information	Cllr Ciaran Beattie	SP&R	Sinead Grimes	Property & Projects	Ongoing	Progressing.
456	Issue Raised in Advance	23/05/2025	The installation of dual-language signage on the Forth-Meadow Greenway	Cllr Ciaran Beattie	SP&R	Sinead Grimes	Property & Projects	Ongoing	Signage package out to tender at present. Tender returned expected mid December 2025 with a view to appointing a contractor.
457	Issue Raised in Advance	23/05/2025	An update on the next stage in the development	Cllr Ciaran Beattie	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	
474	Notice of Motion	23/10/2025	Together - Building a United Community Strategy	Cllr Sam Nelson	SP&R	Sinead Grimes	Property & Projects	Ongoing	Ongoing.
478	Notice of Motion	23/10/2025	Parents' Attendance Records at Council	Cllr Jenna Maghie	SP&R	Nora Largey	Legal & Civic	Ongoing	
479	Issue Raised in Advance	24/10/2025	Levels of criminality and violence in the City Centre	Cllr Ciaran Beattie	SP&R	David Sales	City & Neighbourhood Services	Recommend Close	Recommend to Close (Category 1) As requested a multi agency meeting was held on the 8th Dec 25.

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Subject:	Response received from Andrew Muir, Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs re Greyhound Racing
Date:	20th February, 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance Manager

Restricted Reports													
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>												
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 													
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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 or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To note the correspondence received from Andrew Muir, Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the correspondence as set out in the report and agree to the closure of the motion.
3.0	Main report
	Key Issues
3.1	The Committee will recall that, at the Council meeting held on 3rd November, 2025, it was agreed to write to the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs to “improve the regulation of greyhound racing, noting the developments in other jurisdictions, and to support rehoming efforts and welfare organisations working to protect retired greyhounds.”
3.2	The Committee is advised that a response has been received from the Minister.
3.3	In his response he advises that, due to a constrained Assembly mandate he unfortunately has to prioritise interventions possible during the limited Assembly term. As a result his efforts are currently focused on delivering the priorities established in his Animal Welfare Pathway.
3.4	The priorities were determined following extensive stakeholder consultation, including animal welfare organisations and councils, to identify areas in most need of reform. While greyhound racing was not identified as a concern during those discussions, reforms such as bringing forward the necessary legislation to prohibit third-party sales of puppies, strengthening microchipping requirements, regulation of rescue and rehoming organisations and a review of dog breeding regulations would apply to all dogs, including greyhounds.
3.5	He adds that he believes that exploring the issue fully and progressing any relevant intervention in greyhound racing is a matter that would warrant thorough consideration in the next full five-year Assembly mandate.
	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u>

	None associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Response from Andrew Muir, Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

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**From the Office of the
Minister of Agriculture,
Environment and Rural Affairs**



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department of

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Louise McLornan
Committee Services Officer
Legal and Civic Services Department
Belfast City Council
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BT1 5GS
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DAERA Private Office
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303 Airport Road West
Sydenham Intake
Belfast, BT3 9ED
Telephone: 028 9052 4140
Email: private.office@daera-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: COR-0912-2025
Date: 1 December 2025

Dear Louise

LM/03.11.2025 – GREYHOUND RACING

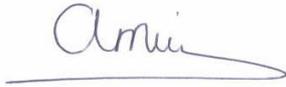
Thank you for your letter of 17 November 2025 advising that Belfast City Council has passed a motion to call on the Northern Ireland Executive and my Department to improve regulation of greyhound racing, noting the developments in other jurisdictions, and to support rehoming efforts and welfare organisations working to protect retired greyhounds.

I am aware of recent developments in other jurisdictions with officials engaging with relevant stakeholders. However, due to a constrained Assembly mandate I unfortunately have to prioritise interventions possible during the limited Assembly term. As a result my efforts are currently focused on delivering the priorities established in my Animal Welfare Pathway. These priorities were determined following extensive stakeholder consultation, including animal welfare organisations and councils, to identify areas in most need of reform while taking into account the limited time remaining in the current mandate.

Greyhound racing was not identified as a concern during these discussions and, as a result, was not included as a specific focus within the Pathway. However, reforms such as bringing forward the necessary legislation to prohibit third-party sales of puppies, strengthening microchipping requirements, regulation of rescue and rehoming organisations and a review of dog breeding regulations will apply to all dogs, including greyhounds.

While greyhounds are afforded the same protections as other dogs under the Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, I believe that exploring the exploring the issue fully and progressing any relevant intervention in greyhound racing is a matter that would warrant thorough consideration in the next full five-year Assembly mandate.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A. Muir". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line that extends to the right.

ANDREW MUIR MLA
Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs



Subject:	Notice of Motion – City Centre Gritting Feasibility Study
Date:	20th February, 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Eilish McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance Coordinator

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 consider a motion in relation to City Centre Gritting Feasibility Study, which was referred to the Committee by the Standards and Business Committee at its meeting on 27th January, 2026.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or fall within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.

	At this stage, the Committee is asked to note that the notice of motion has been received and that, if agreed, a subsequent report will be brought back to the Committee outlining a detailed consideration of the motion and the potential cost implications.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>At the meeting of the Standards and Business Committee held on 27th January, the following motion, which was proposed by Councillor Smyth and seconded by Councillor Groogan was referred to the Committee for consideration:</p>
3.2	<p><u>City Centre Gritting Feasibility Study</u></p> <p>“This Council notes that the Department for Infrastructure currently grits only 20% of the road network across Northern Ireland as part of its winter service programme.</p> <p>This limited coverage excludes pavements and cycle lanes, critical routes for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly in Belfast City Centre where footfall is highest.</p> <p>This Council recognises the health, safety, and accessibility issues caused by untreated pavements and active travel routes during winter months. Impacting workers, residents, those with mobility issues, and visitors as well as discouraging walking and cycling at a time when sustainable transport remains a key council priority.</p> <p>Therefore, this Council calls on the Department for Infrastructure and Belfast City Council to jointly undertake a feasibility study into the development of a winter gritting programme within the Belfast City Centre area, with a focus on pedestrian routes and cycle lanes.</p> <p>This feasibility study should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the operational and financial requirements of such a programme and explore potential sources of capital grant funding from the Department for Infrastructure for the purchase of appropriate gritting and maintenance machinery. As well as identifying how Belfast City Council could support delivery through associated staffing and coordination costs.” <p>Proposer: Councillor Brian Smyth</p> <p>Seconder: Councillor Áine Groogan</p>
3.3	The motion calls upon the Council to jointly undertake a city centre gritting feasibility study. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for the allocation of resources and the motion will be referred to that Committee.

3.4	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> 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.
3.5	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> None associated with this report.

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Subject:	Notice of Motion – Faith-Based Organisations and Addiction Services
Date:	20th February, 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Eilish McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance Coordinator.

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 consider a motion in relation to Faith-Based Organisations and Addiction Services, which was referred to the Committee by the Standards and Business Committee at its meeting on 27th January, 2026.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or fall within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.

	At this stage, the Committee is asked to note that the notice of motion has been received and that, if agreed, a subsequent report will be brought back to the Committee outlining a detailed consideration of the motion and the potential cost implications.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>At the meeting of the Standards and Business Committee held on 27th January, the following motion, which was proposed by Alderman McCullough and seconded by Councillor Bunting was referred to the Committee for consideration:</p>
3.2	<p><u>Ensuring Fair Access to Funding for Faith-Based Organisations Tackling Addiction</u></p> <p>“Belfast City Council recognises the essential role played by faith-based organisations in serving the most vulnerable members of our city, particularly those battling life-controlling issues such as drug and alcohol addiction.</p> <p>This Council acknowledges the work of Teen Challenge Belfast, a registered charity which provides critical intervention services to individuals struggling with addiction. These include on-street outreach, counselling, crisis intervention, and referrals to an 11-month residential rehabilitation programme – reportedly delivering an estimated 85% success rate.</p> <p>This Council further notes that, despite delivering life-saving services without discrimination, organisations such as Teen Challenge face structural barriers to funding due to their faith-based governance models – barriers which inhibit access to public funding streams otherwise available to comparable service providers.</p> <p>Accordingly, this Council commits to reviewing its current funding arrangements and eligibility criteria, with a view to removing unnecessary obstacles that exclude faith-based organisations from applying for and receiving support – provided their services are offered to all, without discrimination, and meet the pressing social needs of our communities.</p> <p>This Council further calls on officers to bring forward proposals to ensure that funding frameworks are inclusive of organisations with a faith ethos, in recognition of the diverse contributions required to tackle addiction, homelessness, and social vulnerability across Belfast.”</p> <p>Proposer: Alderman Dean A. McCullough</p> <p>Seconder: Councillor Sarah Bunting</p>
3.3	The motion calls upon the Council to review funding arrangements and eligibility criteria. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for the Community Support Plan and the motion will be referred to that Committee.

3.4	<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>
3.5	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>

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Subject:	Notice of Motion – Fleadh Cheoil 2026 – Legacy Monument for Belfast
Date:	20th February, 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Eilish McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance Coordinator.

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 consider a motion in relation to Fleadh Cheoil 2026 – Legacy Monument for Belfast, which was referred to the Committee by the Standards and Business Committee at its meeting on 27th January, 2026.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note that, in accordance with Standing Orders, Notices of Motion which commit the Council to expenditure or fall within the remit of a particular Committee must be referred to the appropriate committee for consideration and report.

	At this stage, the Committee is asked to note that the notice of motion has been received and that, if agreed, a subsequent report will be brought back to the Committee outlining a detailed consideration of the motion and the potential cost implications.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>At the meeting of the Standards and Business Committee held on 27th January, the following motion, which was proposed by the Deputy Lord Mayor (Councillor Doherty) and seconded by Councillor Whyte was referred to the Committee for consideration:</p>
3.2	<p><u>Fleadh Cheoil 2026 Legacy Monument for Belfast</u></p> <p>“This Council notes that Belfast will host Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026, one of the most significant cultural events ever held in the city, celebrating Irish traditional music and delivering major cultural and economic benefits.</p> <p>The Council further notes the legacy approach taken by other host cities, including Wexford, which installed a permanent Fleadh Harp monument following the festival.</p> <p>This Council believes Belfast should create a visible and enduring legacy to mark the success of hosting Fleadh 2026 and to celebrate the city’s historic and contemporary contribution to Irish traditional music.</p> <p>Accordingly, this Council agrees to install a permanent Fleadh Legacy Monument, outside the Assembly Rooms, recognising its status as the home of Belfast’s Harp Festival, in time for Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026.</p> <p>The Council further agrees that the monument should be delivered using Council resources and supported where possible through potential sponsorship and external funding, with engagement from artists and relevant cultural partners.”</p> <p>Proposer: Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Paul Doherty</p> <p>Seconder: Councillor Carl Whyte</p>
3.3	The motion calls upon the Council to install a legacy monument for the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026. The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for the allocation of resources and the motion will be referred to that Committee.
3.4	<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>
3.5	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>



Subject:	Correspondence received from Minister of Justice - Standalone Hate Crime Bill
Date:	20th February, 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Eilish McGoldrick, Democratic Services and Governance Co-ordinator

Restricted Reports													
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>												
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 													
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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 or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To note the correspondence received from the Minister of Justice in relation to the need for a standalone Hate Crime Bill.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the correspondence as set out in the report.
3.0	Main report
	Key Issues
3.1	The Committee will recall that, at its meeting on 21st November, the Members of the Committee were provided with an update on the results of a formal public consultation on draft byelaws for the city centre and further engagement.
3.2	During discussion, the Committee agreed that, to deal with some of the obstructive, threatening and abusive behaviour in the city centre, it write to the Justice Minister to outline the need for a standalone Hate Crime Bill and highlight the requirement for an additional class of offenses, noting that the change model in sentencing did not go far enough.
3.3	Subsequently, Democratic Services wrote to the Minister for Justice and a response has been received at Appendix 1.
3.4	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u> None associated with this report.
3.5	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u> None associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Response from the Justice Minister.

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Minister's Office Block C,
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Ballymiscaw
Belfast
BT4 3SG
Tel: 028 9076 5723
DOJ.MinistersOffice@justice-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: COR-1046-2025

Your Ref: EMJM181225

Ms Eilish McGoldrick
Democratic Services and Governance Coordinator
Belfast City Council
Via email: mcgoldricke@belfastcity.gov.uk

9 January 2026

Dear Eilish,

Thank you for your letter of 18 December. I share the concern of Committee Members regarding obstructive, threatening and abusive behaviour in Belfast city centre.

One of my priorities as Justice Minister has been to improve support and legislative protections for victims of hate crime. Proposed new legislative provisions in this Assembly mandate will modernise hate crime law in Northern Ireland and provide a more robust system to sanction offenders. These provisions will be delivered through a Sentencing Bill, that I plan to introduce to the Assembly in early 2026, and a Victims and Witnesses of Crime Bill - planned for introduction in spring 2026.

The loss of two years of Assembly business time and the constraint on resources left insufficient time and resource to accommodate the introduction of a stand-alone Hate Crime Bill in the current mandate. The staged approach which I adopted was specifically

to ensure that the key recommended provisions from Judge Marrinan's review of hate crime will be in place before they would have had I remained wedded to a stand-alone alone Hate Crime Bill which would have fallen into the next mandate, given the restricted legislative programme in this short mandate. Thankfully, it also does no injury to the efficacy of the provisions themselves.

The statutory aggravation model to be included in the Sentencing Bill will become the core method of prosecuting hate crimes in Northern Ireland, allowing all existing criminal offences to be aggravated by hostility based on membership or perceived membership of a protected group. Increased sentences will be allowed, within existing sentence ranges, for aggravated offences. It will also recognise intersectionality for current protected groups by allowing recording of hostility towards more than one protected group in a single offence.

Additional support for victims and witnesses will be included in the Victims and Witnesses of Crime Bill which will include provisions to allow automatic eligibility for consideration of special measures (such as giving evidence by video link) and protection from in-person cross-examination by the defendant in hate crime cases. These measures aim to help improve the quality of the evidence given by the victim or witness and give the victim greater certainty from the outset that they would not have to face the accused in court.

Regarding the issues being considered by the Council Committee, the Department recognises the importance of freedom of expression, as well as the challenges associated with it when speech becomes hateful. The remainder of Judge Marrinan's recommendations, including freedom of expression and stirring up offences will be considered in the next mandate, to allow policy development work and consultation required in advance of legislation being drafted to take place.

Legislation alone will not stop manifestations of prejudice and hate in our society. Addressing hate and prejudice requires a cross-government approach and my

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER

Department is engaged in ongoing work with other Departments to tackle the enabling factors of hate crime and align respective strategies and policies - for example, to connect the TEO Racial Equality Strategy and Together: Building a United Community with the Department's work on Community Safety. This work can help enhance efforts to tackle inequalities, promote good relations and strengthen social cohesion.

Yours sincerely



NAOMI LONG MLA
Minister of Justice

Please ensure that you quote our reference number in any future related correspondence.

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Subject:	Draft City Centre Byelaws
Date:	20 February 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor / Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Russell Connelly, Policy, Research and Compliance Officer

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 	
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
<p>After Committee Decision</p> <p>After Council Decision</p> <p>Sometime in the future</p> <p>Never</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <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	The purpose of this report is to consider draft bye laws for the city centre in relation to amenity issues and the display of graphic imagery.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>It is recommended that Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider the contents of this report; • authorise officers to formally consult the Department for Communities in relation to both draft bye laws; • Note that a further update report will be presented to Committee after that formal engagement concludes before final approval of the bye laws is sought.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>Members will recall that on 21 November 2025 Committee agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to write to the Justice Minister to, among other things, outline the need for a standalone Hate Crime Bill. • to write to the Chief Constable to seek clarity in the use of the PSNI powers under Articles 9, 18 and 19 of The Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987 <p>Committee noted that a report would be submitted to a future committee in relation to the display of promotional material (including graphic imagery) in the city centre.</p> <p>Members will also recall that on 19th December 2025 Committee agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to authorise officers to engage with the Department for Communities in relation to revised draft bye laws which related only to arrangements for special events, such as the Fleadh; and • that a report be submitted to the Committee in February in relation to the options on the remainder of the revised draft bye laws, including the enforcement of existing bye laws. <p>This report will provide updates in respect of the above.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Correspondence from the Justice Minister and PSNI</u></p> <p>Correspondence has been received from the Justice Minister, which states that proposed new legislative provisions in this Assembly mandate will modernise hate crime law in Northern Ireland and provide a more robust system to sanction offenders. These provisions will be</p>

	<p>delivered through a Sentencing Bill that the Minister plans to introduce to the Assembly in early 2026, and a Victims and Witnesses of Crime Bill - planned for introduction in spring 2026.</p> <p>No correspondence has yet been received from the PSNI.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Bye laws for Special Events</u></p> <p>Officers met with representatives from the Department for Communities informally in relation to bye laws for special events in the city, such as the Fleadh. Those discussions remain ongoing but at this time, whilst it would be preferable to have the powers in relation to special events, it is considered unlikely to be necessary to have these powers in place prior to the Fleadh. This will be kept under review should the Council be successful in its bid for the Fleadh in 2027.</p>
3.4	<p><u>Graphic Imagery</u></p> <p>Members will be aware that the set of draft bye laws published for consultation between 27th November 2023 and 4th March 2024 contained provisions relating to promotional literature and information.</p> <p>As noted in the report that went to Committee on 21st November 2025, feedback from the public consultation indicated that the display of certain images in the city centre has a mixed reception. Whilst the majority of respondents indicated quantitatively that their experience was positive, the written comments of those not in favour of the display of graphic imagery (particularly with regards to abortion) expressed strong views to the contrary.</p> <p>Respondents commented that images displayed by pro-life / anti-abortion groups are 'medically sensitive', 'highly triggering', cause 'stress', are 'disturbing', 'hugely traumatising for anyone that has been through a 'pregnancy loss' and 'should not be seen by children'. It was suggested that the use of 'very graphic images / contentious campaigns should only be used after 9:30 pm / similar to TV watershed', which would 'help balance equality with freedom of speech'.</p> <p>Those whose experience of graphic imagery was positive commented that it is 'important that Belfast is a space for inclusive views which allows everyone to express and share them freely and openly', that it 'offers a diverse range of information' and that 'it helps people understand'. Respondents commented on the importance of freedom of expression, noting that 'people should be free to promote or protest whatever images they want'. Respondents commented that if people don't like certain imagery, 'they don't have to look at it'. Although respondents acknowledged that some graphic imagery 'might be difficult to look at', it should not be 'censored' and that it is important for 'raising awareness'. It was also noted that such imagery is less 'intrusive' than loud noise.</p>

3.5

European Convention on Human Rights

It was clear from the consultation responses that respondents attached great importance to the (qualified) human rights afforded by the European Convention on Human Rights.

Members will be aware that freedom of expression is a fundamental right protected under the Human Rights Act 1998 by Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. It is established that protection under Article 10 extends to the expression of views that may shock, disturb or offend the deeply held beliefs of others.

Article 10 is not an absolute but a qualified right; the rights of the individual must be balanced against the interests of society. The draft bye law in relation to graphic imagery seeks to strike the proper balance between those competing interests. When drafting the bye law, officers were conscious that any restrictions on freedom of expression must always be clearly set out in law, necessary in a democratic society for a legitimate aim, and proportionate.

In any situation where there is a proposed interference with freedom of expression, a balance must be struck between the right of the individual to express themselves and the broader public interest justifying the interference (for example, the protection of the rights of others). In particular, the restriction must be proportionate to the legitimate purpose that the state or public bodies are seeking to uphold.

The draft bye law therefore is deliberately narrow in scope, with clear and objective definitions. Members will note that the proposed bye law will not prevent those who are opposed to abortion from protesting, displaying posters, handing out promotional materials etc. Promotional materials which contain graphic imagery as defined in the bye laws are permitted but must be no more than A4 size and contained within an envelope bearing an appropriate warning.

The bye law is intended to address the display of graphic images intended to draw the public's attention whereby the sight of such material is unavoidable. It will not preclude the handing out of any leaflets, flyers or other small scale printed materials provided they are supplied in an opaque envelope with an appropriate advisory warning.

Furthermore, the bye law would only apply in the City Centre and not throughout the City.

3.6	<p><u>Next Steps</u></p> <p>Subject to Committee’s agreement, officers will commence formal engagement with DfC in relation to both sets of Bye Laws and will also seek updated counsel opinion on the proposed bye law relating to graphic imagery.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no financial or resource implications connected to this report. As outlined in the report tabled on 21st November 2025, there will be resource implications in enforcing the bye laws if approved by DfC. This remains under consideration and more detail will be provided before the final proposed bye laws presented to Committee for approval.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>3.8 An equality screening was carried out on the draft bye laws that were presented for public consultation. This draft screening will be updated in light of the consultation findings and brought back to Members for noting.</p> <p>Further screening will be undertaken on the Bye Laws as they progress.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1: Draft Bye Laws for the Regulation of Graphic Imagery in the City Centre</p> <p>Appendix 2: Draft Amenity Bye Laws for the City Centre</p>

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BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

**BYE-LAWS FOR THE GOOD GOVERNANCE OF BELFAST CITY CENTRE AND
THE PREVENTION AND SUPPRESSION OF NUISANCE**

THE REGULATION OF GRAPHIC IMAGERY

DRAFT

Made by Belfast City Council :

**Confirmed by Department for
Communities :**

In operation on and from :

General Provisions

2. These Bye-Laws apply to the City Centre as shown in the map at Schedule One.
3. Notice of the effect of these Bye-Laws shall be given by signs placed in such positions as the Council may consider adequate to inform persons of their existence.

Display of Graphic Imagery

4. (1) It shall be an offence for a person to display, or cause to be displayed, graphic imagery in the City Centre either on a temporary or permanent basis.
(2) Any reference in these Bye-laws to a person displaying graphic imagery includes:
 - (a) any person who is in control of, possesses or owns graphic imagery being displayed in the City Centre;
 - (b) any person who affixes graphic imagery to any item, structure or thing so that it is visible to the general public in the City Centre;
 - (c) any person who otherwise displays graphic imagery, whether on their person, on clothing or on some other item, structure or thing in the City Centre.
5. These Bye-Laws shall not apply to the distribution of leaflets, flyers, pamphlets, brochures or booklets containing graphic imagery or other small scale printed materials [which are less than A4 dimensions] provided they are enclosed within an opaque envelope with a suitable warning on the front.

Offences

6. Any person who contravenes these Bye-Laws shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £500.
7. A person who obstructs or impedes or refuses to comply with a request of an authorised person acting in the exercise of the functions conferred on an authorised officer shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £500.
8. Where an authorised officer is of the opinion that a person is committing or has committed an offence under either of the two preceding bye-laws the authorised person may demand the name and address of such a person and if that demand is refused or the

person gives a name and address which is false or misleading, that person shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £500.

Fixed Payment Notice

9. Where an authorised officer of the Council has reason to believe that a person has committed an offence under these Bye Laws, the officer may give that person a notice offering the person the opportunity of discharging any liability to conviction for that offence by payment of a fixed penalty to the Council.

10. Where a person is given a fixed penalty notice under these Bye Laws:

(a) no proceedings may be instituted for that offence before the expiration of the period of 14 days following the date of the notice; and

(b) the person shall not be convicted of that offence if the person pays the fixed penalty before the expiration of that period.

11. A notice under this section must give such particulars of the circumstances alleged to constitute the offence as are necessary for giving reasonable information of the offence.

12. The Fixed Penalty Notice shall specify the name and address of the alleged offender and in general terms the nature of the contravention alleged to have been committed; and the date and place of the alleged contravention.

13. This Bye-Law will not prejudice the Council's ability to pursue enforcement action under Parts 4 & 7 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 or the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

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BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

**BYE-LAWS FOR THE GOOD GOVERNANCE OF BELFAST CITY CENTRE
AND FOR THE PREVENTION AND SUPPRESSION OF NUISANCES IN BELFAST CITY
CENTRE**

Made by Belfast City Council :

**Confirmed by Department for
Communities :**

In operation on and from :

**BYE – LAWS
BELFAST CITY COUNCIL
FOR THE GOOD GOVERNANCE OF BELFAST CITY CENTRE AND FOR THE
PREVENTION AND SUPPRESSION OF NUISANCES IN BELFAST CITY CENTRE**

Bye-Laws made the _____ by Belfast City Council pursuant to Section 90 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972 for the good rule and government of its City Centre and the prevention and suppression of nuisances in its City Centre at a meeting of the Council held on _____

INTERPRETATION

1. In these Bye-Laws -

‘Authorised Officer’ means any person employed by the Council or any other person authorised by the Council to carry out functions under these Bye-Laws for purposes of Section 93 of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972.

‘City Centre’ means the area delineated in [colour tbc] in the map at Schedule One.

‘Council’ means Belfast City Council.

‘Perform’ means to engage in any type of public performance or exhibition with the reasonable expectation of attracting bystanders and / or receiving donations, and includes but is not limited to the playing of musical instruments, singing, circus-based skills, street theatre, reciting and public speaking and any other type of performance or exhibition not specifically listed but which would be similar in character. For the purposes of this Bye-Law this also includes preaching.

‘Performer’ means a person who engages in any activity described in the preceding paragraph in a Public Place.

‘Public Place’ means any area open to the public including any street, road, footpath, open space, park, cemetery, green space and amenity areas.

‘Special Event’ means a large scale event which is to take place in Belfast which is exceptional in nature and will attract a significant number of visitors to the city.

General Provisions

2. These Bye-Laws apply to the City Centre as shown in the map at Schedule One.
3. Notice of the effect of these Bye-Laws shall be given by signs placed in such positions as the Council may consider adequate to inform persons of their existence.

- a. No person shall, after being requested to desist by an Authorised Officer cause or permit any noise to be made above 70 decibels by
 - i. Playing a musical instrument; and/or
 - ii. operating or permitting to be operated any audio device, speaker, amplifier, or similar equipment of a similar type
4. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3, where there are 2 or more Performers within 100 metres of each other and it appears to an Authorised Officer that there is a cumulative effect of the noise which is so loud or continuous as to give reasonable cause for annoyance to other persons either within places of work or in a Public Place, an Authorised Officer may ask the Performers to reduce their volume and/or to relocate to another place to perform.

Behaviour and Conduct of Performers

5. A Performer must not obstruct the public's access to and egress from any premises or interfere with the free and safe movement of pedestrians.
6. A Performer must comply with any Code of Conduct issued by the Council, which may be amended from time to time.

Exemptions

7. These Bye-Laws shall not apply to the following activities:
 - (a) Those activities taking place in a public place pursuant to an entertainment licence;
 - (b) Those activities taking place in a public place with the consent of Department of Infrastructure or the relevant landowner;
 - (c) Any procession which has been authorised by the Parades Commission;
 - (d) A cash collection in a public place which has been authorised by PSNI pursuant to The Charities Act (NI) 2008; and
 - (e) An official picket pursuant to Article 98 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (NI) Order 1995.

Offences

8. A person who fails, without a reasonable excuse, to comply with a reasonable request from an Authorised Officer pursuant to Paragraphs 3 or 4 will be guilty of an offence
9. Any person who contravenes any of these Bye-Laws shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 of the standard scale.
10. Where an Authorised Officer is of the opinion that a person is committing or has committed an offence under the preceding Bye-Law, the Authorised Officer may demand the name and address of such a person and if that demand is refused or the person gives a name and address which is false or misleading,

that person shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £500.

Fixed Payment Notice

11. Where an Authorised Officer has reason to believe that a person has committed an offence under these Bye-Laws, the Authorised Officer may give that person a notice offering the person the opportunity of discharging any liability to conviction for that offence by payment of a fixed penalty to the Council.
12. Where a person is given a fixed penalty notice under these Bye-Laws:
 - (a) no proceedings shall be instituted for that offence before the expiration of the period of 14 days following the date of the notice; and
 - (b) the person shall not be convicted of that offence if the person pays the fixed penalty before the expiration of that period.
13. A notice under this section must give such particulars of the circumstances alleged to constitute the offence as are necessary for giving reasonable information of the offence.
14. The Fixed Penalty Notice shall specify the name and address of the alleged offender and in general terms the nature of the contravention alleged to have been committed and the date and place of the alleged contravention.

Miscellaneous and Supplementary

Special Events

The Council may restrict or prohibit the use of amplification by Performers in certain areas of the City Centre when there is a Special Event due to take place in the city but only where it is considered necessary to do so for the purposes of facilitating or delivering the event. Any such restriction or prohibition may only be for the duration of the Special Event.

Where the Council proposes to restrict or prohibit the use of amplification for the purposes of a Special Event it shall place notice in 2 newspapers distributed in the city and on its website no less than 2 months prior to the Special Event.

The Council may suspend the prohibition contained within the applicable Belfast City Council Bye-laws prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in public places in certain areas of the city centre for Special Events. Any such suspension may only be for the duration of the Special Event and will be subject to consultation with PSNI and any other relevant stakeholders.

Where the Council proposes to suspend the prohibition contained within the Bye- Laws prohibiting the consumption of alcohol in public places in certain areas of the city centre for the purposes of a Special Event it shall place notice of the proposed restriction or prohibition in 2 local newspapers distributed in the city and on its website no less than 2 months prior to the Special Event.

Surrender of alcohol in designated places

After Paragraph 4 of the Belfast City Council Bye-laws prohibiting the consumption of intoxicating liquor in designated places dated September 2012, insert:

5. (1) If an Authorised Officer reasonably believes that a person is, or has been, consuming intoxicating liquor in a designated public place or intends to consume intoxicating liquor in such a place the Authorised Officer may require the person concerned—

(a) not to consume in that place anything which is, or which the constable reasonably believes to be, intoxicating liquor; and

(b) to surrender anything in his possession which is, or which the constable reasonably believes to be, intoxicating liquor or a container for such liquor.

(3) The Authorised Officer may dispose of anything surrendered to him under paragraph (b) in such manner as he considers appropriate.

(4) A person who fails without reasonable excuse to comply with a requirement imposed on him under paragraph (1) is guilty of an offence.

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

These Bye-Laws will not prejudice the Council's ability to pursue enforcement action under Part 7 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, if appropriate.

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of the **CITY OF BELFAST** in)
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_____))
LORD MAYOR)
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_____))
CHIEF EXECUTIVE)

The foregoing Bye-Laws are hereby confirmed by the Department of Communities for Northern Ireland this day of 202X.

Signed: _____
[job title]

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Subject:	Planning Information
Date:	20 February 2026
Reporting Officer(s):	Kate Bentley, Director of Planning and Building Control
Contact Officer(s):	Ed Baker, Planning Manager (Development Management)

Restricted Reports					
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 					
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?					
<p style="margin: 0;">After Committee Decision</p> <p style="margin: 0;">After Council Decision</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Sometime in the future</p> <p style="margin: 0;">Never</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: 0 auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="width: 30px; height: 20px;"></td></tr> </table>				

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 provide an update on Major planning applications and applications that have been determined by the Planning Committee.

2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The report is for notation.
3.0	Main Report
	<u>Background</u>
3.1	The Committee received an update on Planning Performance at its meeting on the 27 th August 2024. At that meeting and previously, the Committee sought a regular update on Major applications and applications that have been determined by the Planning Committee, especially those where a Decision Notice has yet to be issued.
3.2	All Major applications must be determined by the Planning Committee. The Key Performance Indicator (given in weeks) is calculated from when an application is considered to be valid to when the Decision Notice (“Green Form”) is issued. This means that any delays either pre- or post- committee will impact on the KPI. The target for determining a Major application is 30 weeks.
	<u>Major applications</u>
3.3	Appendix 1 sets out the Major applications that are currently with the Council to determine. Details are given on the location, proposal, the validation date and target date for determination (using the 30 week target set out in the Key Performance Indicator) as well as a status update.
	<u>Applications determined by Committee</u>
3.4	Appendix 2 sets out the applications that have been determined by Committee since February 2022 which are yet to issue. For completeness information is also given on those applications determined by Committee which have had their Decision Notice issued. Details are given on the time taken (in weeks) to bring the applications before Committee and where decisions are yet to be issued, information is given relating to the main reason for the delay.
3.5	Following further discussion at the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee in May 2025, this table has now been amended to include a new non statutory target date and to give more detailed reasons for any delays in determination.
	<u>Conclusion</u>
3.6	This report will be brought to each Planning Committee and to each Strategic Policy and Resources Committee for information on an ongoing basis.
	Financial & Resource Implications
3.7	There are no financial or resource implications associated with this report.
	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
3.8	There are no equality or good relations / rural needs implications associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached

	Appendix 1 – Major planning applications at February 2026
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	Appendix 2 – Applications determined by Committee at February 2026
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Live Major Applications not previously considered by Committee @ 04.02.26

Number	Application No.	Category	Location	Proposal	Date Valid	Target Date	Status
1	LA04/2023/2633/F	Major	St Teresa's GAC, 2 Glen Road Heights, Belfast BT11 8ER	Proposed extension to existing clubhouse to provide indoor sports hall, changing rooms, reception, and fitness suite. Proposed relocation of grass pitch and new 3G training pitch with integrated ball walls. Proposed annex building with club store and matchday shop. Site works including increased parking, fencing, catch nets, floodlighting, dugouts, paths, and other associated amenities.	14-Mar-23	10-Oct-23	Under Consideration
2	LA04/2023/3799/F	Major	Vacant lands (partial site of the former Wolfhill Flax Spinning Mill) located to the south, of Wolfhill Manor, north of Wolfhill Grove and west of Mill Avenue, Ligoniel Road, Belfast, BT14 8NR	New single storey 10-class based primary school, separate nursery school accommodation and school meals accommodation to facilitate the relocation of St. Vincent De Paul Primary School and Nursery from existing site on Ligoniel Road, Belfast. Proposal includes new pedestrian and vehicular accesses onto Mill Avenue, car parking, covered cycle storage area and hard play areas. Hard and soft landscaping including wildlife walkway, fencing, retaining walls, underground drainage system to include the reinstatement of underground storm sewer and headwall into adjacent DFI River wayleave. Includes temporary contractors compound and all associated site works.	09-Oct-23	06-May-24	Under Consideration
Page 969	LA04/2023/4181/F	Major	Lands comprising the existing Sydenham Wastewater Pumping Station west of Park Avenue, Connswater River and King George V Playing Fields, to the south of the Sydenham By-Pass, east of The Oval football stadium, north and east of Parkgate Gardens and north of Parkgate Crescent, Parkgate Parade and Mersey Street, Belfast	Demolition of existing Wastewater Pumping Station (WwPS) with reinstatement of site as a landscaped area. Construction of a replacement WwPS including associated control building and hardstanding, the raising of site levels, in-channel works, provision of new rising main, other ancillary buildings, the creation of an access road on lands within the King George V Playing Fields to serve the facility, landscaping and other ancillary works. Provision of a temporary working area on lands within the King George V Playing Fields, the creation of a temporary access road from Mersey Street to facilitate construction traffic on lands to the rear of 1-35 Parkgate Gardens, the creation of a temporary footway adjacent to 88 Park Avenue and other ancillary development and landscaping restoration works.	14-Nov-23	11-Jun-24	Under Consideration
	LA04/2024/0015/F	Major	Lands at Cabin Hill, Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4	Erection of 53 residential units (including 43 dwellings and 10 apartments) including creation of access, internal roads, landscaping and associated works (revised information).	22-Dec-23	19-Jul-24	Under Consideration
5	LA04/2024/0570/F	Major	Stormont Hotel, 587 Upper Newtownards Road BT4 3LP and adjacent property 37-39 Summerhill Park, Belfast.	Change of use of from hotel, conference centre and offices (sui generis) to a 97-bed care home (Use Class C3(b) and 1,559sqm diagnostic medical facility (Use Class D1(a), associated access, car parking, landscaping and open space.	04-Apr-24	31-Oct-24	Under Consideration
6	LA04/2024/0569/O	Major	Stormont Hotel, 587 Upper Newtownards Road BT4 3LP and adjacent properties at Castleview Road (nos. 2, 4, 6, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28 & 30), Summerhill Parade (nos. 18, 20 & 22), and rear of 160 Barnetts Road, Belfast (amended address)	Outline planning permission with all matter reserved for independent living (Use Class C1) units and up to 62no. assisted living units (Use Class C3), associated internal access roads, communal open space, revised access from Castleview Road, associated car parking, servicing, amenity space and landscaping.	04-Apr-24	31-Oct-24	Under Consideration

7	LA04/2024/0910/F	Major	70 Whitewell Road, Newtownabbey, BT36 7ES Site at Hazelwood Integrated College	Redevelopment of Hazelwood Integrated College to include demolition of existing building and development of new school campus, new sports pitch, outdoor play areas, car parking, hard and soft landscaping and retention and refurbishment of the Listed Building (Graymount House) and other associated site works including a temporary mobile village during the construction process.	23-May-24	19-Dec-24	Under Consideration
8	LA04/2024/2024/RM	Major	Royal Ulster Agricultural Society, the Kings Hall, 488-516 Lisburn Road, Belfast, BT9 6GW	41no. retirement living apartments at Plot 6, parking and landscaping in accordance with outline planning permission LA04/2020/0845/O, seeking approval of layout, scale, appearance and landscaping details	18-Dec-24	16-Jul-25	Under Consideration
9	LA04/2024/2145/F	Major	Lands at North Foreshore / Giant's Park Dargan Road, Belfast, BT3 9LZ	Creation of a new Adventure Park comprising a community / visitor hub building including café, creche, flexible exhibition / community space, ancillary office space and maintenance yard. Development includes community gardens, bmx track, crazy golf, dog park, walking/running/cycle paths, outdoor amphitheatre, bio diversity zones, and recreational facilities. Associated landscaping and infrastructure (drainage, lighting, car / coach parking, WC block etc).	15-Jan-25	13-Aug-25	Under Consideration
10	LA04/2025/0012/F	Major	Lands at the Waterworks Park, located off the Cavehill Road; and lands at Alexandra Park, located between Castleton Gardens and Deacon Street; extending along Castleton Gardens and Camberwell Terrace to the road junction approximately 30 metres to the north west of 347 Antrim Road, Belfast, BT15 2HF	<p>Refurbishment and safety work to the Waterworks upper and lower reservoirs, and Alexandra Park Lake reservoir, to be complemented with wider environmental, landscape and connectivity improvements.</p> <p>The reservoir works comprise of a new overflow structure with reinforcement and protection of the return embankment parallel to the by-wash channel at Waterworks Upper reservoir. Repairs to the upstream face of Waterworks Lower reservoir with the addition of wetland planting to reduce the overall capacity of the reservoir. Removal of an existing parapet wall and embankment reinforcement at the Alexandra Park Lake reservoir.</p> <p>Improvements at Waterworks Park comprise the demolition of the existing Waterworks Bothy and replacement with a new building to include public toilets, Changing facilities, multi-purpose community room and kitchenette. Extension to existing Cavehill Road gatehouse building. Entrance improvements, new events space including multipurpose decking; resurfacing of footways; new pedestrian lighting along key routes; a dog park; replacement platforms and viewing area. New 3-on-3 basketball court; replacement surface to existing small sided 3G pitch; and upgrades to existing Queen Mary's playground.</p> <p>Improvements at Alexandra Park include the resurfacing of footways; new pedestrian lighting along key routes; new reinforced grass event space; new lake viewing area; new public toilets and changing places; entrance improvements. 2no existing bridges replaced; new pedestrian entrance; reimagined peace wall; new multi-sport synthetic surface with cover; and upgrades to existing play parks.</p> <p>Streetscape improvements along Camberwell Terrace and Castleton Gardens include resurfacing of footways with new kerbs; resurfaced carriageways and new tactile paving at pedestrian crossings; and all associated works.</p>	20-Dec-24	18-Jul-25	Under Consideration
11	LA04/2024/2134/F	Major	Site of the former Dunmurry Cricket Club, Ashley Park, Dunmurry, Belfast BT17 0QQ, located north of 1-10 Ashley Park and south of 1-20 Areema Grove and Areema Drive, Dunmurry.	Mixed use scheme for new community recreational facilities, including basketball court, parkland and residential development comprising 37no social/affordable housing units with landscaping and associated works.	21-Dec-24	19-Jul-25	Under Consideration

12	LA04/2025/0088/F	Major	Lands adjacent and south west of Monagh By-pass, north west of Nos. 17, 19 and 22 Black Ridge Gardens and c.150 metres south east of Nos. 38 to 70 (evens) Black Ridge View (part of the wider Glenmona mixed-use development), Belfast	Proposed mixed use development (in lieu of the previously approved employment zone under LA04/2020/0804/F) comprising a three storey building of 36 no. Category 1 (over 55's) social housing apartments and 7 no. single storey Class B1/B2 Business/Light Industrial Units. Development includes 2 no. access points, car parking, landscaping and all associated site works	17-Feb-25	15-Sep-25	Under Consideration
13	LA04/2025/0184/O	Major	38-52 Lisburn Road, Malone Lower, Belfast, BT9 6AA	Seven storey building (39.3m AOD) mixed use development comprising of Use Class B1 (c): Business, Research & Development and Use Class, D1: Community and Cultural Uses, including landscaping, parking, and servicing (Amended Description).	10-Feb-25	08-Sep-25	Under Consideration
14	LA04/2025/0574/F	Major	Surface level car park at lands to east of Lanyon Place Station Mays Meadow, Belfast, BT1 3NR	Erection of eight storey building comprising seven floors of grade A office accommodation, ground floor retail / business units together with car parking (15 no. spaces), cycle parking and plant areas: and public realm improvements including dedicated drop-off area to front of building	17-Apr-25	13-Nov-25	Under Consideration
15	LA04/2025/0974/F	Major	Site to the south of the former Knockbreda High School. Lands bounded by the A55 Upper Knockbreda Road to the south and south-east, Wynchurch Road to the north-east, Knockbreda Primary School to the north and Knockbreda Park to the west.	Development of a new primary school building for Forge Integrated Primary School. including development of a nursery unit, hard and soft play areas, landscaping, car parking, internal drop-off areas and new access arrangements onto the A55 Knockbreda Road via a new signalised junction; demolition of no. 138a Knockbreda Park and associated site works	04-Jun-25	31-Dec-25	Under Consideration
Page 171	LA04/2025/1272/F	Major	Harberton North Special School 29a Fortwilliam Park, Belfast, BT15 4AP	Erection of temporary mobile classroom village to facilitate future refurbishment and extension of existing Harberton North Special School, comprising 3 no. 2-storey blocks of temporary classroom accommodation, temporary hard play areas, temporary staff and visitor parking areas, tree removal and landscpaing. (Amended Plans)	31-Jul-25	13-Nov-25	Under Consideration
17	LA04/2025/1716/F	Major	Santander House, 1 Mays Meadow, Belfast, BT1 3PH	Proposed change of use from, Use class B1(a) office, to short term Transitional Care Unit, Use Class C3 b) comprising of 73 no. ensuite beds, associated ancillary facilities including café, rehabilitation suites and treatment rooms, laboratory, consulting rooms, 2 no. external terraces and all other ancillary, staff and storage rooms. Development includes ambulance drop off bay, replacement of existing windows, and all other associated site and access works.	05-Nov-25	03-Jun-26	Under Consideration
18	LA04/2025/1896/F	Major	Former Belfast Metropolitan College Campus Whiterock Road, Belfast, BT12 7PH	Proposed mixed use development comprising of 77 No. social housing units (mix of 26 dwellings and 51 apartments) and a new children's centre, car parking, landscaping, open space, access and all associated site works including the installation of a new substation.(amendment to planning permission ref: LA04/2024/0122/F).	06-Nov-25	04-Jun-26	Under Consideration
19	LA04/2025/2013/F	Major	Netherleigh House, 1 Massey Avenue, Belfast, BT4 2JP	Change of use of Netherleigh House and existing office block to provide residential and nursing care facilities. Extensions to existing office block including a fourth storey floor, eastern and western gable extension and two front projections from the northern elevation. Erection of 36 no. assisted living apartments over two four storey blocks. Site parking, landscaped amenity areas, woodland trails and all associated site works	18-Nov-25	16-Jun-26	Under Consideration

20	LA04/2025/2018/F	Major	Lands at Donegall Quay, Tomb St. to north of Albert Square, Gamble St. to south of Corporation Sq, Little Patrick St. to east of Nelson St. & under the M3 bridge at Donegall Quay and Corporation St., Belfast, BT1 1AA	Public realm and road improvements including development of urban recreation space below the M3 flyover at Corporation Street / Tomb Street and new public space below the M3 flyover at Donegall Quay.	19-Nov-25	17-Jun-26	Under Consideration
21	LA04/2025/1991/F	Major	Makro, 97 Kingsway, Belfast, BT17 9NS	Subdivision of the existing cash and carry building and the change of use of 4,750 sq,m gross floorspace for use as a Class A1 retail; erection of new loading bay in service yard; minor external alterations to building; reconfiguration of car park.	03-Dec-25	01-Jul-26	Under Consideration
22	LA04/2025/2113/F	Major	St. Marys Christian Brothers Grammar School St Marys Christian Brothers Grammar School 147a Glen Road, Andersonstown, Belfast, BT11 8NR	The construction of a new Sports Hall, Gymnasium and P.E Facility and footbridge connecting to existing GAA playing field	09-Dec-25	07-Jul-26	Under Consideration
23	LA04/2026/0007/F	Major	Lands at Belfast YMCA, Knightsbridge Park, Stranmillis, Belfast. To the east of Nos. 15; 17; 19; 25; 27; 29; and 35 Knightsbridge Manor. South of Nos. 26 to 34 (evens) Knightsbridge Manor, Nos. 65; 66; and 68 Vauxhall Park, and Nos. 15 and 17 Marylebone Park. West of Nos. 35 and 38 Sharman Drive, and Nos. 39 and 42 Sharman Park, Belfast	Proposed mixed-use development comprising 3G playing pitch with floodlighting; Children's Play Area; Trim Trail; Car Parking; and 24 No. Dwelling Units including a mix of detached, semi-detached and apartment house types. The development also includes site access, internal roads, landscaping and pumping station and all other associated site and access works.	17-Dec-25	15-Jul-26	Under Consideration
24	LA04/2025/2183/F	Major	Units 2a and 2b 38 Boucher Road, Belfast, BT12 6HR	Removal of conditions 14 and 15 from the permission referenced LA04/2024/0714/F (Contamination)	18-Dec-25	16-Jul-26	Under Consideration
25	LA04/2025/2215/F	Major	Halifax Building, 24 Cromac Place, Building, BT7 2JB	Proposed change of use from offices to nursing home comprising 156 no. bedrooms, ancillary scanning unit and all associated accommodation including dining/ café areas, day rooms and lounges, hairdressers, cinema rooms, treatment rooms and internal courtyard. The proposal also includes ancillary offices, landscaping, cycle parking, external alterations and all other site and associated works.	19-Dec-25	17-Jul-26	Under Consideration

26	LA04/2026/0008/F	Major	468-472 Castlereagh Road, Belfast, BT5 6RG	Demolition of existing structures on site and erection of purpose built padel facility comprising 8no. padel courts and ancillary uses to include café, changing facilities and recovery studio and all other associated site and access works.	22-Dec-25	20-Jul-26	Under Consideration
Page 133	LA04/2025/2210/O	Major	Lands to the east of Corporation Street, north of Donegall Quay, west and south of Clarendon Dock, south, east and south west of Pilot Street, and south and south east of Corry Road, Belfast (amended address)	<p>Hybrid planning permission is being sought for the following development:</p> <p>Outline Planning Application (no matters reserved) for Plots A & B to provide 456No. residential units (apartments) and 1,600sqm of ground floor commercial uses including retail (Class A1), Financial and Professional (Class A2), Community and Cultural Uses (Class D1), Assembly and Leisure (Class D2), and café, bar and restaurant uses, landscaping, open space, play equipment, public realm improvements and all associated site and access works including servicing from Corporation Street.</p> <p>Outline Planning Application (all matters reserved) for Plots C, D, E and F for a mixed-use development comprising residential (apartments and dwellings), a Hotel/Apart Hotel, ground floor commercial uses including retail (Class A1), Financial and Professional (Class A2), Community and Cultural Uses (Class D1), Assembly and Leisure (Class D2), and café, bar and restaurant uses, the change of use (principle only) to the listed Clarendon Building, Furnace House and Pump House (to include cafe and restaurant uses), re-purposing of Clarendon Dock for leisure uses and all associated site, access and infrastructure works.</p>	27-Jan-26	25-Aug-26	Under Consideration

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Planning Applications Discussed at Committee Between 01 Apr 2019 and 04 Feb 2026

Decision Description	Totals
	16
Application Withdrawn	
Consent Granted	
Consent Refused	
Permission Granted	4
Permission Refused	
Total	20

Application No.	Location	Proposal	Category	Date Valid	Statutory Target Date	Statutory Target Weeks	Current number of Weeks	Committee Date	Weeks between Valid date and Comm date	Weeks Since Committee	Previous New Non-statutory Target Date	New Non-statutory Target Date	Reason decision not issued
LA04/2022/2059/F	Lands south of 56 Highcairn Drive Belfast BT13 3RU Site located at junction between Highcairn Drive and Dunboyne Park Belfast.	Social Housing Development comprising of 12 no. 3p/2b semi-detached dwelling houses with incurtilage parking and associated site works. (amended description and site location plan)	LOC	04-Nov-22	17-Feb-23	15	170	29/06/2023	33	135	28/02/2026	28/02/2026	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement - land ownership issues on the applicant's side
LA04/2024/0483/F	34-44 Bedford Street and 6 Clarence Street, Belfast	Proposed change of use from Office (B1) and restaurant (Sui Generis) to Hotel comprising of 88 no. bedrooms, two storey rooftop extension, restaurant and bar offerings, gym facilities, including new	MAJ	19-Mar-24	15-Oct-24	30	98	15/10/2024	30	68	Unknown	Unknown	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement - issues to be resolved on the applicant's side

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LA04/2024/0480/DCA	34-44 Bedford Street and 6 Clarence Street, Belfast	Part demolition of existing buildings (stripping back of roof, shopfront and other external alterations to facilitate change of use and extension of buildings to hotel use.	LOC	29-Mar-24	12-Jul-24	15	97	15/10/2024	28	68	Unknown	Unknown	See above
LA04/2024/0369/F	Lands at Former Monarch Laundry site, and Broadway Hall Site, No's 451 - 457 Donegall Road, Belfast, BT12 6HD.	Proposed Specialist Nursing and Residential Care Facility comprising approximately 158 no. beds, day/dining rooms, treatment rooms, staff rooms, office/store rooms, including car parking provision, cycle parking, refuse storage, landscaping, and associated site and access works.	MAJ	08-Feb-24	05-Sep-24	30	104	12/11/2024	39	64	Unknown	Unknown	Awaiting Section 76 Agreement and new contamination issues - development commenced without planning permission and awaiting updated contaminated land survey from applicant
LA04/2023/2557/F	Lands East of Meadowhill, North of Glencolin Court, North and East of Glencolin Rise, East of Glencolin Grove, North and West of Glen Road Rise, and North of Glen Road Grove. Belfast.	260 no. dwellings, children's play area and other ancillary and associated works.	MAJ	24-Feb-23	22-Sep-23	30	154	10/12/2024	93	60	Unknown	28/02/2026	S76 clauses remain to be agreed with applicant. Outstanding CoT issues on the applicant's side

LA04/2023/4543/F	885 Shore Road, Belfast, BT36 7DH	Proposed new changing pavilion, enhancing grounds entrances including turnstiles, ancillary facilities and upgrade to existing car park. Proposed 3G surfacing to existing grass pitch with flood lighting.	LOC	01-Feb-24	16-May-24	15	105	17/06/2025	71	33	Unknown	Unknown	DAERA NIEA recently provided its consultation response - advising that bat surveys required
04/2024/1036/F	Lands to the east of the River Lagan located between Lagan Gateway Phase 1 and Belvoir Park Forest, running adjacent to the west of Belvoir Park Golf Club and approximately 120 metres to the east of Newtownbreda Water Treatment Plant, Galwally Ave, Belfast BT8 7YA.	Lagan Gateway Phase 2 – Proposed greenway connection extending between Lagan Gateway Phase 1 at Annadale Embankment to Belvoir Forest Park. Comprising compacted gravel paths; a new elevated (4-5 meter high) timber boardwalk (approximately 85m long); landscaping works, new cycle stands, bollards, seats and bins; and all associated works	LOC	10-May-24	23-Aug-24	15	91	17/06/2025	57	33	Unknown	Unknown	Further information requested from applicant following request from DAERA NIEA

LA04/2025/0535/F	Lands West of Monagh By-Pass South of Upper Springfield Road & 30-34 Upper Springfield Road & West of Aitnamona Crescent & St Theresa's Primary School. North and East of 2-22 Old Brewery Lane, Glanaulin, 137-143a Glen Road & Airfield Heights & St Mary's CBG School Belfast	Variation of conditions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 14, 17, 18, 19, 36, 37 and 41 of approval LA04/2023/2390/F and LA04/2020/0804/F to facilitate removal of 31 previously approved dwellings and retaining structure along northern boundary of site adjacent to Upper Springfield Road. Retention of existing sloping ground levels and landscaping at this location.	MAJ	27-May-25	23-Dec-25	30	36	17/06/2025	3	33	31/01/2026	28/02/2026	Awaiting conclusion of S77 agreement (amendment to S76 agreement). Applicant to address issues raised by DfI Roads
Page 78 LA04/2024/1654/F	432 Falls Road, Belfast, BT12 6EN	Change of use from a 7-bedroom dwelling house (C1) to a 7 bed/ 9 person House of Multiple Occupancy (Sui Generis)	LOC	21-Oct-24	03-Feb-25	15	67	12/08/2025	42	25	31/01/2026	28/02/2026	Gathering additional information to support refusal reason
LA04/2024/1865/O	Land between No 22 Squires View and Nos 57 & 59 Squires Hill Road, Belfast.	3no. detached dwellings part 2 storey part 3 storey (amended plans)	LOC	28-Oct-24	10-Feb-25	15	66	12/08/2025	41	25	28/02/2026	28/02/2026	Late objections received. Planning Service requested additional information from applicant in respect of land instability issue. Application to be reported back to Committee

LA04/2024/0626/F	1 Havelock House Havelock Place, Ormeau, Belfast, BT7 1EB .	Erection of 104no. social rented residential units (comprising a mix of General Social Housing and Category 1 over 55's accommodation) across two detached blocks [ranging between 3 and 5 storeys], landscaping, communal and private amenity space, ancillary cycle and car parking provision, and other associated site works	MAJ	17-Apr-24	13-Nov-24	30	94	11/11/2025	81	12	28/02/2026	28/02/2026	Completion of s76 agreement delayed due to Certificate of Title issue
Page 199 04/2025/1454/F	The Lockhouse 13 River Terrace Belfast BT7 2EN	New community wellbeing centre and cafe extension to existing lockhouse building	LOC	17-Sep-25	31-Dec-25	15	20	09/12/2025	11	8	28/02/2026	28/02/2026	Awaiting outstanding consultation responses
LA04/2022/0809/F	Lands to the south and west of Woodland Grange to the north of Blacks Gate and to the east of Moor Park Mews Belfast.	Amendments to approved schemes ref. Z/2008/0993/F (erection of 53 No. dwellings) & ref. Z/2013/0120/F (erection of 46 No. dwellings); to reduce overall density from 99 No. dwellings to 94 No. dwellings and associated and ancillary works.	MAJ	21-Apr-22	17-Nov-22	30	198	09/12/2025	189	8	28/02/2026	28/02/2026	Awaiting S76 agreement. Application to be reported back to Committee as applicant removed land (and 2 dwellings) from application site to resolve third party land ownership issue

LA04/2025/1693/F	Existing soccer pitch at Falls Park (approx. 50m east of No. 47 Norglen Drive), Falls Road, Belfast, BT11 8EL	Spectator fencing around pitch perimeter (1.2m high), 2 no. ballstop systems (20m x 6m high), and spectator hardstanding.	LOC	21-Oct-25	03-Feb-26	15	15	20/01/2026	13	2	N/A	28/02/2026	Permission Granted
LA04/2025/1694/F	Woodlands Playing Fields, Finaghy Road North, Belfast	The installation of 7 x Ballstop Systems @ 30m x 12m high.	LOC	07-Jan-26	22-Apr-26	15	4	20/01/2026	1	2			Permission Granted
LA04/2025/1695/F Pagger 180	Existing soccer pitch at Dixon Playing Fields (approx. 50m north-east of No. 100 Orby Road), Grand Parade, Belfast	Extension to existing spectator fencing on site, new ball stop system along with pedestrian and vehicular access gates. New kerb line and drainage along car park boundary.	LOC	22-Oct-25	04-Feb-26	15	15	20/01/2026	12	2	N/A	28/02/2026	To be issued
LA04/2025/1696/F	Existing soccer pitches at Clarendon Playing Fields (approx. 130m south-west of No. 5 Abbeydale Court), Abbeydale Gardens, Belfast.	Installation of 2 No. ballstop systems @ 30m x 6m (high).	LOC	22-Oct-25	04-Feb-26	15	15	20/01/2026	12	2	N/A	28/02/2026	Permission Granted
LA04/2025/0605/F	341-345 Albertbridge Road, Ballymacarret, Belfast, BT5 4PY	Erection of a four storey building to create 29no. short-term let accommodation units with ancillary roof-mounted solar panels	LOC	09-Apr-25	23-Jul-25	15	43	20/01/2026	40	2	31/01/2026	28/02/2026	Deferred for Site Visit

LA04/2024/2077/F	Adelaide Business Centre 2-6 Apollo Road, Belfast, BT12 6HP	Proposed change of use from office space (B1) and storage or distribution (B4) to Bowling Alley, Restaurant, Indoor Golf, Children's Soft Play, VR Zone & Amusements, Smoking Area, Car Parking and Associated Site Works. Proposal includes changes to elevations. (Amended Plans Received).	MAJ	29-Jan-25	27-Aug-25	30	53	20/01/2026	50	2	N/A	28/02/2026	To be issued
<p style="text-align: center;">Page 281</p> LA04/2024/1836/F	Lands between Ballygomartin Road and Upper Whiterock Road and to the west (rear) of Moyard Parade and New Barnsley Crescent, Belfast Co. Antrim BT13 3QZ	Proposed development of new walking trails linking Black Mountain Shared Space Project building (approved under LA04/2022/0853/F) on the Ballygomartin Road with the Upper Whiterock Road and Moyard Parade. Proposal to include gated accesses, stockproof fencing, seated areas, information signage, landscaping and associated site works.	MAJ	25-Nov-24	23-Jun-25	30	62	20/01/2026	60	2		28/02/2026	Permission Granted

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1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To present a recommendation for delivering an online booking solution for outdoor pitches.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to approve the procurement of a standalone booking system for outdoor pitches as the first step in reviewing potential wider online booking requirements that will be needed in other areas of the council, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Centres • Recycling Centres • City Hall events • Hot desks • Other Assets and resources.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>During efficiency workshops, elected members expressed a strong desire for the prioritised delivery of an online booking system focussing on outdoor pitches. The City & Neighbourhood Services DMT has already outlined problems with the current management of outdoor pitch bookings impacting customer satisfaction, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability for members of the public and clubs to book and cancel pitches online, • Unnecessary CNS resource requirements to deliver the current manual processes (paper forms, phone calls, email confirmations, paper processing), • Lack of real time availability, automated confirmations and integrated payments.
3.2	<p>It should also be noted that previous research undertaken by Digital Services around the requirement for a corporate online bookings system indicated issues with fragmented legacy systems, inconsistent business processes, and opportunities for consolidation and efficiencies. Whilst the corporate solution remains strategically important, the complexity of organisational alignment has delayed delivery. Outdoor Pitches is a self-contained service with clearer ownership, making it suitable for a fast-track standalone solution. The recommendation is that the work on a corporate solution is paused to allow resources to concentrate on the delivery of Outdoor Pitch bookings as a pre-requisite to extending to other areas in the Council.</p>
3.3	<p>Digital Services has been working with City & Neighbourhood services to understand what is required to add the Outdoor Pitch booking system to the Digital Programme of work as soon as possible, and work has already started on the business case and requirements gathering. The Operational Director of Neighbourhood Services – Jim Girvan, has agreed to be appointed as the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) and project managers have been provisionally agreed from City</p>

	<p>& Neighbourhood Services and Digital Services to progress the project as soon as possible, if approved.</p>
<p>3.4</p> <p>3.5</p>	<p>Members should note that there are pre-requisites required for the implementation of any IT system into council processes. One of the most important phases is making sure project discovery and requirements gathering are completed to the correct level of detail.</p> <p><u>Project Discovery</u></p> <p>Baselining current performance will be required to determine the success of the project following go live.</p> <p>As-is processes must be captured to highlight possible areas of efficiency and future processes must be agreed to feed into the development of requirements.</p> <p>This will be beneficial not only for this project but will provide understanding of how improved/streamlined processes can apply to other similar functions in the council - leading to further consolidation and efficiencies.</p>
<p>3.6</p>	<p><u>Requirements</u></p> <p>The successful delivery of this project is linked to completing a review of any booking policies in advance of the system being configured. This will help with delivering a well-defined requirements document signed off by the business area. The requirements document will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional specification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Real-time availability search (by date, type, location). ○ Pricing & concessions (adult/youth/club rates; VAT handling). ○ Booking flows: single/recurring block bookings; amendments; cancellations; waitlists. ○ Season management and blackout dates (maintenance, events, sports club block booking). ○ Staff override/admin holds and conflict resolution. ○ Automated comms: confirmations, reminders, change notices. • Technical specification and integration requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Payments: Payment integration, PCI compliance, immediate card capture; options for monthly invoicing/DD. These must all map to and integrate with existing corporate finance processes and the corporate finance system. ○ Identity & account registration: Guest checkout + account creation; BCC identity integration for back office staff.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scheduling/resources: Pitch inventory, slots, lighting, and buffer times. ○ GIS & location: Site maps, directions. ○ Reporting: Utilisation, revenue, cancellations, no-shows; export to finance. ○ Website and accessibility requirements. ○ Customer Hub – Onboarding the management of customer contact to the customer hub. ● Non-Functional specification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Data privacy, security and records management requirements ○ Testing requirements ○ Training requirements ○ Go-Live and support requirements
3.6	<p><u>Procurement Approach and approvals</u></p> <p>A procurement approach has been agreed using the G-Cloud framework which offers the fastest route to market. A Tender Initiation Request can be completed for SP&R in March.</p> <p>Digital Services will work with Commercial & Procurement services to determine the best approach to extending the project to other areas should this project prove successful.</p>
Financial & Resource Implications	
3.7	<p><u>Capital & Revenue Financing</u></p> <p>One-off Project implementation costs and ongoing revenue financing will form part of the Outline Business Case that will be presented to the Finance Oversight board in March. If approved the project will be moved to the capital programme at SP&R in March.</p> <p>Based on G-Cloud pricing searches: One-off implementation costs of up to £30,000 may be required for setup and integration.</p> <p>Revenue growth of up to £30,000 will be required. This will be funded from CNS efficiencies achieved through the delivery of this project.</p>
3.8	<p>Resourcing:</p> <p>The Discovery phase will highlight impacts to job roles and staffing requirements as automated processes are mapped out. Management of staffing impacts must be built into the project plan.</p> <p>It should be noted that this project will require resources from CNS, Digital Services, The Online Experience Team, Corporate HR, Continuous Improvement and Finance. These resources must be co-ordinated alongside existing work plans.</p>

	Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment
3.9	No equality, good relations or rural needs implications have been identified at this stage. A screening will be undertaken as part of project initiation aligned with the screening already carried out for the Digital Programme of work.
	Communications Implications
3.10	Communications support will be required for public launch.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - Estimated Project timeline

Appendix 1 - Estimated Project Timeline

Procurement could take place sooner if discovery (Process design, Booking policy, Requirements sign-off) is fast-tracked.

		2026											
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Outdoor Pitch Booking	Business Case and OBC development												
	Procurement and Financial Approvals												
	As-is and To-be processes												
	Booking policy review												
	Specification of requirements												
	Staffing and Change management												
	G-Cloud Procurement and contract sign-off												
	System Implementation and Configuration												
	Finance system Integration												
	Website and Accessibility integration												
	Customer Hub onboarding												
	Go-Live												
	◆ Business sign-off of requirements												
	◆ System implementation begins												
	◆ Go-Live (Phased approach)												



Subject:	#Not Just for Boys Initiative
Date:	20 February 2026
Reporting Officer:	Christine Sheridan, Director of Human Resources Sharon McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer:	Catherine Christy, Corporate HR Manager - Development Karen Fennell Jenkins, Corporate HR Manager - Operations

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

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to seek agreement to a proposal that the Council becomes a champion of the #Not Just for Boys initiative.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the contents of the report and agree to the Council becoming a #Not Just for Boys champion.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	#Not Just for Boys is an initiative led by Women's Tec to support young women and girls to enter and sustain employment in sectors where they are underrepresented. Statistics show that women and girls typically choose traditionally viewed career paths such as beauty or childcare, where salaries are lower, employment less secure and progression opportunities limited.
3.2	A large part of the problem stems from the misconception that some jobs are "just for boys." The #Not Just for Boys initiative is aimed at getting young females in schools to consider careers in the construction industry, in I.T. mechanics and manufacturing. The CEO of Women's Tec attended the Women's Steering Group on 3 February and has requested that the Council considers becoming a #Not Just for Boys champion.
3.3	This initiative is fully aligned to the Council's Gender Action Plan, in particular its aim to promote gender equality in employment within the Council and in the economy, across all sectors. The #Not Just for Boys Champions initiative is a strategic partnership between Women's Tec and employers to create training opportunities and pathways for females in non-traditional sectors.
3.4	An annual fee of £500 is required however the emphasis is on collaboration and support. Signing up to this initiative will require the Council to work with Women's Tec to assist in a number of ways, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosting taster sessions in areas such as joinery or painting and decorating • Hosting site visits • Speaking at careers events • Facilitating work experience placements • Donating unused equipment or materials.

3.5	<p>Benefits for the Council would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of #Not Just for Boys Champion digital logo on website and social media • Promotion of Council apprenticeships and other suitable job opportunities where females are currently underrepresented in the Council • Promotion of the Council's champion status on the Women's Tec website and social media pages <p>If agreed, Belfast would be the first council to sign up to the initiative.</p> <p>Financial and Resource Implications</p>
3.6	<p>An annual fee of £500 is required which will be met from existing budgets.</p>
3.7	<p>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</p> <p>Becoming a #Not Just for Boys champion will contribute to the aims of the Councils Gender Action Plan, and particularly our inclusive growth ambitions.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents Attached</p>
	<p>None</p>

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Subject:	Social Supermarket Fund 26/28
Date:	20 th February 2026
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 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	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Is this report eligible for call in? Yes No

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To advise members on the outcome of the assessment of applications received through the Social Supermarket Fund 26/28 and seek members agreement in relation to the allocation of financial resources.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Note the assessment outcome and agree a preferred allocation model based on the information contained in this report. II. Note that there is no current budget available to support applications to the Social Supermarket Fund 26/28 as this is funded almost 100% from the Department for Communities and confirmation of budget for 26/27 has yet to be received. III. Consider if they wish to release any funds to successful applicants in advance of receiving the DfC LoO so that activity can begin from 01 April 2026. IV. Grant delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to issue Letters of Offer on the basis of the agreed allocation model as budget becomes available through the Community Support Programme or other sources. V. Agree that if approval to release some funds is given, officers progress with the funding allocation process including; sending out letters of intent, agreeing programmes of work with applicants based on the recommended funding allocation, processing funding agreements and ensuring all monitoring requirements are implemented.
3.0	Main report
	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>3.1 In response to recommendations in the Welfare Reform Mitigations report, the Department for Communities (DfC) has operated a Social Supermarket Pilot programme since October 2017. Following positive evaluation of the Programme, funding has been made available through the CSP since 20/21 to all council areas.</p> <p>3.2 The aim of a social supermarket is to offer a sustainable response to food insecurity by seeking to help address the root causes of poverty rather than simply provide food. This is achieved by providing, in addition to food support, a referral network for wraparound support.</p> <p>3.3 The key principles that models should take account of are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing support ‘beyond food’, such as, access to wraparound support services which transition people out of food poverty and respect the dignity of clients. • Maximising existing structures, services, and partnerships to provide wraparound support. <p>3.4 Members will recall that at the June 25 meeting council agreed to roll over awards to organisations funded in 24/25 into 25/26 and asked officers to review the criteria used to assess applications. A new set of criteria was agreed at October council and full details of these are provided in Appendix ii.</p> <p>3.5 This matter is normally considered by P&C committee but given the likelihood that no DfC funding will be received until after the beginning of the financial year, officers are presenting it</p>

to SP&R so that members can consider funding options and whether they wish to release funds in the absence of a DfC LoO.

Key Issues

- 3.6 The Strategic Policy and Resources Committee granted approval on 19 September 2025 to operate an open call for grant applications to the Social Supermarket Fund for the years 2026/28. Members were advised at this point that because activity is 100% funded by DfC, there was a risk that funding to support successful applications might not be in place from April 26. At October committee, members agreed to allocate an additional £100,000 from council funds to projects in the 25/26 year.
- 3.7 The Social Supermarket Support Fund was opened on 17 October 2024 for applications and council launched a campaign to advertise and promote the fund. Advertisements were placed in local and regional newspapers and were also promoted across Belfast City Council website and social media. During November 2025, two information sessions were held to advise potential applicants on the process, a total of 23 attended. Officers also answered queries and provided one to one support to groups as requested.
- 3.8 The 2026/28 Social Supermarket Support Fund received 26 applications totalling £1,123,836 by the closing date of 12 noon on Monday 8 December 2026.
- 3.9 When an application is submitted, the following process is followed:
- Receipt and log of applications
 - Eligibility check of applications (allowing a 5 day response for omitted information)
 - Prepare and supply applications that have met eligibility criteria to Unit Officers to score against agreed set criteria
 - Score each eligible application against the set criteria as outlined in the guidance notes
 - Moderate applications between scoring officers to ensure fairness and consistency in scoring
 - An independent assessment panel to review a sample of applications. The role of the independent assessment panel is 'to ensure that the scoring of applications has been undertaken in an appropriate fashion and to provide verification or validation of sampled applications and the overall process' (Williamson Consulting, 2012).
- 3.10 The independent assessment panels were satisfied with the scoring and application of the criteria for the grants and agreed to recommend the unit's recommendations for awards as shown in Appendix i.

3.11	<p>Funding for Social Supermarkets is primarily drawn from the DfC Community Support Programme (CSP) Letter of Offer, which includes a 100% DfC funded funding stream for this work. Council has not yet received a Letter of Offer for 26/27 and Council does not have any budget to support activity that is 100% funded through the CSP in 26/27.</p>
3.12	<p>DfC officials have advised that the current position on the Social Supermarket budget for 2026/27 is that the draft budget is currently out for consultation until 3rd March 26. The Finance Minister has set out several areas where the Executive has previously committed to providing funding to Departments at the level required. For DfC, this includes earmarked allocations for Welfare Mitigations through which the Social Supermarket programme is funded. Allocations to the individual programs within this budget are yet to be finalised. Members should note that for the last number of years CSP Letters of Offer have not been received until July.</p>
3.13	<p>In order to support activity from 01 April 26, members are asked to consider whether they wish to release any funds to successful applicants in advance of receiving the DfC LoO. Based on a likely DfC budget of approximately £780,000, it is recommended that funding is provided to applicants who scored 51.25 and above, which would require total annual funding of £814,000. This would require an approximate annual contribution of £34,000 from council. It is recommended that organisations scoring over 51.25 are funded since using the next score of 61.25 would provide an annual allocation of only £699,000, which is likely to be less than the DfC LoO and would leave some funds unallocated.</p>
3.14	<p>Members should note that payments for all CSP large grants are paid on a 50/50 basis, therefore if members are minded to approve a payment to successful applicants, it is recommended that this is paid on a 50% basis to allow organisations to plan delivery for the first 6 months of the financial year.</p>
3.15	<p>In April 24, when council faced the same scenario, SP&R agreed to fund 21 projects 70% of their allocation in the absence of a Letter of Offer from DfC to fund this area of work, this funding was taken from underspends in the Hardship Programme. In April 25, council agreed to provide bridging support from council funds for 21 projects funded in 24/25 for the first 3 months of 25/26 delivery before the DfC LoO was received.</p>
3.16	<p>Members are also asked to grant delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhood Services to issue Letters of Offer on the basis of the agreed allocation model as budget becomes available from CSP or other sources.</p>

	<u>Financial and Resource Implications</u>
3.17	The budget received from DfC in 25/26 was £777,811 which has been used to support 19 projects. In November 2025, Council made an additional allocation of £100,000 to support social supermarkets, providing a total budget of £877,811
3.18	Members should note that there is currently no budget available to support this work in 26/27. Letters of Offer will be issued to groups on an annual basis. Officers will bring a paper to committee in February 27 to advise on funds available from DfC and whether any release of funds from council is required. Members agreed last September that although funding is primarily from DfC it would be beneficial for successful applicants to have increased security of funding by operating the Social Supermarket Fund on a two year basis rather than one.
	<u>Equality or Good Relations Implications /Rural Needs Assessment</u>
3.19	The 26/28 Social Supermarket Fund open call is being screened for Equality, Good Relations and Rural Needs Implications.
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached or None
	Appendix i – Assessment criteria 26/28 Social Supermarket Fund Appendix ii – Detail of criteria for Social Supermarket Fund 26/28

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Appendix 1 - Assessment criteria 26/28 Social Supermarket Fund

Applicants can apply for up to £50,000 per annum for 2 years 01/04/26 – 31/03/28

1. Stage One Eligibility Check – Pass or Fail (Based on DfC MoU)

- The grant will be open to not-for-profit community and voluntary organisations who have experience in managing a scheme that provides food support and access to wraparound support services which transition people out of food poverty. (Support can include, but is not limited to, advice on debt, benefits, budgeting, healthy eating, housing, physical and mental health referral, and education, training and volunteering opportunities to enhance future employability.)
- Projects must carry out an assessment of need to ensure the service is provided to those most in need of the support.
- Projects must utilise existing structures, services and partnerships to maximise the impact of the wraparound support.

2. Stage Two Assessment - Criteria for making our decision.

Criteria	Weighting (%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project is based in an area of deprivation (one of the top 10% wards as identified through Neighbourhood Renewal) 	10
Project need and demand for the project – (based on CSP model)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please specify the target groups and individuals in need who will benefit from your programme and provide data to show that your project will meet identified need. 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please outline any local engagement you have undertaken and how the views of those involved are reflected in this programme 	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please outline how you have ensured that the service that your project provides does not duplicate other services for individuals that you will support and has support from other local stakeholders. 	10
Project planning and delivery	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please demonstrate that you have clear processes in place to identify individual beneficiaries to ensure that provision is targeted to those most in need. (This can include referral arrangements, publicity) 	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please demonstrate that you have clear processes in place to assess the need of individual beneficiaries to ensure that provision is targeted to those most in need. 	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please demonstrate that the support that you provide is accessible (this can include reference to publicity, consideration of barriers to access such as language, disability) 	10
Project delivery will be monitored	10
Project provides value for money	10

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Appendix ii – Detail of criteria for Social Supermarket Fund 26/28

Name	% Score	Value Sought	Eligible Funding	Cumulative Total	Q1 Funding
Footprints Women's Centre	88.75	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£12,500.00
Storehouse NI	83.75	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£100,000.00	£25,000.00
Donegall Pass Community Forum	80	£50,000.00	£42,000.00	£142,000.00	£35,500.00
Upper Springfield Development Trust	80	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£192,000.00	£48,000.00
Ligoniel Improvement Association	75	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£242,000.00	£60,500.00
The Parent Rooms	73.75	£49,750.00	£11,748.00	£253,748.00	£63,437.00
Disability Action	73.75	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£303,748.00	£75,937.00
Ashton Community Trust	72.5	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£353,748.00	£88,437.00
Phoenix Education Centre	71.25	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£403,748.00	£100,937.00
Southcity Resource and Development Centre	70	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£453,748.00	£113,437.00
Loughview Community Action Partnership	68.75	£49,936.00	£49,936.00	£503,684.00	£125,921.00
Forward South Partnership	65	£48,261.95	£48,261.95	£551,945.95	£137,986.49
The Vine Centre	65	£49,855.00	£49,855.00	£601,800.95	£150,450.24
Falls Women's Centre	62.5	£24,900.00	£8,300.00	£610,100.95	£152,525.24
West Belfast Partnership Board (WBPB)	62.5	£49,808.96	£49,808.96	£659,909.91	£164,977.48
Castle Community Trust	61.25	£50,000.00	£38,890.00	£698,799.91	£174,699.98
In this together	51.25	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£748,799.91	£187,199.98
Glencolin Residents Association	51.25	£15,000.00	£15,000.00	£763,799.91	£190,949.98
BLACKIE RIVER COMMUNITY GROUPS	51.25	£50,000.00	£50,000.00	£813,799.91	£203,449.98
HERe NI	50	£16,449.17	£16,449.17	£830,249.08	£207,562.27
Hanwood Trust	47.5	£40,000.00	£40,000.00	£870,249.08	£217,562.27
Suicide Awareness and Support Group	37.5	£45,000.00	£0.00	£870,249.08	£217,562.27
Street NI (Tackling Homelessness)	35	£22,000.00	£22,000.00	£892,249.08	£223,062.27
Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid	33.75	£40,000.00	£40,000.00	£932,249.08	£233,062.27
East Belfast Mission - ineligible	0	£48,425.00	£0.00	£932,249.08	£233,062.27
Sense NI - ineligible	0	£24,450.00	£0.00	£932,249.08	£233,062.27
		£1,123,836.08	£932,249.08	£932,249.08	£233,062.27

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Subject:	SP&R Transformation and Efficiency Workshop March 2026
Date:	20 February 2026
Reporting Officer:	Trevor Wallace, Director of Finance Sharon McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer:	Trevor Wallace, Director of Finance Sharon McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Services

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	<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 No

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To remind Members of the agreements to date emerging from the SP&R Transformation and Efficiency workshops to date and agree the date and focus of the next workshop.

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree the proposed date, 27th March 2026, and focus of the next SP&R Transformation and Efficiency workshop.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Four workshops have now been held with elected Members to establish a process for ensuring the most efficient use of council resources, minimise the rates burden on householders and businesses and create a sustainable medium term financial strategy and plan.
3.2	These workshops have engaged Members, CMT and the wider Senior Leadership Team in a data-based exploration of council spend and income, the impact of the operating environment and the need to meet extensive and growing need for investment and service delivery within a constrained resource envelope.
3.3	<p>Members have asked for a programme of work to be established which allows them to have a line of sight on how the council is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximising value from its spend on people, assets, services, events and community investment; • maximising income; • embedding a culture of responsible and effective resource management.
3.4	It is therefore necessary to organise plans and processes to make this happen and to prioritise and resource this work.
3.5	<p>Members highlighted the following points that need to be reflected in the programme of work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principle that efficiency does not equate to the loss of jobs in the council, rather flexibility in the design of jobs that allows optimal resource allocation as priorities, demand and technical innovations change. • Linked to this effective workforce planning, structure that enables delivery and operates within an effective control environment. • Performance improvement across key services. • A line of sight on financial and performance data that allows scrutiny of effectiveness • Strategic approach to income maximisation, including growing the rates base, exploiting funding opportunities and innovative finance. • The need to maximise value from assets – this includes social as well as financial benefit. • Capital programme development – informed by strategic analysis of key service elements e.g. community provision, sports and leisure provision, waste disposal, events spaces, cremation and burial provision, OSS.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital transformation, integration of innovative practices and managed implementation of AI. • Recommendations that are realistic and deliverable.
3.6	<p>Proposed Approach</p> <p>It is proposed that Members are supported in this work by a Transformation and Efficiency Board at officer level chaired by the Chief Executive. Based on discussions with Members, the Board will agree the high level programme of work and programme support and management arrangements to be presented at the next SP&R workshop at the end of March.</p>
3.7	<p>The Transformation and Efficiency Board will sit on a monthly basis, overseeing a programme of work generated and implemented by the following workstreams/ project boards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assets • Finance • People • Digital • Service Improvement • Data/Governance
3.8	<p>This will be folded into the Corporate Planning process and the forward agenda setting process of the SP&R Committee, including the planned SP&R Transformation and Efficiency meetings that will take place every second month.</p>
3.9	<p>Resources (initial arrangements)</p> <p>To be effective, transformation and efficiency work requires dedicated resource, this needs to be informed by an initial assessment of the scale and scope of the programme.</p>
3.10	<p>In the first instance the following steps are proposed in order to agree high level portfolio of work and management arrangements by March.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map and mobilise currently available project management/corporate support resource to create initial PM arrangements/templates and support completion. • Create programme business case for any additional resource.
	Financial & Resource
3.11	As above, to be further developed.
	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
3.12	To be considered at each stage of programme development.
	Communications Implications
3.13	Internal communications key dependency throughout.

4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	None



Subject:	Asset Management i) Morton Community Centre – Licence Renewal with Streetwise Community Circus ii) Botanic Gardens (Lower Section) – Licence Agreement with Friends of Belfast Botanic Gardens
Date:	20 February 2026
Reporting Officer:	Sinead Grimes, Director of Property & Projects
Contact Officer:	Pamela Davison, Estates Manager

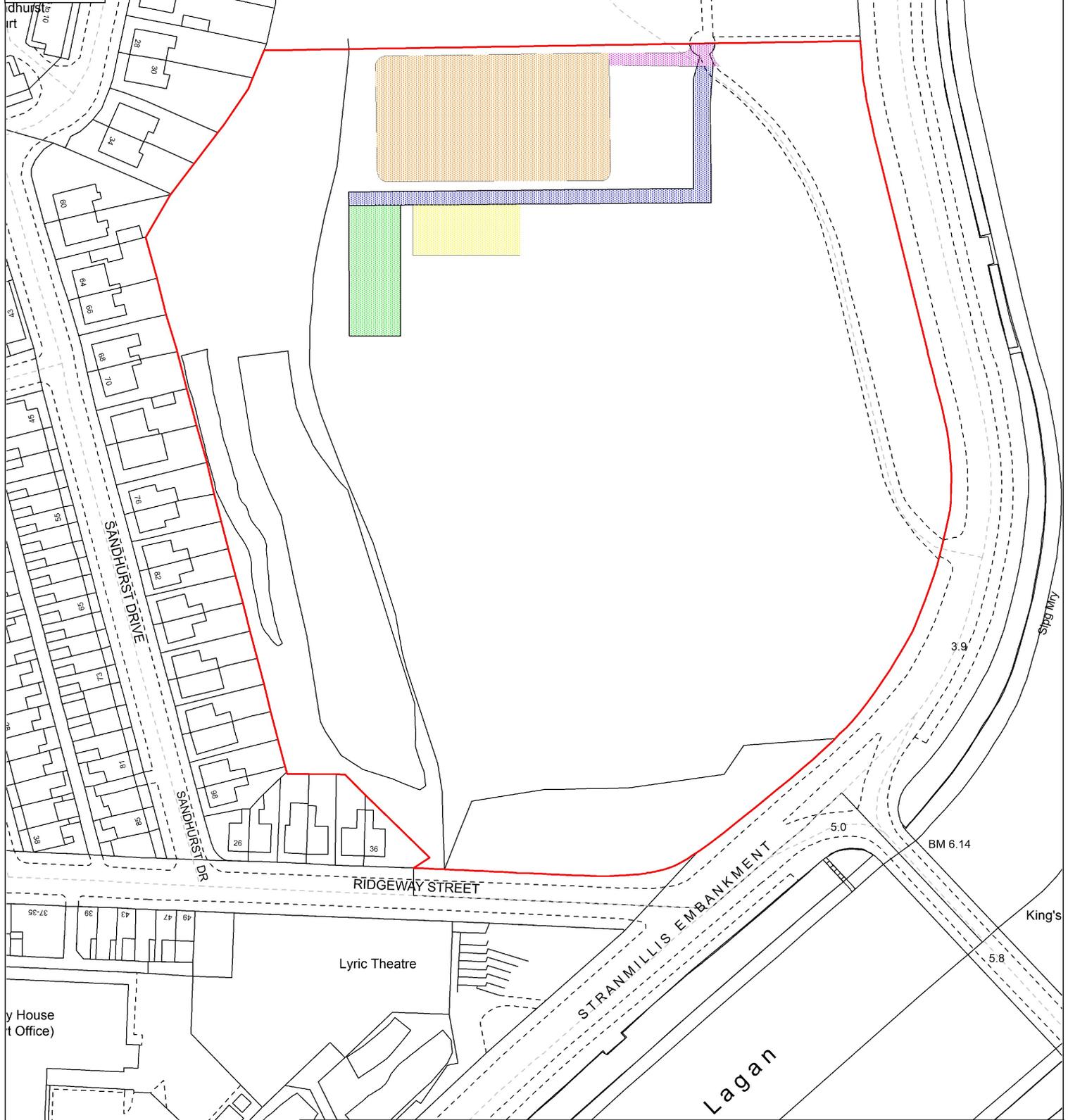
Restricted Reports					
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.					
Insert number <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/>					
<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	<table border="1" style="width: 40px; height: 80px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"></td></tr> <tr><td style="height: 20px;"></td></tr> </table>				

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	The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Committee on asset related disposal, acquisition and estates matters.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	<p>The Committee is asked to approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Morton Community Centre – Licence Renewal with Streetwise Community Circus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve Council entering into a new licence agreement with Streetwise Community Circus for premises at Morton Community Centre. ii) Botanic Gardens (Lower Section) – Licence Agreement with Friends of Belfast Botanic Gardens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approve the grant of a licence agreement between the Council & Friends of Belfast Botanic Gardens to cover their use of a portion of Botanic Gardens (Lower Section) as a community garden to deliver up the objectives of the Horizon 2020 UPSURGE project in partnership with the Council
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>i) Morton Community Centre – Licence Renewal with Streetwise Community Circus</p> <p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The current Licence Agreement with Streetwise Community Circus C.I.C. is due to expire on 31 March 2026 and a new agreement has been offered to the group subject to Members’ approval. The existing Licence allows the group to exclusively occupy a small office, store and open mezzanine storage area, with their use of the main hall covered under separate centre booking arrangements. Under the Licence the group were permitted to install curtains and 2no lattice beams and rope trapeze within the main hall, these will be allowed to remain with the group’s liability for repair, maintenance and indemnity to continue as before. The Group are willing to enter into a new rolling one year licence agreement from 1 April 2026 which can be renewed up to a maximum of five years. The Estates Unit have recommended an uplift in the annual licence fee from £4,530.00 to £4,850.00 which has been accepted by the group subject to Members’ approval.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>Council will receive a revised rent of £4,850.00 per annum. Council’s Legal Services shall act on the instructions of the Estates Management Unit to agree the new licence agreement.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.2	ii) Botanic Gardens (Lower Section) – Licence Agreement with Friends of Belfast Botanic Gardens

	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>Friends of Belfast Botanic Gardens (FoBBG) are intending to partner with the Council in the delivery of the Horizon 2020 UPSURGE project at Botanic Gardens (Lower Section). Subject to Members approval, the Council will enter into a licence agreement with FoBBG to commence as soon as possible which will continue up to and including 30th September 2026 then month to month thereafter up to a maximum of 6 further months with a one month notice period. A licence fee will not be applicable. Members will be aware that there are two further licences presently in place at Botanic Gardens (Lower Section) between the Council & Queens University Belfast (QUB) and the Council & Friends of the Fields (FotF). Both QUB & FotF have been partnering with the Council in the delivery of the Horizon 2020 UPSURGE project at Botanic Gardens (Lower Section). The QUB Licence commenced on 25th February 2023 and will remain in place until 30th September 2026 then month to month thereafter up to a maximum of 6 further months with a one month notice period. The Friends of the Field licence commenced on 1st September 2025 and will remain in place until 31st August 2026.</p> <p>See map attached at Appendix 1 showing the location of the proposed area to be licenced to FoBBG in the context of the two other areas on the site already licenced to QUB & FotF.</p> <p>Members will be aware of the recent discussions taken in respect of the Pitches Programme including the proposals for the Lower Botanic site for a new GAA pitch with further detail on this to come back in March.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resources Implications</u></p> <p>Legal Services shall act on the instructions of the Estates Management Unit. FoBBG are partnering with the Council in the delivery of the Upsurge Project and therefore a licence fee shall not be applicable.</p> <p><u>Equality and Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – See map attached at Appendix 1 showing the location of the proposed area to be licenced to FoBBG in the context of the two other areas on the site already licenced to QUB & FotF.

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- = BCC Lands at Botanic Gardens (Lower Section)
- = Licence Area with QUB
- = Licence Area with Friends of the Fields
- = Proposed Licence Area with Friends of Belfast Botanic Gardens c.300 m2
- = Routes of Access
- = Routes of Access

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Subject:	Contracts Update
Date:	20 February 2026
Reporting Officer:	Sharon McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Corporate Services
Contact Officer:	Noleen Bohill, Head of Commercial and Procurement Services

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)
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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	<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 No

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
	The purpose of this report is to:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek approval from members for tenders, contract modifications to contract term and Single Tender Actions (STA) over £30,000 • Inform members on a Meet the Buyer Event being held on Wednesday 25th March 2026
2.0	Recommendations
	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 1) • Approve the award of STAs in line with Standing Order 55 exceptions as detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 2) • Approve the modification of the contract as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 3) • Note the Meet the Buyer Event being held in City Hall on Wednesday 25th March 2026 (Section 7.0)
3.0	Competitive Tenders
	<p>Section 2.5 of the Scheme of Delegation states Chief Officers have delegated authority to authorise a contract for the procurement of goods, services or works over the statutory limit of £30,000 following a tender exercise where the council has approved the invitation to tender.</p> <p>Standing Order 60(a) states any contract that exceeds the statutory amount (currently £30,000) shall be made under the Corporate Seal. Under Standing Order 51(b) the Corporate Seal can only be affixed when there is a resolution of the Council.</p> <p>Standing Order 54 states that every contract shall comply with the relevant requirements of national and European legislation.</p> <p>The Committee is asked to approve the public advertisement of tenders as per Standing Order 37a detailed in Appendix 1 (Table 1).</p>
4.0	Single Tender Actions (STAs)
	<p>The Council's current Single Tender Action (STA) process, which has been in place since 2020, provides assurance that the Council continues to comply with its obligations under the Procurement Act 2023 'the Act' and internal governance arrangements including required controls and approvals. It mirrors the Act setting out the exceptional and specific circumstances when a STA can be used (see STA/ Direct Award Reasons Table in Appendix 1).</p> <p>To support Officers understanding and to build capability, CPS offer support training and guidance on the STA process.</p> <p>In line with Standing Order 55 the Committee is asked to approve the award of the STAs in Appendix 1 (Table 2).</p>

5.0	Modification to Contract
	The Committee is asked to approve the following modification of the contract as per Standing Order 37a as set out in Appendix 1 (Table 3).
6.0	Tender pipeline
	<p>To support transparency and assist supplier planning, Members should note that Future Tendering Opportunities are published bi-annually on the Councils website. The current update Tendering opportunities covers future tendering opportunities up to 31st March 2027.</p> <p>Note: CPS consult with Departments to help populate this procurement pipeline and are reliant on Departments sharing their available procurement plans.</p>
7.0	BCC Meet the Buyer Event
	<p>A 'Meet the Buyer' event will take place in Belfast City Hall on Wednesday 25 March, 9am-1pm, organised by Belfast City Council, in partnership with InterTradelreland.</p> <p>Businesses from across Ireland are being invited to hear about upcoming procurement opportunities available within the public sector in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Open to businesses, social enterprises and voluntary and community organisations across the island of Ireland, the event will highlight a wide range of public procurement opportunities with the council, other local authorities, and other public bodies such as Translink, NI Water, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Education Authority, Housing Executive, Construction and Procurement Delivery (CPD), and Office of Government Procurement.</p> <p>Attendees can chat directly to buyers and a range of support organisations such as InterTradelreland, Federation of Small Business and Belfast Chamber to hear more about upcoming opportunities, how the procurement process works and get practical advice and support on how to find and submit tender bids.</p> <p>In addition to supporting businesses across the island of Ireland to access public sector opportunities, the event will also provide internal benefits to the Council through direct engagement with the supplier market. Officers will gain insight into market capacity, innovation and barriers to participation, supporting more effective procurement planning and specification design. This proactive engagement aligns with best practice in public procurement and will contribute to improved competition, value for money and delivery of social value outcomes/</p> <p>Registration is planned to open Thursday 19th February.</p>

8.0	Financial & Resource Implications
	The financial resources for these contracts are within approved corporate or departmental budgets.
9.0	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
	None
10.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 1 - Competitive Tenders • Table 2 - Single Tender Actions • Table 3 - Modification to Contract

Table 1: Competitive Tenders

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Est. Max Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services	On published pipeline (Y/N)	Prior Committee approval (Y/N) If Y name Committee & Date	External Funding (Y/N)
Hire of marquees and equipment for Belfast City Council Events	Up to 3 years	£380,000	D Sales	BCC requires the hire of marquees to provide cover for traders, exhibitors, performers and for general public during our annual programme of events. Marquess will be used for music, dance, flower shows and for trading.	Y	N	N
Technical Research and Guidance	Up to 3 years	£72,300	P Gribben	Provides in-depth technical research and guidance to help Digital Services advance the initiatives/projects that support execution of the Digital strategy.	N	N	N
Supply, delivery and fitting of hydraulic hoses on vehicles and mobile plant	Up to 3 years	£100,000	D Sales	Essential parts and specialist fitting service to support the Council's Fleet Management Unit.	Y	N	N
Wavenet Mitel Software Assurance and Support	Up to 2 years	£220,000	S McNicholl	Support and software assurance for all Mitel servers and software including licencing which provide telephony services for all BCC sites including the Customer Hub.	N	N	N
Provision of coordination of services for delivery of Culture Night Belfast for 2026 & 27 with the cultural sector	Up to 21 months	£300,000	D Martin	Services to help support the delivery of Culture Night in 2026 and 2027 (subject to necessary approvals)	N	CGNR committee	N

Appendix 1

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Est. Max Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services	On published pipeline (Y/N)	Prior Committee approval (Y/N) If Y name Committee & Date	External Funding (Y/N)
						in February 2026.	
Augment the City	Up to 1 year	£51,500	S McNicholl	Develop the Augment the City use case, utilising the existing Small Cell Indoor Public 5G connectivity in Belfast City Hall. This project will run for one year under the agreed trial terms and conditions and support model.	N	SP&R Committee January 2026	N
Procurement and installation of 26 SMART compactor litter bins	One off Purchase	£93,444	S Leonard	To replace standard black litter bins within the City Centre. This is part of our litter bin replacement programme and is an extension of the SMART bin pilot at City Hall and vicinity. Replacing the current ones which are rented.	N	N	N
Supply and Delivery of Uniforms, Footwear and PPE	Up to 5 years	£1,500,000	S Grimes	This is a recurring contract for supply and delivery of specific uniforms, footwear and various PPE to BCC stores that are required throughout BCC for services to carry out their daily operations.	Y	N	N
Food Village operator to support the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann	Up to 2 years	Income based contract	K Forster	Operator required to co-ordinate and manage a number of local food and drink vendors to support delivery of the	N	SP&R Committee January 2026	N

Appendix 1

Title of Tender	Proposed Contract Duration	Est. Max Contract Value	SRO	Short description of goods / services	On published pipeline (Y/N)	Prior Committee approval (Y/N) If Y name Committee & Date	External Funding (Y/N)
				Fleadh 26 with option to cover Fleadh 27, if required.			

Table 2: Single Tender Actions

Title	Duration	Est. Max Contract Value	SRO	Description	Supplier	STA Reason
Page 219 Purchase of 6 x 7.5-ton column lifts	One off Purchase	£37,000	D Sales	Replacement lifts must be compatible with existing lifts and associated systems. The supplier the sole sales agents, authorised repair agents and the only company who carry out warranty work on behalf of Steril Koni UK on the Koni lift range installed in Ireland.	Search Workshop Supplies Ltd	3.
Delivery and off-loading of Forcing and Bedding Bulbs	Up to 5 years	£180,000	D Sales	A competitive tender process was undertaken for this requirement; however, no bids were received, leaving no provider to meet the Council's operational needs. Historically, this service has been delivered through quotation exercises, with Green Gardens consistently providing the required works to the necessary standard and best VFM.	Green Gardens	1.
Annual engagement of the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV)	Up to 3 years	£144,000	T Wallace	Specialist advice on rating matters including challenge to BCC assessments in the Valuation List (on going challenges include BWH/UH, Markets); advice on rate implications of investment projects (2 Royal Avenue, student housing, build to rent); accuracy of BCC valuations in valuation list and advice for Business Rate Reform consultations	IRRV	3.

Appendix 1

				The supplier is the only available provider of these services		
--	--	--	--	---	--	--

Table 3: Modification to Contract

Title of Contract	Original Contract Duration & Value	Modification required	SRO	Description	Supplier
Sustainable Food Partnership support Q22-24	Up to 12 months & £29,000	Additional 3 months and £10,250	J Tully	There is a need for a further 3 months of Belfast Food Partnership support by the contractor so that there can be a sufficient handover of the work to a new Food Systems Coordinator who started in post in the Council in December 2025 and to finalise delivery of Sustainable Food Strategy. Due to recruitment challenges, there was a delay in them starting and therefore there is a need for further support from the contractor for the Sustainable Food Programme. Quotation now exceeds £30,000. Fully Funded.	Food Ethics Council

STA/ Direct Award Reasons

STA Number	Full description
1. Switching to a Direct Award	Switching to a Direct Award: No response or no suitable response following advertised procurement exercise.
2. Single Supplier for Art or Artistic Performance	Single Supplier for Art or Artistic Performance: the creation or acquisition of a unique work of art or artistic performance
3. Single Supplier Absence of Competition for Technical Reasons	Single Supplier Absence of Competition for Technical Reasons: only a particular supplier can supply the goods, services or works required and there are no reasonable alternatives to those goods, services or works

Appendix 1

STA Number	Full description
4. Single Supplier Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)	Single Supplier Intellectual Property Rights (IPR): only particular supplier can supply the goods, services or works required due to that particular supplier having IPR or other exclusive rights and there are no reasonable alternatives to those goods, services or works.
5. Urgency	Urgency: Where the goods, services or works to be supplied under the public contract are strictly necessary for reasons of extreme and unavoidable urgency which is not attributable to any act or omission of and could not have been foreseen by the council, and as a result the public contract cannot be awarded on the basis of a competitive tendering procedure using the reduced 10 day period for 'urgent procurements'
6. Prototypes and Development	Prototypes and Development: the production of a prototype, or supply of other novel goods or services (i.e. goods or services designed or developed at the request of BCC), for the purpose of testing the suitability of the goods or services, researching the viability of producing or supplying the goods or services at scale and developing them for that purpose, or other research, experiment, study or development.
7. Additional or Repeat Goods Services or Works	Additional or Repeat Goods Services or Works: Extension or Partial Replacement concerns the supply of goods, services or works by the existing supplier (includes supplier that the council no longer has a contract with) which are intended as an extension to, or partial replacement of, existing goods, services or works in circumstances where a change in supplier would result in the council receiving goods, services or works that are different from, or incompatible with, the existing goods, services or works, and the difference or incompatibility would result in disproportionate technical difficulties in operation or maintenance.
8. Commodity	Commodity: Supplies quoted and purchased on a commodity market
9. Advantageous time-limited	Advantageous time-limited: Supplies or services on particularly time-limited advantageous terms e.g. supplier winding up its business activities
10. Additional or Repeat Goods Services or Works	Additional or Repeat Goods Services or Works: Similar to Existing Goods Services or Works, concerns the supply of goods, services or works by the existing supplier (includes supplier that the councils no longer has a contract with) that are similar to existing goods, services or works where the existing goods, services or works were supplied under a public contract that was awarded following a competitive procedure within the period of five years ending with the day on which the transparency notice is published, and the tender notice or any tender document in respect of the earlier contract set out the Council's intention to carry out a subsequent procurement of similar goods, services or works in reliance on this direct award justification, and any other information specified in Section 95.
11. Other	Other: Reason not in line with Procurement Act 2023

Appendix 1

STA Number	Full description
12. To Protect Life	To Protect Life: where a Minister of the Crown has by Regulations provided that specified contracts may be awarded to protect human animal or plant life or health or protect public order or safety
13. Schedule 2– Exempted Contract	Schedule 2– Exempted Contract: Requirement not considered procurement spend but use of STA process to document and approve spend. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/54/schedule/2

2.0	Recommendations
2.1	In the absence of a fund/grant stream the Committee is recommended to consider the requests.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	The Chief Executive has received a request for funding.
3.2	Members are reminded that there is no established budget for these requests however, an amount of £315,600 is available in the Discretionary Funding Reserve for this year.
3.3	The request is for refurbishment and relaunch of Clarawood Tenants Hall as a sustainable, multi-purpose community hub, serving over 500 residents in the Clarawood area. Further details of the request and designs and drawings are included within Appendices 1 – 3.
3.4	The Committee is asked to consider the request. If accepted it would be on the basis that appropriate due diligence is carried out.
	Financial & Resource Implications
3.5	<u>Financial & Resource Implications</u> The requests fall under the Council's discretionary expenditure policy and be funded from the existing reserve.
	Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment
3.6	None.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 – Final Proposal Clarawood Appendix 2 – Floor Plans Appendix 3 - Elevations



Clarawood Tenants Hall Funding Proposal

Funding Proposal to Belfast City Council

Discretionary Fund

Total Amount Requested: £122,720

1. Project Overview

The Clarawood Tenants Hall Redevelopment Project aims to renovate and return Clarawood Tenants Hall, located within the Clarawood Estate, East Belfast to full Community use. The Community Hall, has lain derelict for several years following a lack financial investment in the facility, leading to a once vibrant hub for community life, now in a state of disrepair.

After intervention by the Clara Residents Association and East Belfast Community Development Association, the NIHE have issued a Letter of Comfort (24 October 2025) confirming support for a 25-year lease to the Clara Residents Association for the refurbishment and community reuse of the Hall. This proposal seeks £122,720 from Belfast City Council's Discretionary Fund to fully refurbish and relaunch the Hall as a sustainable, multi-purpose community hub, serving over 500 residents in the Clarawood area.

2. Project Objectives

- To reopen the Clarawood Tenants Hall for community use.
- To undertake full refurbishment to modern, accessible standards, including disabled access and safety compliance.
- To create a welcoming, multi-functional facility that promotes social inclusion, health and wellbeing, and lifelong learning.
- To develop programmes for all age groups, including youth, seniors, women's wellbeing, and men's activities.

- To ensure long-term sustainability through strong governance, training, and financial management under Clara Residents Association.

3. Governance and Delivery

- Lead Organisation: Clara Residents Association (Charity No. NIC109620)
- Development Partner: East Belfast Community Development Agency (EBCDA)
- Quantity Surveyor: Glyn Mitchell QS
- Architectural Design: Mourne Architecture
- Advisory Support: Forsythe Consulting

The Residents Association has undertaken a full governance development programme facilitated by EBCDA, including leadership, project management, finance procedures, policy adoption, safeguarding, and health and safety training which has left them more than qualified to manage the renovated Clarawood Tenants Hall.

4. Lease and Permissions

- NIHE issued a Letter of Comfort (24 October 2025) confirming its support for a 25-year lease, subject to renovation funding being secured.
- NIHE has no competing plans for the site and fully supports the proposal to bring the Hall back into community use.
- Architectural designs and floor plans have been completed by Mourne Architecture (October 2025). With confirmation of no planning permission required.

5. Refurbishment Plan and Costs

The refurbishment works, costed at £122,720, have been prepared by Glyn Mitchell QS and are fully itemised in the Clarawood Tenants Hall Costs Report (October 2025).

Key Work Elements Include:

- Repairs to floors, walls, and ceilings
- Clearance of debris and internal decoration
- Electrical and mechanical installations
- Gas connection and safety upgrades
- Disabled toilet and access improvements

- Replacement of all windows and doors
- Kitchen reconfiguration and internal stud wall works
- Upgraded lighting and electrical systems
- External works (ramp, drainage, car park clearance)
- Roof and wall insulation
- New floor finishes
- Security alarm and CCTV installation

Total Cost of Refurbishment: **£122,720**

6. Community Impact

The restored Clarawood Tenants Hall will provide:

- Youth programmes and after-school clubs
- Senior citizens' lunches and social sessions
- Women's health and wellbeing activities
- Men's Shed and veterans' groups
- Family fun days, seasonal events, and celebrations
- Training and employability workshops

These activities will directly benefit over 500 residents and address key issues in the estate, including isolation, unemployment, and lack of community facilities.

7. Sustainability and Management

- The Hall will be managed by Clara Residents Association, a registered charity with charitable oversight and trained committee members.
- Ongoing governance and building management support will continue through EBCDA into 2026.
- Income will be generated through room hire, community fundraising, and small grants, ensuring sustainability.
- Maintenance and insurance costs will be incorporated into an annual operating plan.

8. Funding Request

Funder: Belfast City Council Discretionary Fund

Purpose: Full refurbishment and relaunch of Clarawood Tenants Hall

Amount Requested: **£122,720**

9. Wider Community Support

The Clarawood Tenants Hall project has received strong and widespread community backing, reflecting the local demand for a renewed, accessible, and shared community space. Support has been formally expressed by local residents, community organisations, elected representatives, and faith and cultural groups operating within East Belfast.

10. Conclusion

This proposal represents a united community effort to restore Clarawood Tenants Hall, led by Clara Residents Association with the full support of EBCDA, and NIHE.

The £122,720 requested from Belfast City Council will deliver a complete refurbishment of the Hall, transforming it from dereliction into a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable community hub.

Yours Sincerely,

Clara Residents Association



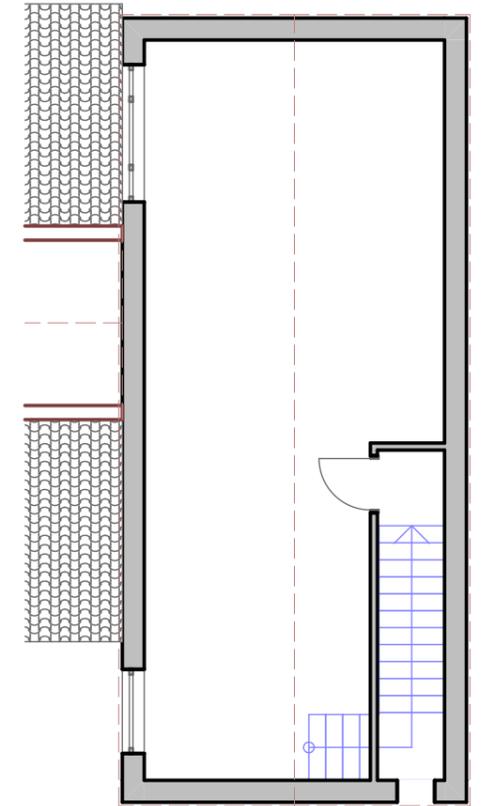
CLARA

RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

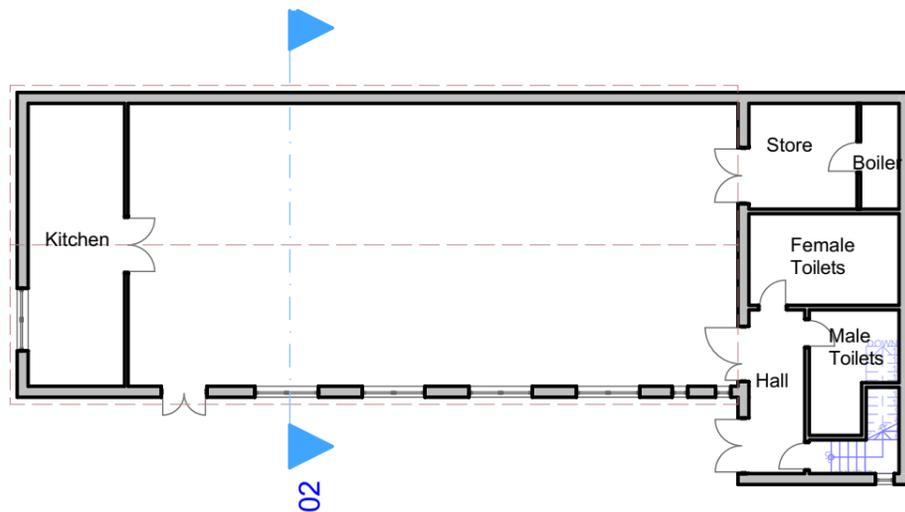
clararg2013@gmail.com



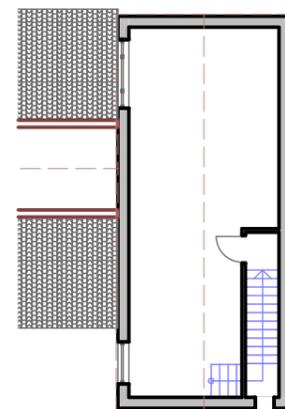
1 GF-Ground Floor 1:100



2 01-First Floor 1:100



3 GF-Ground Floor Existing 1:200



4 01-First Floor Existing 1:200



Project **Clarawood Community Hall**

Client **Clarawood Community**

Project No. Drawing Nr Revision

25-108

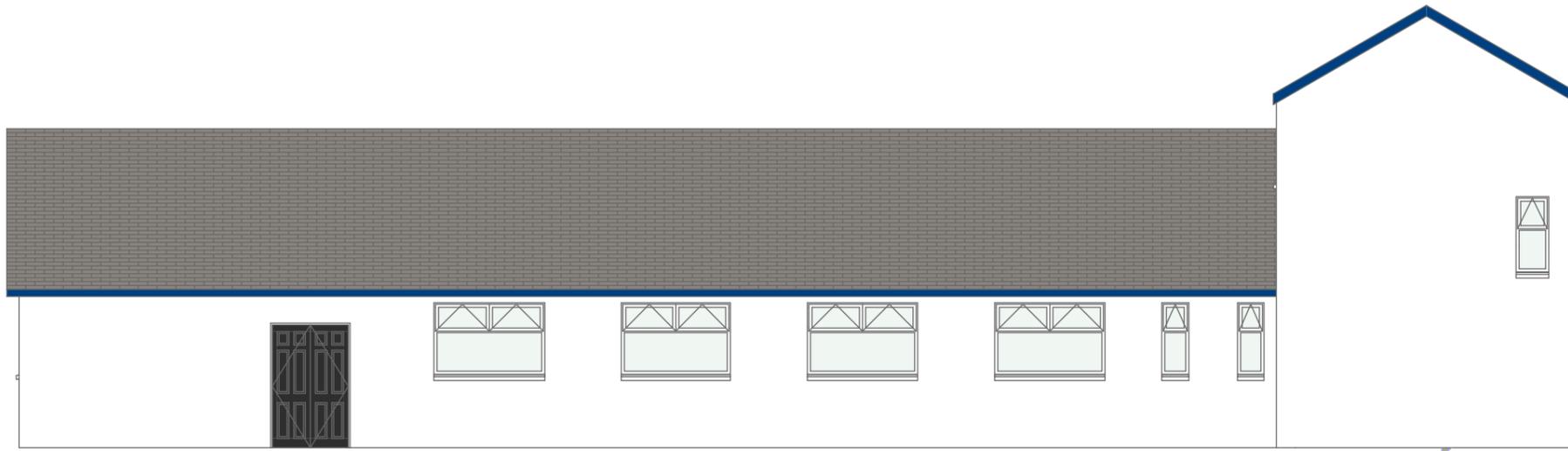
Layout Title

Floor Plans

Date Scales @ A3 Drawn By
Oct 2025 1:100, 1:200 Alan Blue

19 The Square, Kilkeel, Co Down BT34 4AA t:028 4176 3961
m:07803177197 / 07801952862 e:info@mourne.org

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1

Front Elevation

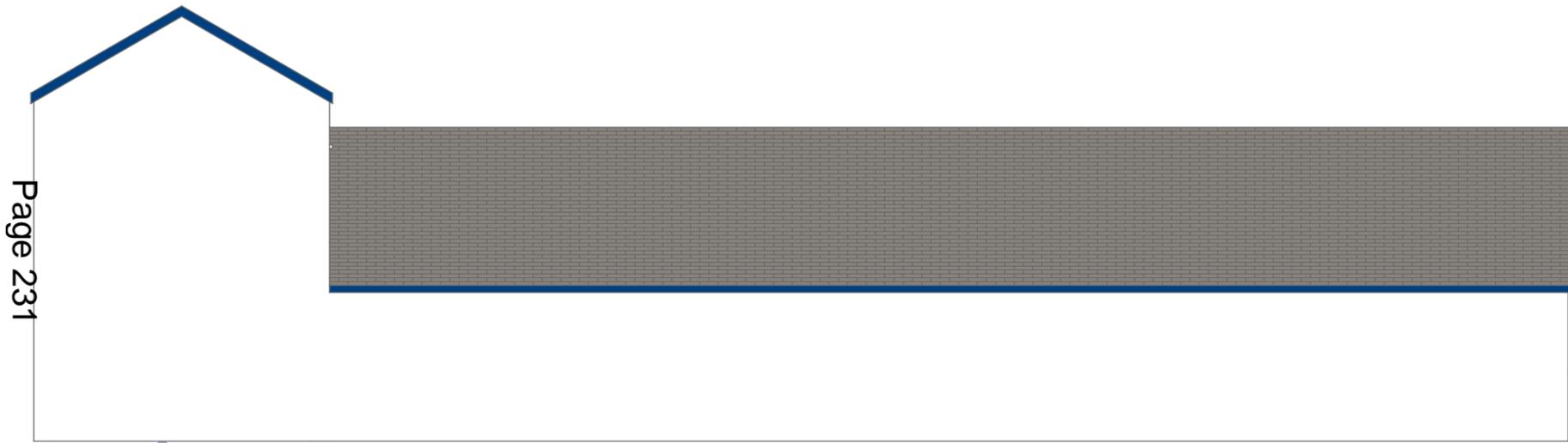
1:100



2

Side Elevation

1:100

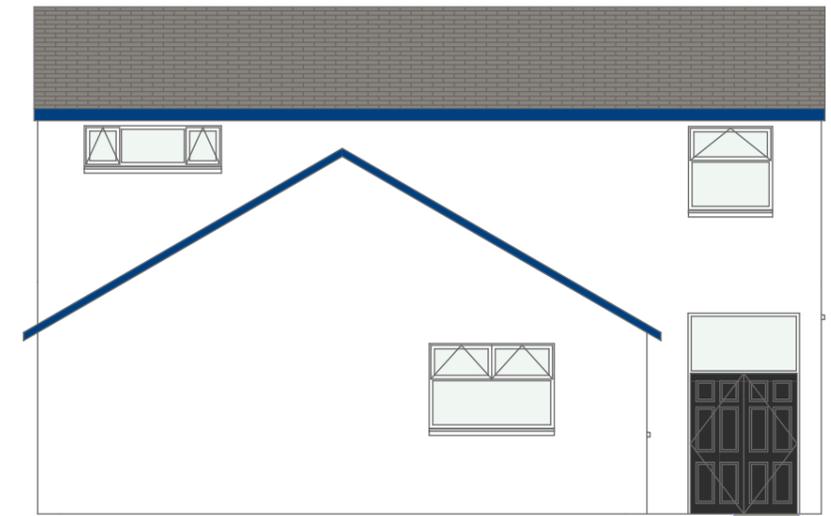


Page 231

3

Rear Elevation

1:100



4

Side Elevation

1:100



**ARCHITECTURAL
DESIGN**
Project
Clarawood Community Hall

Client
Clarawood Community

Project No. Drawing Nr Revision
25-108

Layout Title
Elevations

Date Scales @ A3 Drawn By
Oct 2025 1:100 *Alan Blue*

19 The Square, Kilkeel, Co Down BT34 4AA t:028 4176 3961
m:07803177197 / 07801952862 e:info@mourne.org

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Subject:	Minutes of Shared City Partnership Meeting on 9 th February 2026
Date:	20 th February 2026
Reporting Officer:	Jim Girvan, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Contact Officer:	Godfrey McCartney, Good Relations Manager

Restricted Reports									
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input 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%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
After Council Decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

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

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To report to committee on the key issues discussed at the Shared City Partnership meeting held on the 9 th February 2026.

2.0	Recommendation
2.1	That the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee approve the minutes and recommendations from the Shared City Partnership Meeting held on the 09 th February, including:
2.2	<p><u>Presentation from City of Sanctuary</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shared City Partnership noted the presentation and recommends to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it notes the presentation.
2.3	<p><u>Community Recovery Fund Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shared City Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommends to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee that it notes the contents of the report.
2.4	<p><u>PEACEPLUS – Local Community Action Plan Secretariat Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shared City Partnership recommends that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report
2.5	<p><u>Peace Plus Thriving and Peaceful Communities Thematic Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shared City Partnership recommends that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report
2.6	<p><u>Peace Plus Celebrating Culture and Diversity Thematic Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shared City Partnership noted the contents of the report and agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>CCD1 Interfaith and Belief:</u> to amend the learning resources and engagement with participants to include Key Stage 3 / Year 10 pupils, <u>CCD2 Community Connections:</u> the 3 Welcome Hub locations as Morton, Horn Drive and Cregagh Community Centres, and <p>And recommends that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agree the above recommendations and note the contents of the report.</p>
2.7	<p><u>Community Regeneration & Transformation Thematic Update</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Shared City Partnership recommends that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report
2.8	<p><u>Any Other Business</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Deputy Chairperson and the Good Relations Manager welcomed Ms. Lynch to her first meeting of the Shared City Partnership.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>The Shared City Partnership is a Working Group of the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee which consists of Elected members and representatives from various sectors</p>

	<p>across the city. The minutes from the Partnership are brought before the Committee for approval on a monthly basis.</p>
3.2	<p>The key issues on the agenda at the 9th February 2026 meeting were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership Papers of the 12th January 2026 • Presentation from the City of Sanctuary • Community Recovery Fund Update • PEACEPLUS – Local Community Action Plan Secretariat Update • Peace Plus Thriving and Peaceful Communities Thematic Update • Peace Plus Celebrating Culture and Diversity Thematic Update • Community Regeneration & Transformation Thematic Update • Any Other Business
3.3	<p>More details regarding the above issues and recommendations are included in the following minutes of the meeting attached in Appendix 1: Minutes of the Shared City Partnership from the 9th February 2026; Appendix 2: Presentation from City of Sanctuary; and Appendix 3: PeacePlus AGRS Assurance Audit Draft</p>
3.4	<p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>All financial implications are covered through existing budgets, and the Good Relations Action Plan is included in the current estimates process.</p>
3.5	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The recommendations of the Partnership are to promote the work of the Council in promoting good relations and will enhance equality and good relations impacts for the City of Belfast.</p>
4.0	Appendices - Documents Attached
	<p>Appendix 1 – Minutes of the Shared City Partnership from the 9th February 2026</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Presentation from City of Sanctuary</p> <p>Appendix 3 – PeacePlus AGRS Assurance Audit</p>

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SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

Monday 9th February, 2026

MEETING OF SHARED CITY PARTNERSHIP

Members present: Councillor I. McLaughlin (Deputy Chairperson); and
Alderman Copeland, Councillors Abernethy and Lyons.

External Members: Ms. B. Arthurs, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Ms. A. Roberts, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Ms. J. Irwin, Community Relations Council;
Mr. A. Hagan, PSNI;
Mr. G. Walker, Community and Voluntary Sector;
Ms. N. Creagh, Department for Communities;
Ms. T. Mimna, Executive Office; and
Ms. A. M. White, British Red Cross.

In attendance: Mr. G. McCartney, Good Relations Manager
Ms. D. McKinney, PEACE Programme Manager;
Ms. L. Dolan, Acting Senior Good Relations Officer;
Ms. E. Kennedy, Project Officer (Good Relations);
Ms. N. Lynch (Good Relations);
Mr. I. Eguagie (Belfast City of Sanctuary);
Mr. J. O'Neill (Belfast City of Sanctuary);
Ms. T. Olatunbosun (Belfast City of Sanctuary);
Mr. A. Shyju (Sanctuary Network);
Mr. G. Tubritt (Ballynafeigh Community Development Association)
Mr. A. McMullan, Members' Services and Digital Support Officer.

Apologies

Apologies were reported on behalf of Councillor J. Duffy (Chairperson), Mr J. Donnelly, Mr. L. Gunn and Mr J Girvan.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 12th January were taken as read and signed as correct. It was reported that those minutes had been adopted by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 23rd January.

Declarations of Interest

Ms. Roberts declared an interest under item 6a, Celebrating Cultures and Diversity Thematic Update, in that she was associated with those organisations delivering projects under the PEACEPLUS Programme.

Ms. Arthurs declared an interest under item 4, Community Recovery Fund Update, and item 6, Thriving and Peaceful Communities Thematic Update, in that she was associated with those organisations delivering projects under the PEACEPLUS Programme.

It was noted that, as those items did not become subject to debate or discussion, the Members were not required to leave the meeting whilst the matters were under consideration.

Presentations

Presentation from City of Sanctuary

A number of Members thanked Belfast City of Sanctuary for their presentation and paid tribute to the work undertaken by the organisation.

Following discussion the Good Relations Manager undertook to submit a report to a future meeting of the Partnership to outline how the Council could further contribute, along with Belfast City of Sanctuary, to the development of Belfast as an inclusive and welcoming city for all.

Noted.

Members Update

Ms. White suggested that the focus of the Members' Update section of the agenda could be rotated amongst the different sectors represented on the Partnership, with each sector assigned a meeting at which to present an update. Ms. White offered to make a presentation in June 2026 to mark Refugee Week.

The Good Relations Manager informed the Partnership that Mr. Gunn would provide an update from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive at the next meeting of the Partnership. He also reported that he intended to schedule presentations from the various PEACEPLUS projects on a regular basis.

He suggested that, should Members become aware of developments within their sectors which had good relations or peace and reconciliation implications, they should bring those issues to the Partnership's attention through the regular Members' Updates to identify opportunities to work together to minimise or mitigate the impact of those issues.

Community Recovery Fund Update

Ms. Kennedy, Good Relations Project Officer, updated the Partnership on the status of the Community Recovery Fund which was intended to support areas impacted by the public disorder in the summer of 2024.

She reported that the Fund currently supported 25 projects with 6 of those projects due to complete in March 2026 and the remainder availing of an extension to September 2026.

Those projects were:

Community Recovery Funding	Status Update
CRF001- SNO Engagement Programme	Amount Awarded: £15,000 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF002 – Integration and Inclusion – Wheelworks	Amount Awarded: £29,400 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF003 – Community Centres – 26 Council, 6 Independent	Amount Awarded: £29,000 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF004 – Challenging the Narrative – Edie Shillue Consulting	Amount Awarded: £29,800 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF005 – Schools of Sanctuary	Amount Awarded: £20,000 Completion date: June 2026
CRF006 – BCC Economic Development	Amount Awarded: £20,000 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF007 – WULO LORAG	Amount Awarded: £15,000 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF007 – WULO Forward South Partnership	Amount Awarded: £15,000 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF007 – Interagency LORAG	Amount Awarded: £5,000 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF008a – Area based Consortiums (N) Greater Shankill Alternatives	Amount Awarded: £39,500 Completion date: March 2026
CRF008a – Area based Consortiums (S) Belfast Bands Forum	Amount Awarded: £40,000 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF008a – Area based Consortiums (W) Blackie River	Amount Awarded: £40,000 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF008a – Area based Consortiums (E) East Belfast Alternatives	Amount Awarded: £39,400 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF008b – Open Call Annadale and Haywood Residents Association	Amount Awarded: £18,400 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF008b – Open Call Voicing the Void	Amount Awarded: £19,600 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF008b – Open Call Cliftonville Community Regeneration Forum	Amount Awarded: £11,900 Completion date: March 2026
CRF008b – Open Call Upper Anderstown Community Forum	Amount Awarded: £7,150 Completion date: March 2026
CRF008b – Open Call Dreamscheme NI	Amount Awarded: £8,160 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF008b – Open Call NI Food to Go	Amount Awarded: £16,400 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF008b – Open Call West Belfast Partnership Board	Amount Awarded: £16,000 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF008b – Open Call NI Somali Association	Amount Awarded: £11,385 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF008b – Open Call Markets Development Association	Amount Awarded: £16,000 Completion date: Sept 2026
CRF008b – Open Call Rosario Youth Club	Amount Awarded: £17,268.44 Completion date: March 2026
CRF008b – Open Call Feile an Phobail	Amount Awarded: £18,500 Completion date: March 2026
CRF009 – PCSP Hate Crime Prevention Programme	Amount Awarded: £15,000 Completion date: Sept 2026

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee also note the contents of the report.

Local Community Action Plan Secretariat Update

The Partnership considered the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Shared City Partnership members with an update on the mobilisation of PEACEPLUS Belfast Local Community Action Plan (LCAP).

2.0 Recommendations

Members are requested to note the contents of the report and recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee also note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Mobilisation

Mobilisation of the Action Plan, including the contract awards and procurements are outlined in each of the Thematic Reports

3.2 Financial Controller

Formal contracting of KPMG as the Financial Controller for the verification and certification of PEACEPLUS claims has now been completed.

The Period 1 claim has been submitted on the JEMS system and verification by KPMG is progressing.

3.3 Advance

As reported in January 2026, the first advance payment of €1.5m has been received by Council. The Partnership is requested to note that the €/£ exchange rate, transferred at £1,300,841.21, which is variance of £3,506.62 from the €1.15 submission rate. The variance will be met by the office and administration budget.

Options on managing the exchange rate fluctuations are progressing with internal Management Accounts and external transaction providers.

3.4 Claims and Reporting

The value of claims to be submitted to SEUPB for reimbursement totals £1,633,006.35 (€1,877,957.30 approx.)

The Partnership is requested to note that Claims for Period 1-5 (Jan 2024-Mar 2025) have been collated on to the JeMS system and will be formally submitted on a phased basis. Collation of information to support expenditure for Claim Periods 6-8 (Jan-Dec 2025) has commenced and will be submitted once verification and feedback for Claims 1-4 has been received from KPMG.

Project reports for Period 1-6 (Jan 2024-Jun 2025) have been submitted on JeMS, and SEUPB has reviewed and requested amends, such as removing the reference of exchange rate fluctuations as an issue / risk within the problems section and the upload of evidence of participant completion.

The Period 7 (Jul-Sept 25) project report has been compiled on to JeMS, however submission is being held pending the learning and amends from the Period 6 reporting period. The Period 8 report is due 31 January 2026, however members should note that due to staff pressures this may be delayed to mid-February 2026.

3.5 Forecasting

The Board is advised that expenditure forecasting has been submitted to SEUPB, and discussions have been held with SEUPB to agree spend targets. Officers are liaising with SEUPB to confirm quarterly spend target.

Members should note that expenditure forecasting is required to be submitted to SEUPB every quarter, March, June, Sept and December.

3.6 Assurance Audit

Members are referred to the draft AGRS Assurance Audit Report, Appendix I, which evaluated the effectiveness of governance, risk management and control processes of both PEACEPLUS projects, 1.1 Local Action Plan and 1.4 Reconnected Belfast.

The report outlines an assurance rating of Substantial, which reflect that controls have been evaluated as adequate, appropriate and effective to provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed and objectives met in line with the terms and conditions of the letters of offer.

3.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

Projects continue to progress towards achievement of their targets and evidence this via the Monitoring and Evaluation System and detailed in the Thematic Reports.

Due to resource pressures, the update of the Performance Dashboard has been paused. A further update will be presented at the March 2026 meeting.

Interim arrangements for troubleshooting and technical support have been agreed internally

3.8 Staffing

The new Project Support Officer started on 19 January 2026, and the new Project Officer, is due to commence on 2 March 2026.

As reported in January 2026, there are significant resource pressures within the team five vacant posts. Recruitment for a new Project Manager is due to open on 5 February 2026, and the appointment of the reserve candidate for the Finance and Claims Support Assistant is progressing.

3.9 Financial and Resource Implications

All expenditure associated with the PEACEPLUS Action Plan is reimbursed by SEUPB and is eligible from 1 January 2024. As previously reported referenced at 3.6 above, PEACEPLUS claimable expenditure to 31 December 2025 is approx. £1.63m.

3.10 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

The PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan has been screened for equality, good relations and rural needs assessment, and has been screened out.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources also note the contents of the report.

Thriving and Peaceful Communities Thematic Update

The Partnership considered the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Shared City Partnership with a progress update on projects within the

Thriving and Peaceful Communities (TPC) Theme of the PEACEPLUS Belfast Local Community Action Plan (LCAP).

2.0 Recommendations

Members are requested to note the contents of the report and recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Project Delivery

An overview of project progress within the TPC theme is outlined below.

3.2 TPC 1 Community Empowerment – Lead Delivery Partner NICVA

Project Partners: Forward South Partnership (FSP), East Belfast Community Development Agency (EBCDA), West Belfast Partnership Board (WBPB), Falls Community Council (FCC), Greater Shankill Partnership (GSP) and Marrowbone Community Association (MCA).

The first Citywide non accredited training session on Facilitation Skills was delivered on 11 December 2025, and due to high demand two more sessions are planned for January 2026.

The OCN intake (Course #2) with 24 learners registered is to begin in January 2026, running until end of April 2026. The next Citywide Forum Meeting is scheduled for 14 January 2026. The second Citywide networking event is planned for 18 February 2026 with the theme of Inclusive Community Development.

Baselining is continuing for the Local Community Empowerment Plans (LCEPs) including LCEP 08 (Balmoral/Botanic) LCEP 09 (Lisnasharragh/Ormiston/Titanic), LCEP 02 (Blackmountain), LCEP 04 (Court) and LCEP 01 (Court).

Officers are reviewing recently submitted M&E as part of Oct-Dec quarterly reporting.

Two quarterly payments that had been in arrears due to issues aligning their M&E for those periods with BCC system requirements have now been paid to NICVA, with 117 registrations were verified.

3.3 TPC 2 Health & Wellbeing - Lead Delivery Partner Ashton

Project Partners: Shankill Partnership Board, East Belfast Community Development Agency, West Belfast Partnership Board, & North Belfast Community Partnership.

As reported in January 2026, delivery is due to commence in all 4 project areas (North, West, Shankill and East) within this quarter. Local Working Group meetings are ongoing, and the City-Wide Shared Learning Group and Peer Support Group are due to have their first meetings this month.

The Programme Oversight Group (POG) Terms of Reference has now been agreed, which will enable the change request to amend the membership target of the Programme Oversight Group (POG), and realign the targets into local activity targets, to be finalised. Members are reminded that delegated authority is in place for the Good Relations Manager and Programme Manager to approve this change request and an update will be provided next month.

The completion of the POG change request will enable the Payment Schedule to be finalised and the Phase 1 payment to be progressed.

TPC 3 Youth Empowerment, Inspiring Future Belfast

3.4 Lot 1: 9–12 year olds (Juniors) - Lead Delivery Partner Giga Training Project Partner BEAM Creative Network.

As previously reported, Year 1 delivery has completed, and M&E requirements have been fulfilled and Phase 2b payment is complete.

The project is now planning delivery for 2026, with delivery to commence in April 2026.

3.5 Lot 2: 12–15 year olds (Intermediate) - Lead Delivery Partner Active Communities Network (ACN) Project Partners: Ledley Hall Boys & Girls Club, Lagmore and Rosario Youth.

Delivery of activity is ongoing 4 sessions completed during December 2025 these included: inclusive environment session, good relations, social action activity and Christmas celebration event which was a full group outing. A further 6 sessions have taken place in Hazelwood Integrated College which included: community development – peace art project, my community background, social action planning and needs assessment draft.

The cross border residential with the community group participants is planned for 24th-25th January 2026.

3.6 Lot 3: 16–18 year olds (Seniors) - Lead Delivery Partner Streetbeat Youth Project
Project Partner YEHA (Youth Educational Health Advice).

The social action project proposal is currently under review. Streetbeat have outlined in the proposal that participants actively engaging in the PEACEPLUS programme will plan and deliver a 3-week programme to an identified group within the North/West Belfast area. The programme will focus on addressing issues related to sectarianism, racism, cultural diversity and exclusion within the community. The need for this project was identified by participants during a social action planning session.

This first cohort is due to complete in February 2026. The Phase 2a payment is currently being progressed.

3.7 Lot 4: 19-25 years olds (Young adults) – Lead Partner GEMS NI
Project Partners: Diverse Youth NI (DYNI), Training Network for Women (TWN).

26 participants continue to be actively engaging in the project in line with the project target. The group have now completed the ILM leadership training and have also completed the workshops on Myth Busting – Mental Health; Reporting hate crime; Domestic violence and good relations.

Preparations for the international residential visit to Bosnia & Herzegovina scheduled for 16th-19th February 2026 have commenced. Flights, transport from Belfast to Dublin airport and insurances have been confirmed. Members are requested to the challenging process in securing travel visas for some participants, which required them to visit the Home Office in London. There have been additional costs incurred as a result of this requirement.

GEMS NI will progress to the Phase 2a payment and quarterly payment based on M&E upload and alignment.

3.8 TPC 4 Sport for Peace - Lead Delivery Partner Active Communities Network
Project Partners: Sport Changes Life Foundation, PeacePlayers NI and Community Sports Network.

Pillar 1 coach education (16–18-year-olds):
14 of 17 participants from the Ulster University are now actively participating and have completed: OCN Level 1 – Diversity Within Society, British Dodgeball – Coaching Award, Emergency First Aid at Work and Safeguarding Certificates. Further sessions included: shadow coaching

with pillar 2 participants, sports session of fundamental skill and good practice of coaching, mentoring and OCN.

A second cohort of 17 of 29 participants from St Marys College are now actively participating and have achieved the OCN Level 1. Participants have continued to complete the OCN and First Aid qualification with Pro Paramedics.

Activity for Pillar 2 sports sessions (11-16-year-olds) is ongoing with 226 participants currently engaged across the schools, as outlined below

- Nettlefield PS / Pillar 2 (53 participants) Twinned with St Matthews PS & Harding PS) – 13 sessions delivered to date.
- St Matthews PS: Pillar 2 (34 participants) Twinned with Nettlefield PS & Harding PS) – 14 sessions delivered to date.
- Harding PS / Pillar 2 (28 participants) Twinned with St Matthews PS & Nettlefield PS) – 13 sessions delivered to date.
- St Annes PS– Pillar 2 (27 participants) Twinned with Knockbrea – 10 sessions to date
- Knockbrea– Pillar 2 (15 participants) Twinned with St Annes – 12 sessions.
- St Joesphs PS Pillar 2 (49 participants) Twinned with Black Mountain PS) – 14 sessions delivered to date.
- Black Mountain PS Pillar 2 (20 participants) Twinned with St Joesphs PS – 8 sessions completed to date

Pillar 3 - Two Pillar 3 participants have secured part-time employment with Sport Changes Life and will complete NCC qualifications, due to commence January 2026.

Pillar 4 - Research framework was completed by UJJ and will consist of focus groups and surveys for Pillar 1 participants. Attitudinal change surveys will be assessed for Pillar 2 participants for the final paper.

Two employability fairs are scheduled for January 2026 at UUB and another at ACN to promote opportunities within the sport sector for job roles and volunteering.

3.9 TPC 5 Employability Language Up – Lead Delivery Partner People1st

Project Partners: Belfast City Mission, Conway Education, Donegall Pass, Fane Street Primary, Food Stock, Footprints, Holy Rosary Primary, Mears, Refuge Language, Russian Speaking Community, Street Soccer NI, The Suitcase Project, Wee Chicks, Windsor Women’s Centre.

Programme delivery is progressing with 271 participants registered to date, exceeding current target of 225. 58 participants have completed to date, a shortfall of 49 participants against current targets.

As previously reported, while recruitment and initial engagement have been strong, progression through both strands leading to the achievement of a digital badge has been lower than anticipated. To address this, the Delivery Partner has been actively supporting participants to reengage, including accommodating missed classes where possible and signposting participants to alternative sessions or locations to support completion. These actions are ongoing and are expected to support improved completion rates going forward.

The Delivery Partner is confident of meeting their Phase 2b target of a total of 184 participants (cumulative) by the end of March 2026.

Engagement is city-wide, with particularly strong participation in South Belfast, and post attitudinal survey responses range from 74% - 100% across all 9 questions.

**3.10 TPC 6 Arts Across the Genres – Delivery Partner MayWe
Project Partners: BEAM Creative Network**

MayWe's Phase 2a deliverables are now fully complete and the payment has now been processed. Officers also resolved M&E upload technical issues and M&E has been submitted and verified to support the quarterly report.

Project 1: Polyphonic

To date 106 participants are recruited, with 78 actively participating of a target of 140 (+51 since last report). Area-based capacity building sessions are continuing, and a 2-day intensive block of capacity building sessions were delivered on 10-11 January 2026 for newly recruited participants. These participants will join the area groups to begin the skills sessions and art piece development. All area groups also took part in a study trip and masterclass at Brassneck Theatre.

Project 2: Creative Exchange

To date 63 participants are recruited, with 61 actively participating of a target of 140 (+38 since last report). The North group have completed all 6 sessions and East and West have completed 5/6. South delivery has not started, a group has now been secured to begin in January 2026.

Projects 1 and 2 are attending the Mentoring Day on 24 January 2025 with representatives from the creative arts and

media sector to discuss career pathways with participants and produce a personalised career pack.

Project 5: Media Production

The project is fully recruited with 21 participants recruited of whom 18 are actively participating. Skills sessions continue with Participants continue to attend different activities that Projects 1 & 2 are engaged in to capture footage and content for the newsletter, socials and documentary.

The volunteer group is progressing with 4 participants from each of Project 1 and 2 recruited to collaborate/assist in operations for festivals/ events over the period of their engagement. The first festival the participants will volunteer with is Imagine Festival in March 2026. Imagine Festival and Volunteer Now are joining the Mentoring Day to provide an induction for the volunteer group.

Members are reminded that the programme is designed for participants to be engaged for 18 months and as such there are no completed participants at this stage.

3.11 Financial and Resource Implications

All expenditure associated with the PEACEPLUS Action Plan is eligible from 1 January 2024.

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

The PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan has been screened for equality, good relations and rural needs assessment, and has been screened out.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee also note the contents of the report.

Celebrating Culture and Diversity Thematic Update

The Partnership considered the following report:

1.0 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Shared City Partnership with a progress update on projects within the Celebrating Cultures and Diversity (CCD) Theme of the PEACEPLUS Belfast Local Community Action Plan (LCAP).

2.0 Recommendations

Members are requested to note the contents of the report and agreed

- **CCD1 Interfaith and Belief**
To amend the learning resources and engagement with participants to include Key Stage 3 / Year 10 pupils
- **CCD2 Community Connections**
the 3 Welcome Hub locations as Morton, Horn Drive and Cregagh Community Centres

recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee agree the above recommendations and note the contents of the report.

3.0 Main report

3.1 Project Delivery

Projects are at various stages of implementation and an overview of project progress is outlined below.

- 3.2 CCD1 – Interfaith and Belief Lead Delivery Partner:**
Corrymeela Community
Consortium Partners: Redeeming Our Communities, Belfast Islamic Centre, NI Inter-Faith Forum

54 participants are now registered across the steering groups for Stream 1, 2 and 3, against a target of 70 Stream 1 – 24 (30) participants; Stream 2 – 12 (20) participants Stream 3 – 18 (20) participants

Corrymeela continue to use a range of recruitment methods to ensure target is achieved.

Stream 1: Outreach Education element 1x co-design session completed during December 2025. Members are advised that this element continues to be behind schedule by more than 4 months. There have been several issues identified including the suitability of learning resources and access to KS4/5 pupils due to exam timeframes and the limited space for non-curriculum activities. As such, Corrymeela has submitted a change request to amend Stream 1 delivery to include pupils/participants from KS3, with a focus on engagement with year 10 pupils in schools.

The change request has been considered by the Programme Board, and it is recommended that as the SCP agreed this change on the basis that does not contravene the tender requirements and the programme manual criteria.

Stream 2: Welcoming Programme. The online survey is being finalised and is due to be issued imminently.

Stream 3: 1 co-design sessions has taken place and a festival focussing St Brigid's Day and Jewish Tu B'Shevat is being delivered on 1 February 2026.

3.3 CCD2 – Community Connections Lead Delivery Partner: GEMS NI

Consortium Partners: Business in the Community, Belfast City of Sanctuary, Diverse Youth NI, Migrant Centre NI, Ballynafeigh Community Development Association.

Strand 1 Leadership & Mentoring sessions are progressing with 4 sessions having taken place. Other strands of the project are running slightly behind due to some recruitment and implementation delays, which this has delayed the Phase 2a payment.

11 participants are verified as registered and actively participating, and this is 110 participants short of the Phase 2a target of 121 participants registered and actively participating.

Strand 1 Mentors, and Strand 2 Facilitators are due to commence this month, and **Strand 3 Connectors and Strand 4 Welcome Hubs** are due to be in place by mid-February, it is therefore anticipated that all Phase 2a targets will be met by end of February.

Strand 4 Welcome Hub Locations

Members are reminded that the project requires 3 Belfast Welcome Hubs to be established through council community spaces, and Morton was approved as a pilot location, pending a full proposal.

As reported in January 2026, the Programme Board requested clarity on the 3 Welcome Hub (WH) locations, Morton, Horn Drive and Cregagh, around the minority ethnic populations in the proposed locations and the achievement of targets.

Further information was provided on the locations, accessibility, availability of space, usage of space by minority ethnic groups and census figures, as well as encouraging usage of the spaces by new users.

The Programme Board considered the additional information and the approach, and agreed the Welcome Hub locations as outlined above. The Programme Board recommend that the Shared City Partnership also agree the Welcome Hub locations.

3.4 CCD 3 – LGBTQIA+ Community Engagement Project - Lead Delivery Partner: The Rainbow Project Project Partners: Cara Friend, HRe NI

Strand 1 Co-ordination and Strand 2 Strategic Planning currently have 16 out of a target of 25 participants (combined) registered and actively participating. Members should note that a change request is being finalised which will enable wider parameters for recruitment to both these strands.

Strand 3 comms activity is ongoing, and receipt of a substantial comms strategy will complete targets for the Phase 2a payment. Strand 5 research is underway with survey launched in December 2025 receiving 400 out of the 500 target responses to date.

The project held a very successful launch event on Friday 9 January 2026 in the MAC, with 100 participants attending, which exceed the target of 50 meaningful participants attending this event.

3.5 CCD4 – Community Empowerment Ex Politically Motivated Prisoners

Lead Delivery Partner: Coiste na nIarchimí Project Partners: Tar Anall, Action for Community Transformation, Charter NI, and Tar Isteach

As reported in January 2026, the contract initiation phase is being finalised. Officers continue to work closely the Delivery Partner on the alignment of the condensed implementation plan with the payment schedule.

Delivery planning has been ongoing during this period, with recruitment due to commence January 2026 and a low key launch event planned for March 2025.

CCD5 From Multiculturalism to Interculturalism

3.6 Lot 1 – Language and Cultural Access

As previously reported, the tender closed on 8 December 2025 and the assessment process is ongoing, with clarifications submitted to the bidder.

3.7 Lot 2 – Cultural Spaces (Come On Over) Lead Delivery Partner: MayWe

The project's steering group is in place and are progressing with the design of the activity programme. Options for further cultural spaces have been discussed with MayWe and will be progressed, with an update to the Council in due course.

Members are requested to note the onboarding of these final 4 spaces will be realigned into the next payment phase as it was stipulated in the tender that the deadline for all spaces to be signed up was the end of Year 1 (July 2026).

A realigned implementation plan accounting for this has been requested from MayWe.

3.8 Lot 3 – Festivals and Flagship Events _Lead Delivery Partner: Féile an Phobail

The Phase 1 contract initiation phase has now been completed, and the payment is now being progressed following agreement of the revised project payment schedule. Quarterly payments are in arrears due to the delay in completing the contract initiation phase.

The project is continuing with delivery in line with the agreed implementation plan, including the Flagship Events and Musical Fusions steering groups and the mentoring programme.

Officers have now addressed some technical issues that had prevented the submission of the quarterly report and the quarterly contract management meeting is scheduled for late January 2026, which will confirm the progress of delivery.

3.9 Lot 4 – Culture and Shared Built Heritage - Lead Delivery Partner: Arts Ekta

Project Partners: Cairde na Cille, Kabosh Theatre
The delivery of Year 1 activity is complete and monitoring and evaluation data and information is currently being verified and will be reported to the SCP on completion of the full M&E review.

Concept plans for Year 2 programme of Events and Tours are being reviewed by officers, with Year 2 Burial Traditions concept plan due in February 2026. Year 2 Events are due to commence in March 2026, Tours to commence in April 2026 and Burial Traditions Workshops/Events to commence in June 2026. The second cohort of Tour Guide OCN is due to start in February 2026 and the second co-created theatre piece is to be delivered in March 2026. It is envisaged the theatre activity will focus on East Belfast.

Members are requested to note that a change to the delivery approach for the Faith-based Trail project has been agreed via delegated authority from the Programme Board. The change request will replace the AR element of the 'Faith in Focus' walking trail with an immersive trail, which will involve art installations, interactive lights, motion sensors, QR code passport, digital souvenirs, as well as a digital map and microsite.

As part of the Faith-based Trail project, the schools group will begin the first series of educational trips to faith centres for the co-designed faith trail at the end of January 2026. The school co-design workshops are currently being scheduled for completion before Easter.

3.10 Financial and Resource Implications

All expenditure associated with the PEACEPLUS Action Plan is eligible from 1 January 2024.

3.11 Equality or Good Relations Implications/ Rural Needs Assessment

The PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan has been screened for equality, good relations and rural needs assessment, and has been screened out.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and agreed:

- to amend the learning resources and engagement with participants to include Key Stage 3/Year 10 pupils as outlined at paragraph 3.2 in the report;
- to confirm the three Welcome Hub locations as Morton, Horn Drive and Cregagh Community Centres as outlined at paragraph 3.3 in the report; and
- to recommend that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee note the contents of the report and agree to the above recommendations.

Community Regeneration and Transformation Thematic Update

The Peace Programmes Manager updated the Partnership on the delivery of the Community Regeneration and Transformation theme of the PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan.

She highlighted that the design teams for all of the capital projects had now been appointed and were progressing to the final design and planning stage.

She reported that stakeholders in the LGBTQIA+ Hub project had raised concerns surrounding rent affordability and the impact of delayed Phase 2 works would have on their ability to fully relocate to the premises.

The Peace Programmes Manager advised the Partnership that the Council had been preparing for the upcoming community consultations on the Distillery Street Project and on the opening of the interface.

She reported that further route-planning and exploration of options on the Access to the Hills project with community stakeholders was ongoing, with stakeholders preferring to locate the route through Ligoniel Dams rather than the original Wolfhill Road route due to safety concerns. The procurement exercises for both the Access to the Hills and the Sanctuary Theatre projects were ongoing.

The Partnership noted the contents of the report and recommended that the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee also note the contents of the report.

Any Other Business

The Deputy Chairperson and the Good Relations Manager welcomed Ms. Lynch to her first meeting of the Shared City Partnership.

Date of Next Meeting

The Deputy Chairperson reminded the Partnership that the next meeting would be held at 1:30pm on Monday 9th March.

Chairperson

Belfast City of Sanctuary



Building a Welcoming, Safe, and Inclusive City for

All

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A Sanctuary Culture Advancing the Belfast Agenda and Good Relations Strategy

 Belfast Shared City Partnership

 January 25, 2026



A Growing Movement

Schools and Nurseries Leading the Way

Page 256

59

Schools & Nurseries in Belfast.

Since June 2017

From Blythefield Primary School in 2017 to 59 schools in Belfast, with a total of 99 Schools across northern Ireland today, the Sanctuary Network has fundamentally shifted how Belfast's educational sector approaches inclusion.

Rigorous Appraisal

Schools are assessed against three core principles: Welcome, Safe Environment, and Inclusion & Integration, ensuring genuine commitment.

Participatory Process

Appraisals involve refugees, asylum seekers, and community members, giving voice to those with lived experience.

Urban Villages Focus

Strong adoption in Urban Villages areas, actively transforming communities through inclusive education.

Future Ready

Equipping young people with the values and understanding needed for a diverse, interconnected world.

Queen's University Belfast

Northern Ireland's First University of Sanctuary

Est. May 2025



Access & Pathways

- **Widening Participation:**
Pathway Opportunity Programme now includes Newcomers, Refugees, and Asylum Seekers (16-19).
- **Scholarships:**
Dedicated support for displaced students to access higher education.
- **Scholars at Risk (SAR):**
Institutional support for threatened academics.

Removing barriers to entry for the most vulnerable.



Academic Support

- **McClay Library:**
Free one-year Associate Personal Memberships for displaced academics and students.
- **Language Support:**
Non-formal English classes and sanctuary language programmes.
- **Resource Access:**
Full access to digital and physical learning materials.

Ensuring success through comprehensive resources.



Community & Culture

- **Sanctuary Coffee Mornings:**
Monthly welcoming gatherings for social connection.
- **QUB STAR:**
Student Action for Refugees society providing peer support.
- **Sanctuary Roadshow:**
2025-2026 outreach activities across communities.

Building a culture of welcome beyond the classroom.

Belfast Trust

The Only Trust of Sanctuary in the UK and Ireland

In September 2024, Belfast Trust became the **first and only Health Trust** in Northern Ireland, the UK, and Ireland to receive the Trust of Sanctuary Award.

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Maternity Services of Sanctuary

Introduction of a Cultural Liaison Midwife to ensure culturally sensitive care for pregnant women and families from diverse backgrounds.



International Workforce

Active international recruitment and support strategies, creating a workforce that reflects the diverse communities served.



Inequalities & Inclusion Team

A dedicated team specifically supporting refugees and asylum seekers in navigating complex health services.



Cultural Representation

Exhibitions like Oliver Jeffers' "Seen" remind staff and patients of the importance of compassion and solidarity.



Vulnerable Youth Support

Specialised support programs for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, ensuring safety and care.



The only Trust in NI with a comprehensive Good Relations Strategy

Institutional Models of Welcome

Ormeau Library and Belfast Met leading by example



Ormeau Library

Library of Sanctuary (2023)

Serving a diverse and vibrant community, the library has transformed into an essential hub for learning and connection for those new to Belfast.

- Welcome
- Safe Environment
- Inclusion & Integration



Belfast Met

College of Sanctuary (First in NI)

861

ESOL Learners

56

Countries

Dedicated ESOL Unit (Oct 2025)

New institutional investment in language support alongside full scholarship places for asylum seekers.

A Network of Change

Organisations and Institutions Working Together

The Sanctuary Network builds a collaborative citywide ecosystem so welcome is shared across schools, services and communities.

Education

Schools, universities and colleges creating inclusive learning.

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Public Institutions

Councils and libraries providing civic welcome and information.

Healthcare

Trusts delivering culturally sensitive care.

Community

Faith groups, businesses and volunteers offering housing and connection.



Collaboration across sectors drives systemic inclusion.

The Integrated Journey

A coordinated approach supports a family at every step: learning, health, civic resources and pathways to a new future.

Sanctuary Culture & Strategic Alignment

Operationalising T:BUC and Good Relations Strategies

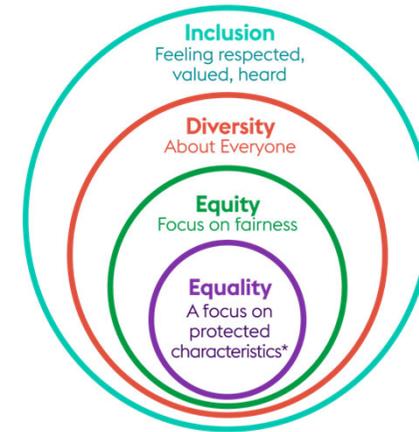
T:BUC Priorities (2013)

- **Our Children & Young People:** Shaping a shared future.
- **Our Shared Community:** Creating spaces of welcome.
- **Our Safe Community:** Ensuring safety for all residents.
- **Our Cultural Expression:** Respecting diverse identities.

Good Relations Outcomes

- Strong, transformative civic leadership.
- Shared and connected spaces for diverse populations.
- Structured collaboration through the Sanctuary Network.
- An intercultural city with respectful expression.

Sanctuary culture moves Good Relations beyond the traditional "two communities" framework to a comprehensive model of inclusion.



Expanding the Definition of "Community"

 Newcomer Communities

 LGBTQIA+ Community

 People with Disabilities

 Young People

Belfast's Diversity & Commitment

The Evidence for Inclusion

1,750

Asylum Seekers

Approx. 69% of Northern Ireland's total supported population reside in Belfast.

4.1%

LGBTQIA+ Community

Highest proportion in NI (2021 Census), indicating a vibrant, visible community.

24.8%

Disability

Adults reporting limited activities due to health, requiring accessible services.

1,798

Young Voices

Surveyed in Big Youth Survey (89% increase), showing growing engagement.

Institutional Response

 59 Schools of Sanctuary

 861 ESOL Learners

 University Pathways

 Trust of Sanctuary



From Aspiration to Reality

Addressing Exclusion & Marginalisation

Barrier

Systemic Exclusion (Jobs, Housing)

→ **Sanctuary Response:** University & College pathways provide skills, scholarships, and professional development to break cycles of poverty.

Barrier

Discrimination & Racism

→ **Sanctuary Response:** Schools of Sanctuary explicitly teach diversity, countering xenophobia from an early age.

Barrier

Health Inequalities

→ **Sanctuary Response:** The Trust of Sanctuary ensures culturally responsive care, removing barriers to access.

Barrier

Social Isolation

→ **Sanctuary Response:** Libraries and Community hubs provide safe spaces for connection and belonging.

"Institutional change alone is insufficient. Sanctuary culture requires sustained, coordinated action to ensure welcome translates into genuine belonging."



Inclusion for All

Official Designation

BELFAST CITY FOR ALL

Formalising our commitment to Welcome and Inclusion.

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Formalise

Recognise the Sanctuary Network and institutional achievements.



Signal

Send a clear message of belonging to LGBTQIA+, Disabled, and Newcomer communities.



Lead

Position Belfast as a leader in inclusive city development.

Let us make welcome our official policy.





Belfast
City Council



PEACEPLUS Programme

Assurance review carried out by Audit, Governance and Risk Services
January 2026

AGRS Key Contacts

The key AGRS contacts in relation to this audit are as follows:

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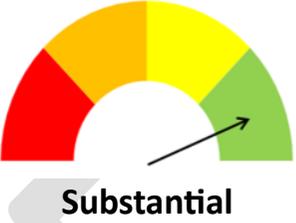
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Audit, Governance & Risk Services is committed to ensuring high standards of service to Belfast City Council. Our work complies with Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public Sector. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our work, please contact our Head of AGRS Claire O’Prey on extension 4643 or via email at o’preyc@belfastcity.gov.uk. We are committed to improving our service and encourage feedback at the end of each audit.

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Executive Summary				
Audit Title	PEACEPLUS Programme	Audit Opinion	 <p>Substantial</p>	Controls evaluated are adequate, appropriate, and effective to provide reasonable assurance that risks are being managed, and objectives should be met.
	<p>PEACEPLUS is a European Union funding programme designed to support peace and prosperity in Northern Ireland and the border counties of Ireland, building on the work of the PEACE and INTERREG programmes.</p> <p>PEACEPLUS is managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) and represents a funding partnership between the European Union, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Government of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Executive.</p> <p>Belfast City Council is the lead partner for the delivery of two PEACEPLUS Projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Community Action Plan • Reconnected Belfast Waterworks / Alexandra Park <p><u>Local Community Action Plan</u></p> <p>The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) has allocated €17.4million (approximately £15.1 million) to us to deliver the Belfast PEACEPLUS Local Community Action Plan to fund community activities and infrastructure projects that help build peace and reconciliation in Belfast.</p> <p>A key aspect of the Action Plan is the Community and Regeneration theme which will deliver almost €5 million (approximately £4.3 million) of investment across Belfast – focussing on empowering local people to regenerate and transform their communities on a cross-community basis.</p> <p>Sixteen Belfast projects will benefit from the PEACEPLUS funding and will all be delivered by external contractors. The focus of these projects is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six projects are aimed at building thriving and peaceful communities; • Five projects will look at celebrating cultures and diversity; and 			



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five small scale capital projects have been designed to regenerate and transform their local areas. <p><u>Reconnected Belfast - Waterworks / Alexandra Park</u></p> <p>Reconnected Belfast – Waterworks and Alexandra Park is a large scale capital project that the Council has been granted €13 million (approximately £10 million) in SEUPB funding for. This project will be delivered by the Property and Projects department.</p>
	<p>While there are two distinct areas of work under the PEACEPLUS programme, the Council is taking a “one Council” approach to their delivery, with joint SROs from City & Neighbourhood Services and Property & Projects.</p> <p>The Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the Local Community Action Plan is the Operational Director (Neighbourhood Services) and the work will primarily be overseen by the Peace Programmes team in City & Neighbourhood Services department, with input from Property & Projects for the smaller capital projects.</p> <p>The SRO for the Reconnected Belfast project is the Director of Property & Projects, with the work being led by a project team within Property & Projects, with input from the Peace Programmes Manager for the ‘animation’ aspects of the project.</p> <p>The delivery of the Reconnected Belfast capital project will be overseen and managed by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Responsible Officer • Deputy Senior Responsible Officer • Investment Decision Maker • Senior Clients • Senior Programme Delivery Manager • Client Manager • BCC Project Manager • PEACEPLUS Programming Lead <p>Programme Oversight for the Action Plan is provided by the Programme Board and the PEACEPLUS Team and Secretariat which is managed by the Peace Programmes Manager.</p> <p>The PEACEPLUS team is made up of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace Programmes Manager • Finance and Systems Lead Officer • Three Project Managers • Three Project Support Officers • Finance / Claims Officer

£

- Monitoring / Data Analyst
- Project Officer
- Programme Support Assistant
- Finance and Data Support Assistant

The PEACEPLUS Staff Structure sets out the line management and reporting paths up to the Programmes Manager and on to the Good Relations Manager.

SEUPB has allocated:

- €17.4million (approximately £15.1 million) for the Council to deliver the Belfast PEACEPLUS **Local Community Action Plan** to fund community activities and infrastructure projects that help build peace and reconciliation in Belfast. The allocation of funding across this programme is:

Thriving and peaceful communities	€5,269,692.93 (£4,582,341.68 approx)
Celebrating cultures and diversity	€3,192,994.55 (£2,776,517 approx)
Community Regeneration and transformation (capital projects)	€5,367,007.89 (4,666,963.38 approx)
Staff Costs	€3,150,069.22 (£2,739,190.63 approx)
Office & Administration (flat rate)	€457,510.38 (£397,835.11 approx)

- A further €13 million (approximately £10 million) has been granted by SEUPB for the **Reconnected Belfast** Waterworks and Alexandra Park capital project.

The two projects are subject to separate Letters of Offer, each with project specific funding conditions, and the SEUPB standard conditions of funding.

The Sterling figures above are based on the planning exchange rate requested by the SEUPB of €1.15. Reimbursement of expenditure will be in Euro, based on the EU commission average rate at the time of the submission of the claim, as such the rate will be subject to change.

	<p>Governance arrangements for the implementation of the PEACEPLUS programme have been formalised.</p> <p>The Governance framework for the PEACEPLUS Local Action Plan reflects both strategic and operational levels.</p> <p>Strategic Level - The strategic tier of the PEACEPLUS Governance Framework model is the Council’s Strategic Policy & Resources Committee and full Council.</p> <p>Operational Level - The operational level comprises of three sub-tiers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tier 1 - Shared City Partnership Tier 2 - PEACEPLUS Programme Board Tier 3 - Thematic Steering Groups <p>Regular reporting to SEUPB is also required by the Terms and Conditions of the Letters of Offer.</p> <p>The governance arrangements for the Reconnected Belfast capital project have also been formalised and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reconnected Belfast Project Board • The Project Team • The Project Delivery Team <p>The Reconnected Belfast Project Board will report into the Finance P&P Oversight Group and then on to the People & Communities Committee.</p>
	<p>Our audit reviewed the controls in place to mitigate the following potential risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance arrangements are not adequate and / or are not operating in practice. • Risks within the programme are not being effectively monitored and managed • Compliance with the conditions of funding is not being effectively monitored and managed • External delivery contracts were not procured in line with internal and SEUPB guidelines • Contracts for the delivery of projects are not being effectively managed • Capital projects are not procured in line with terms and conditions of funding or are not delivered in line with specified timeframes and budgets • Funding claims submitted to SEUPB are not accurate or have not been prepared in line with SEUPB requirements.

Basis of Audit Opinion

Based on our review of programme documents and the sample testing that was undertaken, we have provided an assurance rating of **Substantial** over the controls in place to manage the risks that could impact on delivery of the Councils two PEACEPLUS Projects in line with the terms and conditions of the letter of offer. The positive assurance opinion reflects the significant knowledge and experience that the management team have in delivering Peace programmes, and the learning from previous Peace programmes.

It is important to highlight that unlike previous programmes, a decentralised control arrangement has been adopted for management verifications in the PEACEPLUS Programme. Previously SEUPB operated a centralised system for management verifications where SEUPB staff verified and certified project expenditure prior to payment. In PEACEPLUS, projects must appoint an external controller to carry out Management Verifications for all partners within their project. It is still early stages of the delivery of the PEACEPLUS Programme, and while BCC has procured an external controller in accordance with SEUPB's Framework, as at December 2025, BCC has not yet submitted a funding claim to the external controller, therefore AGRS has not tested controls over the new management verification process.

Further details of the audit work done and the findings from each of the following audit areas are provided below.

- Governance, Risk Management and Compliance with the Conditions of Funding
- Procurement of External Delivery Partners for the Local Community Action Plan projects
- Management of the Delivery Partners
- Capital Projects
- SEUPB Funding Claims

Our audit did not identify any issues with the key controls in the above audit areas, however the programme is at an early stage, and we highlight the importance of ongoing oversight of the effective operation of these controls.

Governance, Risk Management and Compliance with the Conditions of Funding

Our audit looked at the governance arrangements that have been put in place for the programme; how programme and project risk is being managed; and how compliance with the conditions of funding is being monitored and managed. The following controls were found to be in place, adequate, and operating effectively:

- A formal Governance Model has been established for the PEACEPLUS Programme.

- The Governance Model includes the Terms of Reference and roles and responsibilities for key groups and individuals that make up the programme governance structure.
- The Programme Board meets monthly and reports up to the Shared City Partnership which also meets monthly.
- The Celebrating Cultures & Diversity and Thriving & Peaceful Communities Thematic Steering Groups have been meeting quarterly since May.
- Update reports are produced for the Programme Board and the Shared City Partnership to assist with the monitoring and management of the delivery of the programme. The Programme Board report includes updates around governance, mobilisation priorities, procurement, staffing/ recruitment, risk management, communications, and actions / next steps. Appropriate decision making is taken at an operational level by the Programme Board, and more strategic decisions are considered by the Shared City Partnership.
- A formal process had been established for the regular review of PEACEPLUS programme risks.
- Risk registers are in place at a Programme level and for each of the three programme themes.
- A formal process has been established for monitoring and managing compliance with the SEUPB Letter of Offer and the standard conditions of funding. This includes the use of a 'Letter of Offer Tracker' for monitoring compliance.

Procurement of External Delivery Partners for the Local Community Action Plan projects

We reviewed the BCC PEACEPLUS Procurement Process document that was established for the PEACEPLUS programme and undertook sample testing to confirm that procurement activities were undertaken by BCC in line with the prescribed process. This did not include a review of the procurement activities undertaken for the capital projects, see 'Capital Projects' section later. The following controls were found to be in place, adequate, and operating effectively:

- The PEACEPLUS Team have established documented procedures to provide guidance around procurement activities for the PEACEPLUS Programme.
- Commercial and Procurement Services (CPS) are involved throughout the procurement process and also provide advice to the PEACEPLUS Team when needed. Where the contract is above the OJEU thresholds, CPS run the tender exercise completely, with some input from the Peace team.
- Tender exercises were advertised on the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) as required by the documented procedures and the PEACEPLUS Programme Manual.
- A Procurement Tracker spreadsheet has been established to monitor and manage the procurement activities to be completed.
- At the completion of the procurement exercise formal contracts are signed with all external delivery partners.

Management of the Delivery Partners

We reviewed the BCC Contract Management Protocol that was established for the PEACEPLUS programme and undertook sample testing to confirm that contract management activities are being undertaken by BCC in line with the Protocol. The following controls were found to be in place, adequate, and operating effectively:

- A Contract Management Protocol has been established to provide guidance on the management of the delivery partners for PEACEPLUS projects.
- The delivery partners are required to provide monthly update reports to the Project Manager prior to the monthly contract management meeting. These reports include updates on project progress, monitoring and evaluation, communications, and budgets and resources.
- Delivery partners are required to meet monthly with the Project Manager and other members of the PEACEPLUS team, to review delivery progress. However, sample testing found that while contract management meetings were not formally minuted as required by the Contract Management Protocol, there is an agenda in place for each meeting, the Project Manager makes notes around what has been discussed at each meeting, and an action log is updated and circulated following each meeting. Testing also found that in all instances monthly and quarterly meetings were being held as required, and delivery partners were providing the required update reports.
- Appropriate remedies are in place for addressing any contractual issues that arise with project delivery partners.

Capital Projects

In relation to the capital projects that are being delivered as part of the PEACEPLUS Programme, we reviewed the procurement guidance that is in place and how project delivery, and project expenditure and budgets, were being managed.

The following controls were found to be in place:

- BCC Documented procedures are in place around the procurement for PEACEPLUS capital projects, and to ensure that procurement exercises are completed in line with terms and conditions of funding.
- A delivery programme has been established for each of the capital projects.
- A formal process is in place for monitoring and managing project delivery. Each project has a Project Manager and a Client Manager and there is also a Project Board to oversee the delivery of the projects.
- Management are responsible for regularly monitoring and managing project expenditure against budgets, including receiving regular reports on project expenditure and holding regular meetings to discuss project delivery versus budgets.

Community Regeneration and Transformation (CRT) Capital Projects

It is still early stages of the delivery of these capital projects. Design teams were appointed for each of the five CRT projects in quarter two of 2025/26, and each of the projects is in the planning/ design phase of the delivery programme.

Three of these capital projects also include the delivery of a community animation programme once the construction phase has been completed. Alignment between the animation activity and construction works for each capital project is critical. Officers from Property and Projects are working closely with the PEACEPLUS Project Managers to ensure alignment of both elements.

We undertook testing to confirm that procurement exercises were completed in line with the procurement strategy (developed by Property and projects), and that Delivery Programmes and processes for monitoring and managing project expenditure against budgets have been established for each project. Testing of a sample of projects found that to date, procurement activities have been undertaken in line with the documented procedures, and Delivery Programmes and processes for monitoring and managing project expenditure against budgets, have been established. In November 2025, no contract payments had been made in relation to these five small scale capital projects.

Waterworks and Alexandra Park Capital Project

An Integrated Consulting team was appointed for this project in September 2025, and the project is currently in the Detailed Design stage of the delivery programme. It is anticipated that construction on this project will commence in 2026, and the project should be completed in 2028.

Section four (Proposed Procurement Route) of the Reconnected Belfast Procurement Strategy provides the following guidance “Based on the expected value of the ICT services being greater than the current EU threshold limits, the (Integrated Consulting Team) ICT will be procured utilising the OJEU/PCR2015 process. The procurement will also follow the guidance laid out by the Construction & Procurement Delivery (CPD) unit of the Department of Finance and will utilise a suitable price/quality ratio and the lowest or most acceptable price. The Council will use the electronic tendering system e-SourcingNI”.

Testing found that the procurement of the Integrated Consulting Team for this project was undertaken in line with the BCC Reconnected Belfast Procurement Strategy, and the requirements of the PEACEPLUS Programme Manual, including being advertised on OJEU and in the local newspapers.

SEUPB Funding Claims

In relation to the submission of funding claims to SEUPB we found the following controls were in place:

- Formal procedures have been established for submitting funding claims in line with the SEUPB requirements. These include key roles and responsibilities of programme staff.
- Funding claims must be reviewed and appropriately approved prior to submission to SEUPB to ensure that all expenditure is eligible, and claims will be approved and paid by SEUPB.

Previously, (for the Peace IV Programme) it would have been SEUPB who verified a sample of the Councils programme expenditure prior to funding claims being paid. However, for the PEACEPLUS Programme the verification process has changed and the Council is now responsible for the verification of expenditure. To enable this the Council is required to appoint a Financial Controller, selected from a central framework provided by SEUPB, to undertake management verifications. The role of the Controller is to verify that the expenditure reported by the Council fulfils the conditions as detailed in the Letter of Offer and the PEACEPLUS Programme Manual.

Programme expenditure (for the Local Community Action Plan projects) up to the end of September 2025 was:

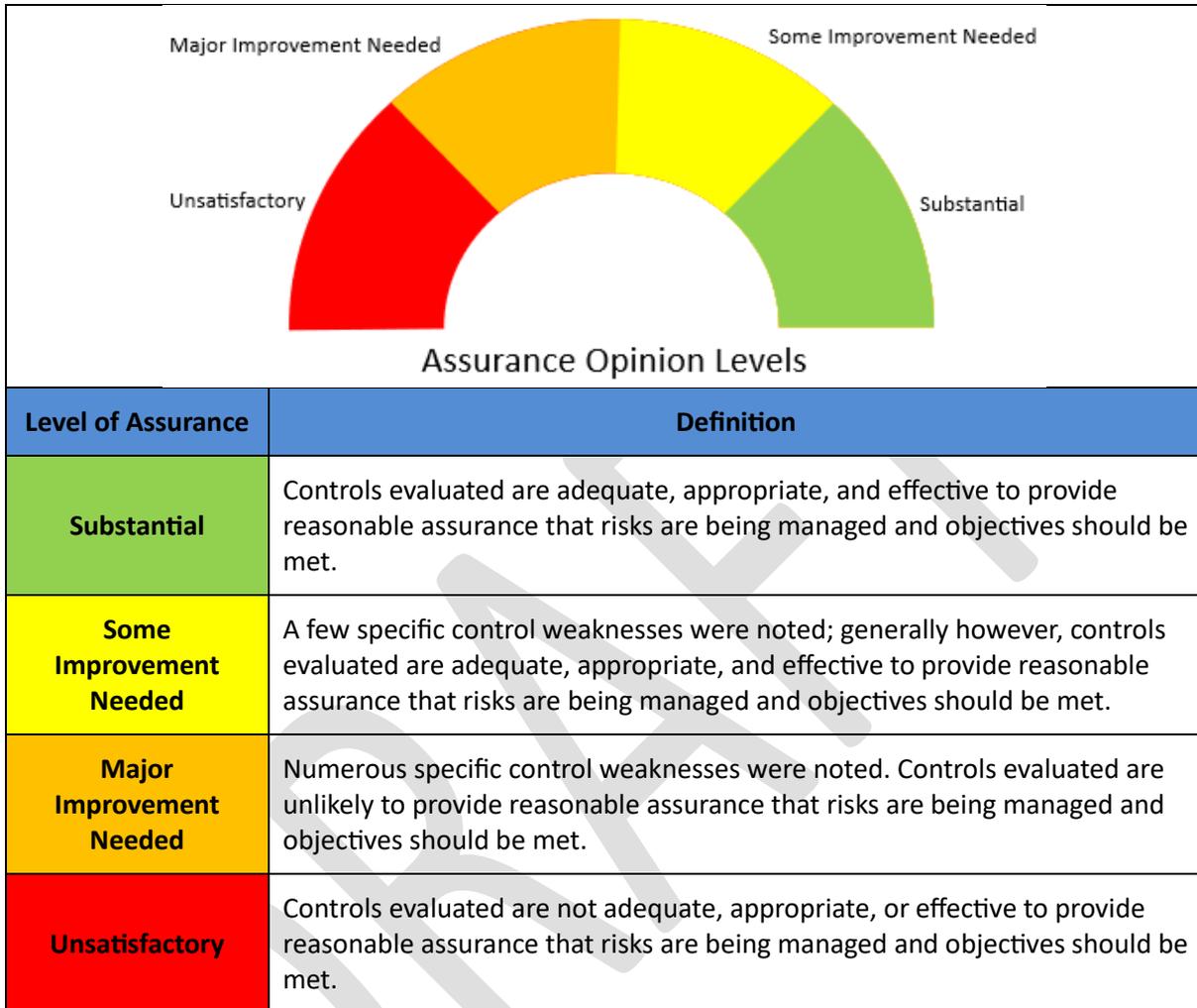
Salaries	£765,958
Office and Administration	£114,894
Thriving and Peaceful Communities	£172,155
Celebrating Cultures and Diversity	£390,766
	£1,443,773

This expenditure represents about 10% of the £15,193,057 total budget for these projects. As of December 2025, no funding claims have yet been submitted to SEUPB, no compliance testing could be completed.

A 'Preparation Lump Sum' of €100,000 (£85,862.35) for the Local Community Action Plan, has been received into Council's euro bank account. The Lump Sum is an automatic payment to assist Council in covering the costs relating to the preparation of the Local Action Plan and associated application to the PEACEPLUS Programme. No supporting documentation showing expenditure incurred was required by SEUPB in relation to this payment.

To help manage the financial risk to Council, officers submitted an advance request to SEUPB. SEUPB has confirmed the Council will receive a €2.25m advance which will be provided in two payments. A one-off payment of €1.5m was received in December 2025 and the remaining €750k will be paid to the Council once the first 4 claims have been submitted.

Appendix 1 – Definition of Assurance Opinions



Minutes of Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum Thursday 12th February 2025

Attendance

Members:

Councillor Michael Long
Councillor Sarah Bunting
Councillor Brian Smyth
Councillor Ciaran Beattie
Councillor Séamas de Faoite
Councillor Natasha Brennan
Alderman Sonia Copeland

Officers:

John Walsh, Chief Executive
Sharon McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Strategic Director of Corporate Services
Trevor Wallace, Director of Finance
Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
Damien Martin, Strategic Director of Place & Economy
Jim Girvan Director of Neighbourhood Services
Stephen Leonard, Director City & Neighbourhood Services
Joanne Delaney, Portfolio and Programme Coordinator (secretariat)

1. Finance Update

The Director of Finance provided an update on the setting of the district rate for 2026/27 following deferral to strike the rate at the February Council meeting. The Director referred to the summary report circulated outlining the financial impact for not only 2026/27 but also for medium term planning in relation to the proposal at Council to decrease the rate agreed at the Special SP&R Committee. Members discussed in detail the impact in setting a lower rate in 2026/27 for Members ambitions and for future growth proposals. The Chief Executive in his role as designated Chief Financial Officer also outlined a number of issues that need to be taken into consideration in order to provide assurances to Members on the robustness of the revenue estimates. Members discussed in detail the impacts and risks outlined and it was agreed Parties further consider in advance of the Special SP&R Committee being arranged for Friday 13 February.

2. City Centre Byelaws

The City Solicitor provided an update on the byelaws for special events such as the Fleadh following consultation with the Department for Communities as agreed by December SP&R Committee. The City Solicitor also referred to the remaining city centre byelaws and the

concerns raised by Members at the December SP&R Committee in relation to enforcement and the issues surrounding the display of graphic imagery in the city centre. Members noted the key next steps in relation to the draft byelaws for the city centre, including the recommendations that would be brought to February SP&R Committee in relation to the regulation of graphic imagery in the city centre and enforcement of the current bye laws.

3. Ending Violence Against Women and Girls - Shared Island Event

The Director of Neighbourhood Services advised that correspondence had been received outlining that NILGA along with the Association for Irish Local Government (AILG) will hold a cross-border event on developing the leadership and influence of Councillors in relation to Ending Violence Against Women & Girls. The event which follows the successful application to the Shared Island Civic Society Fund is seeking to bring Councillors with experience of tackling this issue together to discuss challenges and opportunities with their counterparts in AILG. Members noted the event was to be held in March and that there was an allocation of two places for each Council Area. It was agreed these places should be offered to the Chair of SP&R and P&C Committee and if they are unable to attend then onwards to the Deputy Chair for consideration. The Director of Neighbourhood Services to follow up.

4. City Innovation Programme Update

The Deputy Chief Executive provided an update on city innovation matters including a funding bid made to the Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayoral Challenge. Members noted the update provided.

Arising from discussion, Members made a number of points about the council's alleyway programme which officers agreed to explore with a view to bringing a further report back to committee.

5. Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2026

The Strategic Director of Place & Economy presented an update in relation to the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann work programme which included an overview of some of the engagement that has already taken place and the subsequent feedback received. The Director also outlined the detail of further and planned targeted sessions with communities and businesses and Members suggested a number of additions for these sessions. It was also noted that should Members feel it would be beneficial to provide sessions for any other organisations or groups they can forward the details directly to the Director.

The Director City & Neighbourhood Services then presented the proposed operational plans for the street cleansing and waste management workstreams for pre event, event duration and post event. Members discussed the resource requirements for street cleansing operations during the event and it was noted that consideration be given to the use of volunteers where possible and the Director to further explore. In terms of waste management arrangements it was advised that a similar approach to that of Wexford and Mullingar was envisaged subject to Committee approval. Following detailed discussion on the financial and resource implications outlined for the waste management model it was agreed that the Director further explore the alternative options suggested by Members in advance of the recommendations being brought to SP&R Committee.

The City Solicitor provided an overview of the outcome of discussions with statutory partners, points to consider and next steps in relation to licensing arrangements for liquor, pavement cafes and street trading for the event. It was noted that update reports on the detail discussed would be brought to both SP&R and the Licensing Committee. The City Solicitor also advised Members that the Licensing Committee may be required to hold special meetings and Council will be asked to provide delegated authority to Licensing Committee for any Fleadh related decisions which would ordinarily require ratification by Council. Members will be kept updated as this work progresses.

Members raised some points in relation to late night bus services and other city wide operational issues in order to ensure the effective hosting of the event and it was agreed that the Chief Executive arranges to meet with The Executive Office to discuss further and explore any collaboration opportunities in light of budgetary constraints.

6. Planning Update

The City Solicitor updated the Forum on a number of planning matters which were currently live. An issue was raised by a Member in relation to a specific application and the role of statutory consultees, the City Solicitor agreed to follow up on this.

7. AOB

International Relations Framework

The Strategic Director of Place & Economy advised that a formal invitation to participate in an international visit to China in April 2026 had been received by the Lord Mayor to include a

delegation from Belfast City Council. Following consideration it was agreed the detail of the invite is circulated to Party Group Leaders to further consider and to be further discussed at a future meeting of Party Group Leaders.

US Consul General

The Chief Executive advised that he had received correspondence from the US Consul General in relation to an initiative to plant trees across the eleven council districts in Northern Ireland in order to mark the upcoming 250th Anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence. Members agreed to the Chief Executive engaging with the US Consul General to ascertain the details of the initiative and an update to be brought back to Party Group Leaders.

Sunday Openings 2026 – Public Consultation Exercise

The Strategic Director of Place & Economy provided an update on the plans to launch a public consultation exercise in order to seek views on progressing the holiday resort designation across the wider Belfast City Council area to enable extended Sunday trading hours for larger retailers. Members noted the approach and timescales outlined and it was noted the draft survey would be circulated to Members following the meeting.



Subject:	Requests for use of the City Hall
Date:	20 February 2026
Reporting Officer:	Nora Largey, City Solicitor and Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Christopher Burns, Interim Functions and Exhibition Manager

Restricted Reports													
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>												
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input style="width: 30px; height: 20px;" type="text"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information relating to any individual 2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information) 4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter 5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained 6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction 7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime 													
<p>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 5%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td></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	This paper, together with the attached appendix, contains the recommended approach in

	respect of each of the requests by external organisations for access to the City Hall function rooms received up to 6 February 2026.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the recommendations as set out in Appendix 1.
3.0	Main report
	<u>Background Information</u>
3.1	The current criteria for use of the function rooms used to review external applications is set out below.
3.2	Functions permitted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • functions which support other events in the city and which are of demonstrable economic benefit to Belfast whether organised by the council or not. • functions which demonstrably enhance the city’s image nationally or internationally as a desirable commercial, business or tourist destination. • functions designed to celebrate or commemorate a notable achievement or significant anniversary (25, 50, 100 years) by an organisation or body with close links to the city or province. • functions organised by recognised local community or voluntary sector groups for non-profit and non-political purposes.
3.3	Functions not permitted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conferences, meetings, seminars, performances, wedding receptions, private parties or receptions and similar booking requests in the prestige function rooms. • functions, which have as their principal purpose the generation of commercial gain for the organisers. Charity-fundraising functions are managed by the Lord Mayor’s Office. • functions which have no compelling links to the council or the city specifically and which could instead use local private sector facilities. • functions which have as their primary purpose the advancement of any political or religious cause or campaign or are otherwise potentially contentious or involve significant reputation risks for the council. • functions which involve exceptionally large or disruptive set-ups or pose a real and tangible risk to the fabric of the building or grounds.
3.4	<u>Key Issues</u> Committee will recall that at its meeting on 24 th May 2024, it considered an update on the City Hall Income Generation Project. Committee was advised that charging for the use of

	<p>the Council's function rooms would be considered as part of a later stage of this project. Pending this work being brought to Committee, delegated authority was given to the City Solicitor and Director of Legal & Civic Services to depart from the existing charging structure and negotiate room hire charges for commercial type events. Work was undertaken looking at a review of the current pricing structure and a report was presented to Committee in January 2026 with proposals for event charging from April 2026 onwards.</p>
3.5	<p>The standard charging structure will apply to the events listed in the Schedule at Appendix 1 up until the end of the current financial year. Events from April 2026 will soon have prices confirmed with the conclusion of current review following report to Elected Members last month.</p>
3.6	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None, any recommendations for hospitality will be met from existing budgets.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications / Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1 - Schedule of function requests received up to 6 February 2026.

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FEBRUARY 2026 CITY HALL FUNCTION APPLICATIONS

NAME OF ORGANISATION	FUNCTION DATE	FUNCTION DESCRIPTION	CRITERIA MET	ROOM CHARGE
Belfast Bands Forum	9 March 2026	Commonwealth Day 2026 A Community Recovery funded programme to celebrate the music, dance, culture, and flavours of the Commonwealth and bringing people together. Numbers attending: 130	C	None
Belfast National Graves Association	24 March 2026	Easter Lily Launch 2026 - reception and speeches focusing on local history. Numbers attending: 80	C	None
Belfast Buildings Trust	24 April 2026	Grand Final of the NI Schools Debating Competition 2026 – annual event to encourage mature debate and civic engagement in young people Numbers attending – 140	D	<i>Event post April 2026 - Charge TBC</i>
Confucius Institute	28 April 2026	South-Central Minzu University Performing Arts School Performance – cultural exchange event. The audience will be school children and teachers from schools learning Mandarin in Belfast. Numbers attending – 100	D	<i>Event post April 2026 - Charge TBC</i>
Ulster Tatler Group	3 September 2026	Ulster Tatler Awards 2026 – Annual awards event with dinner and presentations Numbers attending – 400	B	<i>Event post April 2026 - Charge TBC</i>
Education Authority Intercultural Service	15 October 2026	Schools of Sanctuary Awards Ceremony – speeches and presentations with performances from local school children Numbers attending - 100	D	<i>Event post April 2026 - Charge TBC</i>
Franco-British Lawyers Society	16 October 2026	Dinner to mark the Franco-British Lawyers Society Society's Inaugural Universities Moot – The attendees will primarily be law students and young lawyers from France and the UK	C	<i>Event post April 2026 - Charge TBC</i>

FEBRUARY 2026 CITY HALL FUNCTION APPLICATIONS

		Numbers attending – 300		
Irish FA Foundation	22 October 2026	McDonalds Irish FA Awards 2026 – is a celebration of grassroots local volunteers in the community Numbers attending – 200	D	<i>Event post April 2026 - Charge TBC</i>
Tour Guides Northern Ireland	3 November 2026	10th Anniversary Celebration – with reception, dinner, speeches and entertainment to mark milestone for organisation Numbers attending – 150	C	<i>Event post April 2026 - Charge TBC</i>
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	5 November 2026	Celebration of Involvement 2026 - is a celebration event to recognise the contribution of service users to improve services. Numbers attending – 80	D	<i>Event post April 2026 - Charge TBC</i>

Minutes of Special Party Group Leaders Consultative Forum Thursday 5th February 2026

Attendance

Members:

Councillor Ciaran Beattie
Councillor Natasha Brennan
Councillor Sarah Bunting
Councillor Séamas de Faoite
Councillor Michael Long
Councillor Áine Groogan

Officers:

John Walsh, Chief Executive
Sharon McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Strategic Director of Corporate Services
Trevor Wallace, Director of Finance
Nora Largey, City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
David Sales, Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services
Jim Girvan, Director of Neighbourhood Services
Sinead Grimes, Director of Property & Projects
Geoff Dickson, Strategic Planning & Policy Manager (secretariat)

1. Community Support Plan

The Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services and the Director of Neighbourhood Services outlined the proposed approach to developing a community capacity pilot, in line with the decision made at SP&R Committee the previous week. Should Members agree to the outline approach at Committee, a more detailed implementation plan will be brought back for consideration and approval.

Discussion focused on how money would be allocated on an area basis, as well as the need to ensure other communities that are not geographical in nature were able to avail of the capacity grants.

A member also raised the need for overall investment in community centres should be considered as a priority in the future.

Members agreed the report be taken to SP&R Committee for consideration.

2. Leisure Update

The Director of Finance outlined the options for completing the existing phases of the Leisure Transformation Programme, namely the second building at Girdwood.

Members also discussed the need to progress the next phase of the programme and look at options regarding the remaining leisure estate including Shankill, Ozone, Ballysillan and Whiterock leisure centres.

Members were content that the report be discussed at SP&R Committee.

3. Pitches Programme – Proposed Phasing and Implementation Plan

The Strategic Director of City & Neighbourhood Services updated Members on the completion of the Pitches Strategy, with a view to bringing the draft strategy to Committee in March. He then outlined the potential implementation plan for the capital investment, focusing the initial priorities on the pitches that will bring the most benefit to the highest demand sports.

Some Members showed aspects of concern with some of the possible sites for pitch investment, including Boucher Playing Fields and Botanic Gardens.

Members agreed that the paper be brought to Committee for discussion.

4. Revenue Estimates 2026/27

The Director of Finance updated Members on the current estimating process, including changes to the Estimated Penny Product (EPP) following the Finance Ministers rate revaluation suspension. The Director of Finance also reminded Members of the requirement to strike the rate by 15th February.

Members agreed that the paper be brought to SP&R Committee for consideration.

5. AOB

Attack on Cleansing Staff

The Chief Executive updated members on the situation regarding the assault on members of staff whilst cleaning the city centre and the discussions with trade unions since the attack regarding additional safety measures being introduced to protect staff. Party Group Leaders joined CMT in condemning the attack and offering their support to the staff involved.

Social Policy Working Group

Monday, 16th February, 2026

MINUTE OF MEETING & WORKSHOP

- Members present: Councillor Doherty (Chairperson);
Alderman Copeland; and
Councillors F. McAteer and I. McLaughlin.
- In attendance: Ms. S. McNicholl, Deputy Chief Executive/Director
of Corporate Services;
Mr. J. Tully, Director of City and Organisational Strategy;
Mr J. Girvan, Director of Neighbourhood Services;
Ms. N. Bohill, Head of Commercial and Procurement
Services;
Mr. K. Heaney, Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty;
Ms S. McStay, Category Officer
Ms. L. Armstrong, Solicitor;
Mr M. McCann, City Innovation Manager;
Ms D. Ferguson, City Innovation Programme Lead;
Ms S. O'Regan, Employability and Skills Manager;
Ms C. Christy, HR Manager (Development);
Ms. C. Patterson, Policy and Programme Manager,
Inclusive Growth;
Ms C. Hutchinson, Strategic Policy and Planning Officer;
Ms. M. Robinson, Belfast Business Promise Co-ordinator; and
Mr B Flynn, Committee Services Officer

Apologies

An apology was received from the Director of Human Resources.

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 17th June, 2025, were adopted.

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Members' Workshop

The meeting continued in the form of a Members' workshop, the main items discussed are set out below:

Planning Discussion

The Director of City and Organisational Strategy provided the Working Group with an overview of the achievements and progress linked to the commitments in the Inclusive Growth Strategy, referring to the Belfast Agenda, the Belfast Region City Deal and emerging work across the Council that would support efforts to build community wealth and deliver on inclusive growth ambitions. The Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty outlined the changes to the strategic context and introduced several proposed priority areas of work.

During discussion, Members agreed with the proposed areas of focus and highlighted the importance of ensuring that Council teams and Members were aware of the various programmes of work and pathways in place to support their delivery. The proposed direction of travel for the Belfast Business Promise was noted and it was agreed that further detail would be brought to Members in due course.

The Working Group also identified a number of priorities that would benefit from enhanced focus. These included:

- the growing issue of the in-work poverty, as well as those not in work and to also consider linking to the Cost of Living Working Group and the positive impacts of the Hardship Fund working with schools and breakfast clubs;
- the role of good jobs and supporting people to reach their potential through pathways for future job opportunities and 'jobs of the future', with particular reference to innovation and apprenticeships;
- the role of innovation and inclusive innovation, with opportunities to connect to the community and voluntary sectors and the potential to link to emerging BRCD/innovation funding to address social challenges; and
- the potential opportunities presented in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility and developing a city proposition which would direct and/or sign-post organisations towards specific issues, such as poverty, hardship etc. Also the need to consider what measured were received well with organisations - the Belfast Business Promise could be a platform for this.

In addition, Members discussed the importance of maximising social value through collaborative procurement and the use of developer contributions. It was suggested that there would be value in understanding the future pipeline of investment/inward investment opportunities to explore how the Council could work across government and with training providers to support pathways to employment opportunities - engagement with DfE/INI would be vital.

It was agreed that the presentation, along with the presentation from the recent Anti-Poverty Network event would be circulated to Members.

Sustainable Procurement Policy

The Head of Commercial and Procurement Services referred to the draft policy that had previously been circulated to Members and explained that the overall aim was to ensure contracts deliver value for communities.

The Working Group was supportive of the proposed approach to engage and test the viability of proposals with key stakeholder, such as the BBP Network Anchors, Federation of Small Business, social enterprises and others as part of the development of the policy. The draft policy would be brought back to the Working Group in advance of any formal public consultation process, with a view to securing Council approval in September, 2026. All Members were encouraged to provide further feedback on the draft policy.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty provided members with an update on proposals and progress. While Members highlighted the need to avoid 'initiative-overload' on businesses, it was felt that there would be opportunities to better connect or direct businesses to specific issues to benefit communities.

The example of the 'match-making platform' used by Birmingham City Council and many U.K. cities was referred to as an approach that could be tested for its viability in a Belfast context. A Member also highlighted the 'Vacant to Vibrant' scheme, which had included a successful 'match-making' service. It was also noted that community capacity to avail of CSR offers was also likely to vary across the city and that research on capacity levels/needs recently agreed by the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee could be taken account of in an emerging approach.

The Members noted the proposal to facilitate a citywide philanthropy round-table discussion in partnership with Community Foundation NI, and that SPWG/Elected Members would be involved in these discussions.

Discussion around sponsorship opportunities recognised that initial discussions/testing has been largely from a commercial perspective, however, there was potential for it to also deliver on an organisation's CSR commitments.

There was support for progressing with initial discussions with key businesses and anchors, with the Belfast Business Promise network suggested as a starting point to scope the opportunity and issues of interest.

It was agreed that further engagement takes place with Members through Party Group briefings to inform emerging approach.

The Head of Inclusive Growth and Anti-Poverty confirmed that following the discussion, an outline workplan would be prepared and brought back to SPWG.

Social Value Procurement Policy - Delivery Report

The Working Group was provided with an update on the delivery of social value outcomes via open tender competitions awarded in accordance with the Council's Social Value Procurement Policy (SVPP), for the reporting period 1st October 2025 to 30th November 2025.

Noted.

Following a query, the Head of Commercial and Procurement Services agreed to provide Cllr McLaughlin with further information on the numbers of contracts below the Social Value threshold.

Chairperson

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